

Child Protection Policy

It is vital that all people who work with children, particularly infants and young children, should be alert for the signs of child abuse. Some of the earliest signs of physical ill-treatment of children are to be found in facial bruising and damage to and around the mouth. Therefore, it is essential that all team members play a responsible part in recording and reporting potential danger to children.

Where a child is found with a physical injury, however minor, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Could the injury have been caused accidentally? If so, how?
- If an explanation for an injury is given, does it fit the facts as you find them?
- If there has been a delay on the part of the parents in seeking dental care, are there good reasons for this?
- If the explanation of the cause is consistent with the injury, is this cause itself within normal acceptable limits of behaviour?

It should also be remembered that children are also subject to other forms of abuse besides physical, and these include sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Warning signs of these kinds of abuse may not come from a physical injury and require observations of:

- The nature of the relationship between parent and child
- The child's reaction to other people
- The child's reaction to any medical or dental examination
- The general demeanour of the child
- Any comments made by the child and/or parent that give concern

Practice Child Protection Policy Statement

Our dental practice is committed to protect children from harm. Our dental team accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

To safeguard children:

- We adopt child protection guidelines through procedures and have a code of conduct for the dental team
- We will make staff and patients aware that we take child protection seriously
- We will respond to concerns about the welfare of children
- We will share information about concerns with agencies who need to know
- We will follow the procedures for staff recruitment and selection carefully
- We will ensure all staff have access to training and support
- We will review our policy at regular intervals

To report any concerns with regards to child welfare please speak to the Practice Owner (or Practice Manager if owner unavailable) in the first instance.

Norfolk County Council Children's Services

Telephone: 0344 800 8020 (Ask for 'Children's Advice and Duty Service')