Procedure for recording/reporting alleged abuse

If a child comes to me (or my assistant) with a case of alleged abuse / harm it is recorded as follows. I will not prompt the child or put words into their mouth but will sit and listen to what they have to say. After they have told me I will record the following

* the date and time of the observation or disclosure
* the name, age and address of the child
* exact words spoken by the child
* any observation I have made (such as any physical marks on the child or behavioural symptoms of the child)
* The name of the person to whom the concern was reported with date and time
* The names of any other persons present at the time

All records will be signed and dated and kept in a secure, confidential file.

After the record has been made, I will attempt to seek an explanation from the parents for an injury or sudden change in the child’s behaviour. However, there may be certain circumstances when this will not be appropriate, for example in the case of sexual abuse, if the injuries or other signs are very obviously a sign of abuse, or if the child has told me that a parent is harming them.

I will then report any suspicious incidents or accidents to the duty social worker without delay.

A referral needs to be made to Social Services as soon as a problem, suspicion or concern about a child becomes apparent, and at least within 24 hours. I should receive feedback within 10 days of the referral.

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