



# Example and guidance for Record of Concern

**Date of next review:** September 2024

**Author:** HCC Child Protection School Liaison Service

Please ensure that you fully read this guidance to confirm that key information and details are incorporated into your settings' arrangements.

This guidance has been provided as a recommended template in line with KCSIE (2023) but the overall quality assurance of the final document is the responsibility of the DSL/SLT/GB. Settings should therefore amend/add/remove information to reflect additional or alternative arrangements they have in place.

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# 1. Introduction, Background and Statutory Framework

## Introduction

The reason for this guidance and exemplar is both as a direct request by some schools to have clarification as to what is considered good practice and meets legal requirements when recording concerns.

## Background

Safeguarding records have been highlighted within individual management or Safeguarding Practice Reviews (previously called Serious Case Reviews) undertaken in Hertfordshire and nationally, particularly, the need for robust procedures for the recording, sharing and transfer of information within and between educational establishments.

For some children a one-off serious incident or concern may occur, and staff will have no doubt that this must be immediately reported and recorded. More often however, it is the accumulation of a number of small incidents, events or observations, that can provide the evidence of harm being caused to a child. Records should be factually accurate, clear, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should support monitoring, risk assessment and planning for children and young people, enabling informed and timely Requests for Support to be made when necessary. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of **all** staff working within a school.

## Statutory Framework Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023:

- *No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. (p. 3)*
- *All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.*

*Records should include:*

- *a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern*
- *details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and*
- *a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.*

*If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). (p. 68 & 69)*

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Examples of poor practice include:

- Failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- Poor record keeping
- Failing to listen to the views of the child
- Failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- Not sharing information or sharing too slowly
- A lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action

## 2. The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Ensure all staff members know when and how to record concerns about a child's welfare, however small or apparently insignificant.

Ensure all staff know where to locate key documents such as record of concern forms/have access to an electronic recording system, have access to Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023), the school/setting's code of conduct, Child Protection Policy, What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015). For Early Years settings, all staff should know where to locate the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2023), Section 3 - Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

When a record of concern form is passed to the DSL or there is a completed electronic record, it is important that the DSL checks that this is sufficiently detailed and has been signed and dated by the staff member reporting the concern

The DSL needs to consider the safety and wellbeing of the child and whether the concern raised indicates emerging or unmet needs for the child. The DSL needs to make a professional judgement about how the concern should be responded to. The DSL must record the action taken in response to every record of concern form, regardless of outcome. The level of detail of this record will clearly depend on the nature and seriousness of the concern but may include:

- Requests to staff for monitoring specific aspects of the child/young person's presentation, behaviour, attendance, etc. Be specific in your recording- give timescales /frequency.
- Discussions and telephone calls, with colleagues, children/young people and parents, along with a record of full names and dates
- Contact with the Consultation Hub - with a record of who was consulted (full name and job title) and dates consulted
- Letters sent and received
- Recording the outcomes of any responses or action the DSL took, with dates
- Updating the chronology
- Updating the child/young person's file as new documents are produced or received
- Filing all copies of Requests for Support or letters sent
- Update the front sheet, if necessary
- Cross-reference to files for other children/young people within the family

## 3. Record of Concerns

A standard 'Record of Concern' form must be used for all staff, irrespective of their role in school; some guidance about completion is strongly recommended. A proforma for the record of concern form can be found on the Child Protection area of the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning.

Blank copies of the Record of Concern form must be easily accessible to all staff, including supply, and depending on the size and type of school, should be available in a range of places.

It is acknowledged that many schools employ a range of staff who hold specific pastoral care responsibilities and who may have their own systems for recording their ongoing work with children and their families e.g., diaries/notebooks. Where possible this should be avoided, but if necessary, the DSLs should be aware of these systems and establish processes for sharing information. School staff must be advised that they must take care to ensure that no sensitive material is communicated by insecure means. This would include email, but also notes left for colleagues. In all cases where specific safeguarding concerns arise, staff must be aware of their responsibility to complete the school's formal record of concern form.

