

PARENT COMMUNICATION · ALL GRADES

Safeguarding Concern

From a family — response framework

Important context

This is NOT a substitute for your school's safeguarding training, your DSL, or local safeguarding procedures. This is a SUPPLEMENT — practical phrasing and steps for the first conversation when a parent comes to you. If you have ANY uncertainty about a safeguarding concern, go to your DSL immediately. They are trained for this. You are not the safeguarding lead. You are the first person someone trusted enough to tell. What matters most: take it seriously, don't make assumptions, escalate appropriately.

If a parent starts to disclose

<p>Don't shut it down</p> <p>If a parent starts saying something serious, don't redirect to a meeting time. They've nerved themselves up. Listen now.</p>	<p>Find a private space</p> <p>If you're in the middle of the corridor, move. 'Let me come into my classroom for a minute. I want to hear this properly.'</p>
<p>Listen more than you speak</p> <p>Let them tell you. Don't interrupt with questions. Let them finish. Take it seriously.</p>	<p>Don't promise confidentiality</p> <p>DON'T say 'I won't tell anyone.' If they tell you something significant, you have to share with the DSL. Be honest about that.</p>
<p>Don't try to investigate</p> <p>Don't ask 'why?' or 'when did this start?' or 'who did it?' Your job is to receive and refer — not to investigate.</p>	<p>Don't react visibly</p> <p>Even if you're shocked. Even if you're angry. Stay calm. Disclosure can stop if the listener overreacts.</p>

What to say / what not to say



Try	Avoid
Thank you for telling me. That took courage.	Are you sure?
I'm so sorry this is happening.	Why didn't you tell us sooner?
I want to make sure we get the right help.	I'll handle this for you.
I have to share this with our safeguarding lead.	I won't tell anyone.
You did the right thing telling me.	Don't worry about it.
What would help right now?	Have you tried...?

What to do immediately after

<p>Go straight to the DSL</p> <p>Same day. As soon as the conversation ends. If your DSL isn't in, find the deputy DSL. If neither, find any senior leader.</p>	<p>Write it down</p> <p>Use your school's safeguarding form. Verbatim quotes if possible. Date, time, who was present, what was said. Sign and date.</p>
<p>Don't talk about it elsewhere</p> <p>Not in the staff room. Not at home. The DSL decides what gets shared and with whom.</p>	<p>Don't follow up with the family yourself</p> <p>Once the DSL has it, they (or external agencies) lead. Your role is to be the supportive class teacher, not the investigator.</p>
<p>Look after yourself</p> <p>Hearing disclosures is heavy. Talk to your DSL about your own wellbeing. Use any staff support available.</p>	

When the concern is about another child / family

Sometimes parents share concerns about ANOTHER family. 'I think Sofia at home is being smacked.' 'Ben told my child his dad hits his mum.' The response is the same:

- Listen. Don't interrupt with questions.
- Don't promise confidentiality.
- Thank them for sharing.
- Tell them you'll pass it to the safeguarding lead, who will decide what to do.
- Don't gossip. Don't share with other staff.
- Don't approach the family in question.
- Pass to DSL same day. Don't underestimate concerns parents share about other families. They often see things at the school gate, in WhatsApp groups, in informal contact that staff never see.

When the concern is about staff



If a parent raises concern about a member of staff — an allegation, a worry, a 'something a teacher said' — this is a Section 1 (KCSiE) matter. • DO NOT promise to keep it quiet. • DO NOT discuss with the staff member named. • DO NOT wait — this is same-day action. • Go to the Head Teacher (or Designated Officer if it's the Head). • Write down exactly what was said. This is one of the most important things to get right. Allegations against staff have specific procedures (LADO referrals, etc.). The class teacher's job is to receive, document, and pass up — same day.

What you can and can't do

YOU CAN: • Listen with care • Document accurately • Reassure that you take it seriously • Pass to the right people • Support the child in your class
YOU CAN'T: • Promise outcomes • Decide what's serious enough • Investigate • Keep secrets • Comment on outcomes
Doing your job well in safeguarding usually means doing LESS than you instinctively want to. Receive, document, pass on. Trust the system. Care for the child in front of you.

