



Brookdale Primary School

Child Protection Policy

The Designated Senior Teacher for Child Protection is:

Miss K Ball - Headteacher

In her absence the role will be undertaken by:

Mrs G Knapton - Deputy Headteacher

In the rare event of both these members of staff being absent concerns should be reported to Miss Hubbard then any other senior teacher after that.

Designated Lead Teacher Child Protection training completed: **February 2021 (valid for 2 years)**

Training to be renewed: February 2023

Nominated School Governor for Child Protection is: Mr John Hughes

Review date: *July 2022*

Making referrals

Any referral should be initiated in consultation with the school's designated teacher for Child Protection. A written record of your concerns should be made using the schools internal recording form. This should then be given to the Designated Child Protection teacher who may decide to make a referral to Integrated Front Door (IFD).

Mon-Fri, 9:00am – 5.00pm Tel: **0151 606 2008**

Outside of these hours Tel: **0151 677 6557**

E-mail: IFD@wirral.gov.uk

Introduction

Brookdale recognises its legal duty under the Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all children. The school recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations

This procedures document provides the basis for good practice within the school for Child Protection work. It should be read in conjunction with the [Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Protection Policies and Procedures](#). These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the Board considers to be safe and professional practice in this context. Child Protection has to be considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004. Within the context of Every Child Matters, this takes account of the need for children "being healthy and staying safe".

These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) requirements and procedures.

All procedures can be found on the WSCP website :

www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk

Underpinning values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, Brookdale will work in accordance with the principles outlined in the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Protection procedures:

Child-centred

The child should be seen (alone when appropriate) by the Lead Social Worker in addition to all other professionals who have a responsibility for the child's welfare. His or her welfare should be kept sharply in focus in all work with the child and family. The significance of seeing and observing the child cannot be overstated. The child should be spoken and listened to, and their wishes and feelings ascertained, taken into account (having regard to their age and understanding) and recorded when making decisions about the provision of services. Some of the worst failures of the system have occurred when professionals have lost sight of the child and concentrated instead on their relationship with the adults.

Rooted in child development

Those working with children should have a detailed understanding of child development and how the quality of the care they are receiving can have an impact on their health and development. They should recognise that as children grow, they continue to develop their skills and abilities. Each stage, from infancy through middle years to adolescence, lays the foundation for more complex development. Plans and interventions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare should be based on a clear assessment of the child's developmental progress and the difficulties the child may be experiencing. Planned action should also be timely and appropriate for the child's age and stage of development.

Focused on outcomes for children

When working directly with a child, any plan developed for the child and their family or carer should be based on an assessment of the child's developmental needs and the parents/carers' capacity to respond to these needs within their family and environmental context. This plan should set out the planned outcomes for each child, progress against these should be regularly reviewed and the actual outcomes should be recorded.

The purpose of all interventions should be to achieve the best possible outcomes for each child recognising each is unique. These outcomes should contribute to the key outcomes set out for all children set out in the Children Act 2004:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

Holistic in approach

Having a holistic approach means having an understanding of a child within the context of the child's family (parents or carers and the wider family) and of the educational setting, community and culture in which he or she is growing up. The interaction between the developmental needs of children, the capacities of parents or carers to respond appropriately to those needs and the impact of wider family and environmental factors on children and on parenting capacity requires careful exploration during an assessment.

The ultimate aim is to understand the child's developmental needs and the capacity of the parents or carers to meet them and to provide appropriate services to the child and to the family which respond to those needs. The analysis of the child's situation will inform planning and action in order to secure the best outcomes for the child, and will inform the subsequent review of the effectiveness of actions taken and services provided. The child's context will be even more complex when they are living away from home and looked after by adults who do not have parental responsibility for them.

Ensuring equality of opportunity

Equality of opportunity means that all children have the opportunity to achieve the best possible developmental outcomes, regardless of their gender, ability, race, ethnicity, sexuality, circumstances or age. Some vulnerable children may have been particularly disadvantaged in their access to important opportunities and their health and educational needs will require particular attention in order to optimise their current welfare as well as their long-term outcomes into adulthood.