KCSiE, 2023 is clear that staff should “*immediately*” report any concerns about a child’s welfare to the setting’s Designated Safeguarding Lead or (or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). **In some circumstances this may mean initially passing the information on verbally but always to be followed by a completed Record of Concern form as soon as soon as possible; best practice would be that the concern is formally recorded the same day as information is verbally shared to ensure that no details are forgotten.**

Records relating to work with the child and their family should use clear, straightforward language, be concise and be accurate not only in fact, but also in differentiating between opinion, judgement and hypothesis. Staff should be mindful of the need to record information in an objective and professional manner, as it may be shared with the child, parents and other agencies, as part of an investigation or inquiry. Additionally, safeguarding records may be required for disclosure in court proceedings.

The Record of Concerns proforma comes in 3 double-sided pages:

1. **Record of Concern**

Page 1 completed by staff member raising concern

Page 2 completed by DSL (or a deputy) to quality assure content of concern

2. **Body map** (optional)

Page 1 and 2 to be completed by staff member raising concern if a body map is required

3. **Record of Concern Action form**

Page 1 and 2 to be completed by DSL (or a deputy) responding to the Record of Concern raised.

This must be attached to the original concern before filing.

#### 4. Why is all of this important?

As mentioned above and per paragraph 70 of KCSiE, 2023:

*It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children’s welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Further information about serious case reviews can be found in Chapter four of Working Together to Safeguard Children. Examples of poor practice include:*

- *failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect*
- *poor record keeping*
- *failing to listen to the views of the child*
- *failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve*
- *not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies*
- *sharing information too slowly, and*
- *a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action*

## 5. Guidance on completing a Record of Concern and Actions

Information Required	Enter Information Here
Time & date of incident	<i>Those responsible for safeguarding children must act in a timely way as delay exposes children to further abuse and neglect.</i>
Child's full name	<i>Always use the child's full name and any aliases with correct spelling.</i>
Child's date of birth	<i>Need full DOB, this is often needed by other agencies to trace records.</i>
Child's gender	<i>If child identifies as a gender different to the one they were born with, note this here.</i>
Child's class/tutor group/form group	
Reporter's name and position in the school (if visitor also add contact details)	<i>Name needs to be in full. Contact details (if not a member of school staff, e.g. visitor or contractor)</i>
<p>Nature of concern/disclosure</p> <p><i>In <u>factual</u> terms include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Location when child disclosed</i></li> <li>• <i>Who else was present</i></li> <li>• <i>What you saw</i></li> <li>• <i>The child's words /actions</i></li> <li>• <i>Your response/ actions (inc. any open-ended questions to clarify)</i></li> <li>• <i>Observations of child's behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>Signs of injury or pain (if so, illustrate on body map)</i></li> <li>• <i>Other children or adults involved?</i></li> <li>• <i>Have there been previous similar concerns?</i></li> <li>• <i>Any <u>professional</u> views to add</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Recorded by the person/s to whom the disclosure is made or the person who has witnessed or suspects abuse and neglect. This includes permanent or temporary staff, volunteers, external contactors, clubs using the school and visitors to the school and parents.</i></p> <p><i>In factual terms – what did the child say? How are they feeling? Any comments about their behaviour? Are there any obvious signs of injuries or pain? (if so, use body map and attach) Are any other children or adults involved? Clarify using open ended questions to clarify, who, what, when and how etc</i></p> <p><i>Do not be afraid to talk and listen to a CYP, you can clarify with a child what they are telling you. The more information the better as the process to support and protect child relies on firm, grounded information.</i></p> <p><i>Children can disclose in stages and so this may be their first attempt and if ignored an opportunity could be lost.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Always be 'professionally curious'</i></p> <p><i>Your <u>professional view</u>, context of concern or disclosure. You may know of the CYP well and their family, friends' peers professionally or personally. You may live in the area and have local community information, gossip from what people have said, if so, record this as it is e.g. 'hearsay'.</i></p> <p><i>Your <u>professional views</u> on what you know about the CYP e.g. Any previous concerns? How are they doing in school? How do they get on with others, staff their peers, any comments on their presentation, their personal circumstances (such as health, development and whether they have any additional needs), their identity, race, religion and/or if known, their social relationships with their family, friend and wider networks?</i></p> <p><i>factual account of what you have said to CYP and agreed to do?</i></p> <p><i>This is taking concerns seriously listening and talking to the CYP and being honest and open with them about what your role is e.g. to pass on if child presents as needing support or protection. Apply all the rules of talking and listening to children as set out in schools handbook that accompanies your stage one statutory training.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recognise – Respond – Record – Report</b></p> <p><i>If you are concerned say something. This may be a little part of a puzzle that might contribute to other information on records both at the school and on other held by other agencies.</i></p>
Name and position of person you are passing this information to	<i>You must follow child protection procedures in your school there is a process which requires you to pass on to your headteacher/DSL or deputies.</i>
Time and date form completed	<i>Regulators such as Ofsted scrutinise children's records and expect data controllers to audit children files and evidence that there is no time delay and the safety of children is prioritised.</i>
Reporter's (your) Signature	<i>Name needs to be in full and always be signed. Contact details (if not a member of school staff, e.g. contractor)</i>

