

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

Families have a right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment.

All schools have a legal duty to work with other agencies, for example social care and the police, to safeguard children's welfare.

This leaflet will explain to you what that means in practice. It also tells you where you can get more information or help.

Your school has a senior member of staff who is responsible for child protection matters affecting pupils at the school (the 'designated senior person for child protection').

It also has procedures which explain how your school deals with child protection concerns, plus other safeguarding policies including managing allegations or concerns about the behaviour of members of staff.

You can ask for copies of these procedures from the school office.



Schools must follow:

- the law and guidance from the Department for Education
- the Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures
- their own safeguarding policies

If the school is worried about whether a pupil is suffering harm, they must refer this on to a social worker.

The school will normally let the pupil's parent(s) or carer(s) know when they do this but they should not contact them if they think that this could put a child or young person at increased risk of harm. They will usually take advice from social workers about when to speak to parents.

When a school refers a child protection concern to a social worker, they must share all relevant information about the pupil.

The Data Protection Act allows schools to share personal information with other agencies when there are child protection concerns about a child or young person.

What happens if a social worker is involved.....

The social work manager, usually in consultation with other agencies, will decide what should happen next. This should happen within 24 hours of receiving the referral.

They may decide that no further action is needed by them but suggest that the school or other agencies do an assessment using the Common Assessment Framework or provide services to support the child.

They may decide that the referral needs looking into further. What action is taken will depend on the circumstances.

Any of the following may be appropriate:

- An initial assessment
- Child protection enquiries. These include assessing the risks to the child, based upon research, information shared and talking to those concerned
- If the referral is about an allegation against a member of school staff, a discussion will take place between the school and the local authority to decide what should happen next. This might mean a referral to social workers and/or the police
- They will contact you to let you know what is happening as soon as possible.

- Look at your school's safeguarding policy and child protection procedures
- Look at the Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures on the internet at: www.dorsettschb.co.uk
- Look at the Common Assessment Framework guidance at: <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/caf>
- Look at Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2010) at: <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/>
- Look at Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 at: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002>
- Look at the Government guidance "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (2007) at: <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/>
- Look at the Government guidance "What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused" (2006) at: <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/>
- Children and young people can contact Childline for free 24-hour telephone support on 0800 1111 or at www.childline.org.uk

If you have a concern about a child, please tell somebody who can help.

Dorset Children's Services Social Care

Bridport:	01308 422234
Christchurch:	01202 474106
Dorchester:	01305 221450
Ferndown:	01202 877445
North Dorset:	01258 472652
Purbeck:	01929 553456
Weymouth & Portland:	01305 760139
Out of Hours:	01202 657279

Dorset Police:

Emergency:	999
Non-Emergency:	01202 222222



This leaflet is produced by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please contact the DSCB on telephone 01305 221196 or email at info@dorsettschb.co.uk

To access this and more information online, please visit our website at: www.dorsettschb.co.uk

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Dorset Safeguarding Children Board

Child protection and your school



Information for parents and young people

"Safeguarding is everybody's business"