

One minute guide

Safeguarding Children, April 2020

Safeguarding children means protecting them from anything that might affect their normal health and development, and ensuring that they have good, safe care.

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or failing to protect them from harm.

Children are often abused by people they know

Children are often abused in their homes or places they go to

Children are abused less often by strangers

Abuse can take place online

Children may be abused by adults or other children

What can child abuse look like?

Type of Abuse	What Does This Include?	Possible Indicators
Physical Abuse	Causing physical harm to a child such as hitting, kicking, shaking, poisoning, burning	Injuries such as bruises, burns, broken bones, no acceptable explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened, frequent injuries, flinching when a particular person comes near to them, female genital mutilation
Sexual Abuse	Forcing or persuading a child to take part in sexual activities whether the child is aware of what is happening. They could be activities that involve contact e.g. rape and touching, or non-contact e.g. involving children in looking at sexual images or watching sexual activity. It can also take place online	Withdrawn, nightmares, bed-wetting, harming themselves including using alcohol and drugs, reluctance to be alone with a particular person, knowledge of sexual language and behaviour that would not be expected at their age, infections, pregnancy, behaviour such as being distant, upset or angry after using the internet
Exploitation	Sexual exploitation, which is a form of sexual abuse where they are given things like gifts, drugs, money and affection in exchange for performing sexual activities. They are often tricked into believing they	Unhealthy and inappropriate sexual behaviour, secretive, having money and other items, including mobile phones, that they can't or won't explain,

	<p>are in a loving and consensual relationship – this is known as grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they are being abused.</p> <p>Wider exploitation involves children being victims of trafficking, labour exploitation and child criminal exploitation – a clear example if children being used to traffic drugs and money in ‘county lines’ drug trafficking.</p>	<p>disappearing for long periods, infections, pregnancy.</p> <p>A child subject to threats, blackmail, or violence, being forced to commit crimes, being arrested, not being able to leave a gang or perceived social group, physical harm or sexual abuse, their safety/their family’s safety threatened, abusing drugs or other substances, money, gifts or possessions unexplained and not accounted for.</p>
Neglect	<p>Continually failing to meet a child’s basic needs such as providing adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision or medical care, failing to protect a child from harm or danger. It can also occur during pregnancy due to the mother using drugs or alcohol</p>	<p>Smelly, dirty, hungry, inappropriate clothing, untreated nappy rash, sores, untreated injuries, no heating, tiredness, difficulties concentrating, poor language skills, left alone</p>
Emotional Abuse	<p>Continual emotional mistreatment which influences the child’s emotional development e.g. humiliation, criticism, threats, bullying, pushing a child too hard or, on the other hand, limiting their learning and social interaction, exposing them to domestic violence and abuse, never saying anything kind or expressing positive feelings, expecting too much for age and level of development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of abuse, but it may occur alone</p>	<p>Lack of confidence, low self-esteem, withdrawn, anxious, clingy, seeking attention, depression, self-harm, difficulties with making and maintaining relationships, extreme outbursts, lacking in social skills, struggling to deal with their emotions</p>

Anything you notice can help a child at risk. We all have a role to play in protecting children and young people from child abuse and neglect. Many people do not act because they’re worried about being wrong. You don’t have to be certain; if you’re concerned a child is being abused or their safety is at risk, speak to someone.

Following these simple steps and reporting your concerns to your local council could provide the missing piece of information that is needed to keep a child safe.

Child abuse. If you think it, report it.

Children’s Social Care: Telephone: 024 76788555

Or outside of office hours to the Emergency Duty Team: 024 76832222

(You may not speak to a social worker; a call handler may take details. Please give all the information you can e.g. location, estimated age of child, what you saw, who was there etc. Please note this may mean that your call takes longer to ensure as much information as possible is obtained.)

If a child is at risk of significant harm e.g. very young children being left alone/you’ve witnessed severe physical chastisement, contact the police on 999 immediately