## Record of Concern Action form

### Actions / Request for Support and rationale

For completion by DSL / DDSL

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<p>(D)DSL's immediate response and actions taken</p> <p><i>Include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any further information gathering</li> <li>• Speaking to the named CYP or others</li> <li>• Has any immediate risk assessment been carried out, and if so, what?</li> </ul>	<p><i>SLT have very specific safeguarding roles for safeguarding including in this making sure that there is always some available to respond to concerns raised about CYP in the school. Include in this section sharing and gathering information, verification, speaking to child/ren, parents or carers and gauging their response. This may also include undertaking a professional consultation. Has any immediate risk assessment been identified or carried out?</i></p>
<p>Information shared with Parents / carers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date/time</li> <li>• Are they aware of school's concerns / actions carried out to support / safeguard CYP?</li> <li>• <b>Parent/carer's response</b></li> <li>• Do you have consent for this? If not rationale for not sharing information?</li> </ul>	<p><i>If not, why? The only time you would not be speaking to a parent is if you believe that this would place the CYP at risk. Therefore you should always work openly and honestly with parents and carers and although at times this is difficult in the longer term the outcomes for CYP is much improved for all parties. Consider that we are responsible for safeguarding and within this required to 'promote the welfare' of CYP. This means that working at this level with CYP and their families is primarily early help and support.</i></p> <p><i>If parents are not informed prior to a Request for Support then a clear rationale for not informing needs to be on the Request for Support form but could also be in this section. It is imperative that work is done <u>with</u> parents/carers and not done to them, hence the importance for open and communicative interactions with parents/carers throughout.</i></p> <p><i>The only reasons not to share information with parents are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm through this action</li> <li>• There would be an impact on a criminal investigation</li> <li>• The delay in being able to get in touch with parents before making the Request for Support would impact on the immediate safety of the child</li> </ul>
<p>Feedback given to child [yes/no (why), date and time]</p>	<p><i>The child has trusted staff with this information, they need to be given an age and developmentally appropriate explanation for what may happen or is happening next.</i></p>

**Record of Concern Action form**  
**Actions / Request for Support and rationale**

For completion by DSL / DDSL

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**Request for Support made to Children's Services?**

1.  Yes, Which agency/service:  
 No

2. Rationale for actions and above decision:

*What level of intervention is required to safeguard and promote the CYP welfare? i.e. where does this level of need sit on the **Continuum of Need document**.*

*What other actions were considered? Why did you choose this action over the others considered?*

**If referring:**

3. Parental consent gained?

- Yes  
 No (*pick one from below and attach supporting evidence*)

The only reasons not to gain parental consent are when:

- The child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent  
 There would be an impact on a criminal investigation  
 A delay in making the Request for Support would impact on the immediate safety of the child

Feedback given to reporting staff member  <i>[yes/no and date and time]</i>	<i>Basic outline of the plan for the child/ren, Consider 'need to know' and schools policy on confidentiality. However, this should never get in the way of sharing important information to staff that you have identified as a key part to monitoring and supporting a CYP.</i>
Feedback given to other staff members?  <i>[who, rationale for doing so, date and time]</i>	<i>Who, what, how and your rationale for this? Consent needed for this?</i>
Further Action Agreed	<i>Any further actions being taken which have not already been detailed above</i>
Full Name of DSL	
Time and date form completed	<i>It is imperative to provide a timeline for recognition, reporting and response to CYP needs. All services responsible for safeguarding children are required to act in a timely way as delay exposes children to further abuse and neglect. Regulators such as Ofsted scrutinise children's records and expect data controllers to audit children files and evidence that there is no time delay and the safety of children is prioritised.</i>
Signature of DSL	