Involving of children and families

In the process of finding out what is happening to a child it is important to listen to the child, develop a therapeutic relationship with the child and through this gain an understanding of his or her wishes and feelings. The importance of developing a co-operative working relationship is emphasised, so that parents or carers feel respected and informed, they believe agency staff are being open and honest with them, and in turn they are confident about providing vital information about their child, themselves and their circumstances. The consent of children, young people and their parents or carers, where appropriate, should be obtained when sharing information unless to do so would place the child at risk of suffering Significant Harm. Similarly, decisions should also be made with their agreement, whenever possible, unless to do so would place the child at risk of suffering Significant Harm. See also Information Sharing and Confidentiality Procedure.

Building on strengths as well as identifying difficulties

Identifying both strengths (including resilience and protective factors) and difficulties (including vulnerabilities and risk factors) within the child, his or her family and the context in which they are living is important, as is considering how these factors are having an impact on the child's health and development. Too often it has been found that a deficit model of working with families predominates in practice, and ignores crucial areas of success and effectiveness within the family on which to base interventions.

Working with a child or family's strengths becomes an important part of a plan to resolve difficulties.

Integrated in approach

From birth, there will be a variety of different agencies and services in the community involved with children and their development, particularly in relation to their health and education. Multi and inter-agency work to safeguard and promote children's welfare starts as soon as it has been identified that the child or the family members have additional needs requiring support/services beyond universal services, not just when there are questions about possible harm.

A continuing process not an event

Understanding what is happening to a vulnerable child within the context of his or her family and the local community, and taking appropriate action are continuing and interactive processes and not single events. Assessment should continue throughout a period of intervention, and intervention may start at the beginning of an assessment.

Providing and reviewing services

Action and services should be provided according to the identified needs of the child and family in parallel with assessment where necessary. It is not necessary to await completion of the assessment process. Immediate and practical needs should be addressed alongside more complex and longer term ones. The impact of service provision on a child's developmental progress should be reviewed at regular intervals.

Informed by evidence

Effective practice with children and families requires sound professional judgements which are underpinned by a rigorous evidence base, and draw on the practitioners' knowledge and experience. Decisions based on these judgements should be kept under review, and take full account of any new information obtained during the course of work with the child and family.

The school will foster an ongoing culture of vigilance to maintain a safer environment for all pupils by:

- Ensuring that senior members of staff have undertaken the A 'Safer Recruitment' course and are committed to working to the guidelines recommended.
- Checking the suitability of all prospective staff and volunteers during the recruitment process by checking the Independent Safeguarding Authority register of people cleared to work with children as well as carrying out a Criminal Records Bureau check.

- Formulating an induction policy and programme for new staff and volunteers with the emphasis on Safeguarding Children.
- Ensuring that the Designated Senior Teacher for Child Protection has undergone suitable training for their role and that this training is refreshed every 2 years.
- Arranging whole school staff training in Child Protection every 3 years. This training to include all staff e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, administration and caretaking staff; and anyone else who has regular contact with the pupils.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused and by co-operating with other professionals (as recommended by 'Working Together'.) to carry out our responsibilities outlined in any Child protection Plan issued at a Child Protection Case Conference.
- Obtaining written notification from any agency, or third party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school or college that the school or college would otherwise perform.
- Establishing a safer environment in which children can learn and develop.

Establishing a safer Environment.

The school will :

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHCE and Computing curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise risks and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the Designated Senior Teacher responsible for child protection and their role in helping staff to safeguard pupils.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify the Integrated Front Door (IFD) if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is the subject of a child protection plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children to enable appropriate support to be targeted effectively e.g. 'Team Around the Family' meetings.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations:

0151 666 5525 / 07342058612

anneking1@wirral.gov.uk

kerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk

safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk

The school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Wirral Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services and the Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that, when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within 2 weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved
- After 20 days absence if a child has moved and the new school is unknown the school will post details on the 'Pupil to Pupil' register.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the nominated Governor for Child Protection and the Designated Senior Teacher for Child Protection.

