

## Appendix C - What to do when a child discloses abuse or neglect

Where a young person discloses abuse or neglect, the following sequence of events should be adhered to:

### Create a safe environment

**Create a safe environment by offering** the child a private and safe place if possible. Stay calm and reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame. Tell the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you.



### Listen

**Listen** to what the child has to say and take them seriously; reassure the child but advise that you cannot promise to keep a secret. Do not make promises you cannot keep. If there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, assistance should be called for. Tell the child what you are going to do next after the disclosure. Depending on circumstances the child may then return to class or be offered time out of class with support from the DSL.



### Talking to the child

**When talking to the child**, do not interview the child and keep questions to a minimum. Do not display shock or disbelief. Encourage the child to use his/her own words and do not ask leading questions, interrupt their dialogue, or make assumptions which might give particular answers. Do not repeat the disclosure over and over.



### Record

**Record** in detail the circumstances and timings of the disclosure including the nature and extent of any injuries, explanations given by the child and the action taken (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings), within 24 hours of the disclosure. Record the child's name, address and date of birth along with details of the child's emotional state on CPOMS.



### Do not take responsibility

- Only tell those people that it is necessary to inform.
- Do not try to investigate the allegation yourself.
- Immediately consult our Designated Safeguarding Lead so that any appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the information and decide on the next steps.
- Do not approach or inform the alleged abuser.