

Guidance On Responding To A Child

Disclosing Abuse

This document should be used by teachers as advice for how to deal with a child disclosing sensitive information to them.



It is important that all teachers are familiar with the child protection policy within that school and that they know who the child protection officer is so that any concerns they may have can be dealt with in the correct fashion.

The following list should be used as advice for teachers in the event that a child discloses information relating to abuse that they may be suffering to them:

- **Stay calm**
- **Listen carefully** to what is said
- **Do not promise to keep secrets** – find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others. *NB: If the child is Fraser/Gillick competent (i.e. they have a good understanding of the situation and are intelligent enough to deal with the situation on their own.) then staff members should not inform parents or guardians if the young person doesn't comply.*
- **Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace**
- **Only ask questions for clarification purposes** – at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- **Reassure** the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- **Tell them what you will do next** and with whom the information will be shared
- **Record in writing what was said** using the child's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

In the case that a child or adult discloses any information regarding abuse that they may have suffered, the information should be passed onto the school's Child Protection Officer. If the Child Protection Officer is not available, any urgent concerns should be passed on to the relevant social services authority or the Police.