Appendices

- 1. Guidance on Child Protection matters**
- 2. Telephone numbers for referral**
- 3. Useful telephone numbers**
- 4. Allegations against staff guidance**
- 5. Flowcharts**
- 6. Further information and training**

Appendix 1

Guidance on 'Whether this is a Child Protection Matter'

If staff have significant concerns about any child they should make them known to the school's Designated or Deputy Designated Child Protection Teachers.

These concerns may include:

Physical abuse:

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse:

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect:

Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

Is this a child with additional needs where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? A Team Around the Family (TAF) arrangement should be put in place:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the SENCo, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for a TAF to be completed.

Is this child in need? s17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.
- their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- they are disabled.

Is this a child protection matter? s47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm.
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- serious health problems.

If this is a child in need, discuss the issues with the designated child protection teacher and parents. Obtain their consent for referral to First Response (see below) or any other agency.

If this is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the designated teacher and will need to be referred to IFD by the school as soon as possible.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under S.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration.

Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

All staff will have training on all the above issues on induction to school and every 3 years via a Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership validated basic 'Safeguarding Children' course.

If there is any doubt; [IFD](#) should be called on 0151 606 2008 and advice can be given.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation.

You can never guarantee confidentiality to a child as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

"There are some secrets I can't keep; but I promise that if someone is hurting or frightening you I will help keep you safe. I cannot do that on my own and will need to talk to about it"

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, included social service departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible

consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared.

The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the County Legal Services Department.

Talking to and listening to children

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- be accessible and receptive;
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace;
- take what is said seriously;
- reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- make a careful record of what was said.

You should NEVER:

- take photographs or examine an injury;
- investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions;
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- speculate or accuse anybody;
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the persons allegedly involved;
- forget to record what you have been told;
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, you may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

Record keeping*

Well kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- state who was present, time, date and place;
- use the child's words wherever possible;
- be factual/state exactly what was said;
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation;
- be written in ink and signed by the recorder;

*The school intends to move from a paper-based system to an electronic recording system in the academic year 2021-22

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

The Designated Child Protection Teacher or their deputy will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher or head of year to attend the subsequent core group meetings.

Are You Concerned about a Child?

In these times of less contact, we must all be more vigilant to keep children safe

If you see or hear something that worries you, you must report your concerns

To report a child safeguarding concern call Wirral Children's Services on 0151 6062008

In an emergency always dial 999



the more you see and say
the more we can help and protect

Appendix 3

Other useful contacts

Initial consultations will be dealt with in the first instance by **Anne King, Local Authority Designated Officer**. Anne can be contacted on 0151 666 5525 and

Mobile 07342058612

Please ensure referrals are sent

to anneking1@wirral.gov.uk, kerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk and safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk

Appendix 4

Protecting yourself against allegations of abuse or [low level concerns](#) (pg 95 of link)

You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following sensible precautions can be taken when working alone with children:

- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally.
- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards.
- must not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses
- must not give pupils lifts home in your cars
- must not arrange to meet them outside of school hours
- must not chat to pupils on the social websites

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil even when the pupil is over the age of consent.

Any use of physical force or restraint against pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant physical restraint policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others parents will be informed.

Children will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment.

Allegations of abuse against a professional

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer should therefore be taken seriously.

If an allegation is received by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors the following should be considered

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children
- there are low level concerns about the conduct of a professions

Allegations of abuse made against staff, whether historical or contemporary, should be dealt with by the Headteacher; not the designated child protection teacher in cases where this role is not undertaken by the Head (if the allegation is against the Head then it should be dealt with by the Chair of Governors). The Head / Chair should contact the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 666 5525** to discuss the allegation.

This initial conversation will establish the validity of any allegation and if a referral is needed to CADT. If this is the case a strategy meeting will be called that the Head / Chair should attend.

