

Safeguarding Children and Young People

The Chestnuts Surgery has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Keeping children and young people safe, by 'safeguarding' them means:

- Protecting children from bad treatment
- Making sure that a child's health or development is not impaired
- Making sure that children are growing up in a safe environment that provides effective care
- Taking action to help all children to have the best chances in life

Who is a vulnerable child or young person?

A child or young person is someone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Child protection is part of safeguarding, which describes the activity that is undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Children who are defined as being 'in need' are those who are vulnerable and do not have a satisfactory level of health or development, or that their health or development will be impaired without the help and support of services. The term 'children in need' also describes children who are disabled.

What is abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of bad treatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting. Abuse can also occur online.

The abuse could be carried out by someone they know, or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Types of abuse

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which involves causing physical harm to a child. This includes (but is not limited to) hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricated the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve making a child feel worthless, silencing a child, imposing inappropriate expectations on a child, overprotecting a child in a way that limits their development, bullying (including cyber bullying), causing fear, or exploiting a child.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of abuse of a child, although it can also take place on its own.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative assault, however sexual abuse also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging

children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse can be carried out by adult men or women, and also by other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It can take place during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, make sure a child has appropriate supervision, make sure a child has access to appropriate medical care or treatment, or make sure a child's basic emotional needs are being met.

How do I report abuse?

for Children or Young People:

Access and Assessment Team on 01482 448 879 during normal office hours

Emergency duty team on 01482 300 304 out of normal office hours

If you think the abuse is also a crime:

If you think a crime has been committed call 999, otherwise call your local police station (your telephone directory will have relevant numbers). The police can also offer advice regarding safety at home and in the community and may refer people who have experienced violence, abuse or crimes to the Victim Support helpline – 0845 303 0900. Or you can call the Police protection unit on – 0845 125 35 45

Care Quality Commission

Information and advice for those concerned about a health or social care service – 03000 616161.