

## 10 Top tips for reporting concerns about a child and making a referral to statutory services

As the person responsible for leading safeguarding and child protection in your early years or school setting you will already know the importance of meeting your statutory duties and responsibilities. (we explore this in our filmed interview which is part of this CPD bundle).

In addition to legislative expectations and Government guidance we thought it would be helpful to give some of our top tips from our experienced child protection experts for your consideration.

### Recording concerns

1. Always keep an accurate record of concerns about a child. Concerns may be in relation to observations of injuries, deterioration in a child's well-being or maybe a conversation with a parent or disclosure of abuse from a child. Whatever the concern, accurate reporting needs to consist of factual information, concise and relevant detail and is recorded in chronologically.
2. Always act appropriately as a result of a concern. Ask yourself, should I report this concern to other agencies such as early help (intervention) or statutory services? Do I need to do this immediately or should I seek advice from other professionals who can help me to determine 'what next'?

### Information sharing

3. Always follow and engage with information sharing procedures that demonstrate compliance with data protection legislation.
4. Make sure that you communicate with parents (and staff) why, when and how you share information about children, making it clear in your setting policy and procedures before the child begins to attend the setting.

### Working with others

5. Be aware of other agencies and services with whom children and families in your settings are engaging with and from whom they are receiving help. Actively seek clarification about their roles and responsibilities and what their contributions are in relation to plans and strategies. Make others aware of your involvement, interventions and strategies to support children providing clarity in regard to your own role and responsibilities within the multi-agency response and partnership.
6. Work together with other professionals, including social care teams to achieve agreed goals, plans and outcomes for children. Draw upon your own abilities, skills and experiences that contribute towards keeping children safe and protected.

### **Liaising with children's services social care and safeguarding partners**

7. Always seek clarity and up-to-date information about your social care, safeguarding partners procedures, policies and priorities. Use directives and advice provided by your local authority to help you to understand important themes and actions you will need to take in relation to all safeguarding and child protection protocols or policies that are bespoke to the LA in which you work. This includes using and applying tools provided by your LA to determine children's thresholds of need and information about interventions that should be applied in relation to early help, child in need and child protection.
8. Act promptly to use your local authority social care teams to ask for advice and to make a referral where required. If in doubt about anything always check it out with them. That's what they are there for!

### **Making a referral to social care in relation to a child needing to be protected**

9. When making a referral to social care always use accurate information that is communicated in a way that helps them to understand your concerns and reasons for referral. Give sufficient information that explains circumstances, facts, events and the nature of your concerns including the reasons for the referral. Use information in an way that helps analyse a situation rather than focus only on describing a situation or event.
10. Always further support a referral in writing. Documenting the referral details and recording the date when the referral was made. With whom did you speak? What was said? Was advice if any was given from social care? Did you agree on decisions made? Don't be afraid to challenge others if necessary. Follow up a referral if nothing happens and you need to seek clarity or want an explanation about what happens next.