The decision of the strategy meeting could be:

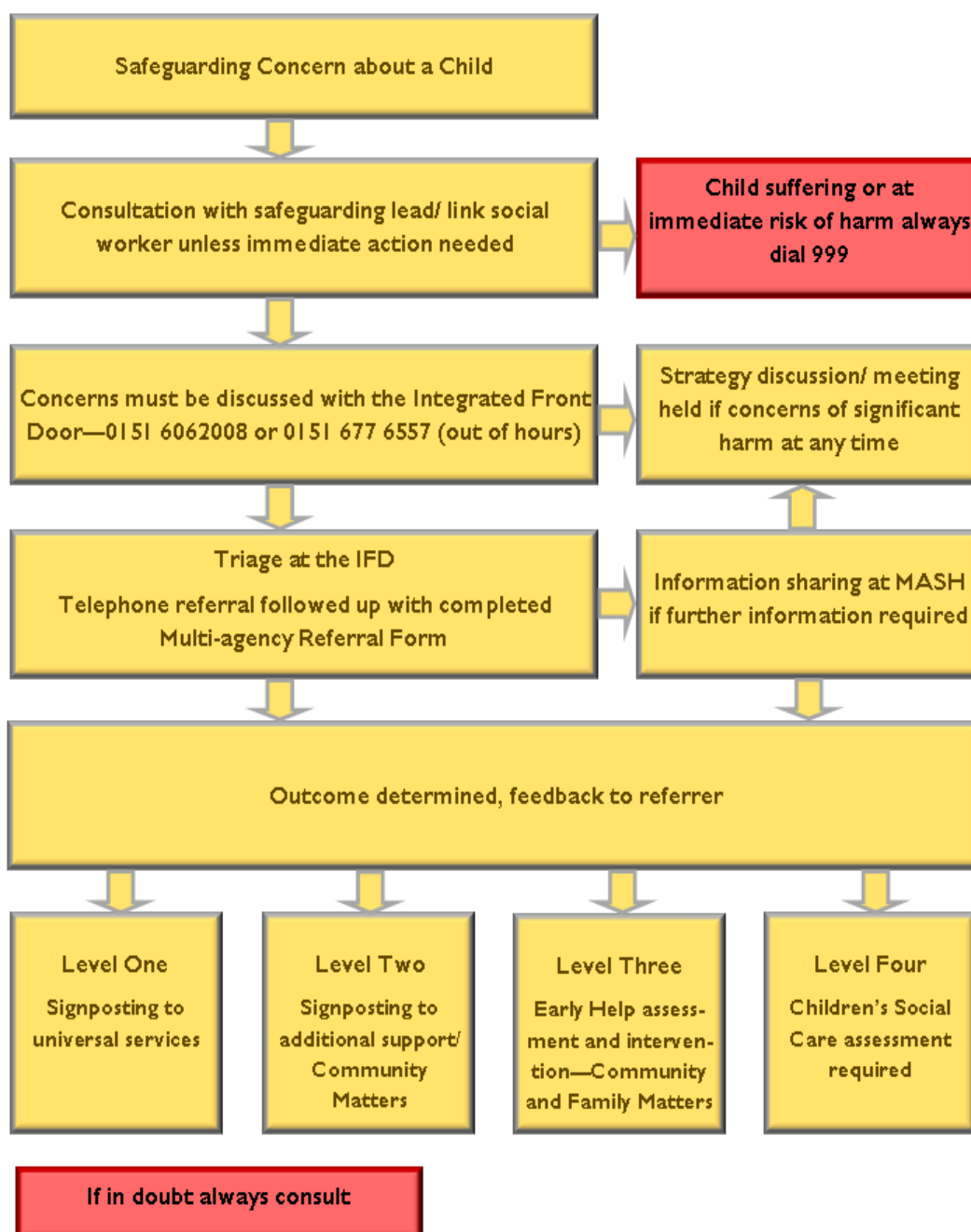
- investigation by children's social care
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the Schools Senior HR advisor

The fact that a member of staff offers to resign should not prevent the allegation procedure reaching a conclusion.

Appendix 5



Actions to take when there are safeguarding concerns about a child



Use these for additional information:

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/7-minute-briefings/>

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/safeguarding-e-learning/>