## 6. Example of completed Record of Concern and Actions

Information Required	Enter Information Here
Time & date of incident	10:50am, 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023
Child's full name	Joe Bloggs
Child's date of birth	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018
Child's gender	Male
Child's class/tutor group/form group	Starfish class
Reporter's name and position in the school <i>(if visitor also add contact details)</i>	Mrs Mary Smith, class teacher
Nature of concern/disclosure <i>In <b>factual</b> terms include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Location when child disclosed</i></li> <li>• <i>Who else was present</i></li> <li>• <i>What you saw</i></li> <li>• <i>The child's words /actions</i></li> <li>• <i>Your response/ actions (inc. any open-ended questions to clarify)</i></li> <li>• <i>Observations of child's behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>Signs of injury or pain (if so, illustrate on body map)</i></li> <li>• <i>Other children or adults involved?</i></li> <li>• <i>Have there been previous similar concerns?</i></li> <li>• <i>Any <b>professional</b> views to add</i></li> </ul>	<p>JB has been fighting in class and swearing at other pupils. When he was calmer he talked about why he was so angry, he said his 'Mummy and Daddy' fight and swear all the time at home. I (Mrs Smith) asked him when they last did this/ he said last night and his older sister 'shouted back at Daddy' and daddy then lost his temper with her and smacked her, JB said he was scared and cried. On further prompting he said that his dad left the house and his mum took him and his baby sister to his granny's. JB said his daddy is sometimes a bad man, when asked what he meant he said the police take him away.</p> <p>I asked how his mummy was last night and today, he said "<i>mummy sad and cries a lot, she fell over last night when she drank some smelly drink with auntie Sue</i>" – he added "<i>mummy is scared of daddy</i>" too.</p> <p>JB has not long been in the school he only started in September so limited knowledge of him but he needs a lot of re assurance in class and I have had to ask mum on 2 occasions to bring in his winter coat as he has shown up without one. Mum looks distant and reluctant to talk with me, there is no eye contact and she looks very pale and underweight herself. His older brother is also on roll at the school and you think that there is an older sister at secondary school.</p> <p>JB generally gets on with other children but can be very aggressive and spiteful towards them, he also complains of being hungry a lot, I mentioned this to mum but she said they are a big family and is very greedy. Not much is known about the family yet, I have only seen dad once at the admission meeting, and he was very stand offish and showed little warmth towards JB. He also swore in front of JB e.g., he became impatient with JB and said, "<i>for F*** sake sit still</i>". I found him intimidating.</p> <p>I am also aware from a neighbour of the family that there is a lot of shouting and arguing and people coming and going to the flat they live in but I have not said anything until now as this has nothing to do with school.</p> <p>I reassured JB and told him if ever he was upset or was worried, he can come to me or Mrs Baker (class teaching assistant). Currently JB is now out of class as he was not ready or able to settle down to learn so we have arranged for him to have some time out with Mrs Baker.</p>
Name and position of person you are passing this information to	Jane Doe, Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead
Time and date form completed	11:30am, 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023
Reporter's (your) Signature	<i>Mary Smith</i>



## Record of Concern Action form Actions / Request for Support and rationale

For completion by DSL / DDSL

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<p>(D)DSL's immediate response and actions taken</p> <p><i>Include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Any further information gathering</i></li> <li>• <i>Speaking to the named CYP or others</i></li> <li>• <i>Has any immediate risk assessment been carried out, and if so, what?</i></li> </ul>	<p>DSL aware that the family are new to the area, they have moved from another part of the county but the reason for this is not apparent at this stage, there is very little information on JB records. Later in the day child made a further disclosure to FSW of domestic abuse that he had witnessed. I did not speak to JB as class teacher and FSW information sufficient to seek advice from Children's Services, JB only 5 and there is a baby in the family, both could be at risk of harm.</p> <p>Called the CPSLO consultation service to seek advice I was advise, was advised to make a safeguarding Request for Support based on the information above and the fact that there was history on Children's Services records indicating that there has been previous concerns raised about ongoing domestic abuse. In JB's Child Protection file there was also a previous Request for Support from pre-school a year ago suggesting that mum misuses alcohol and that JB had presented at school with an unexplained bruise to his neck.</p> <p>At that time Children's Services carried out a Child and Family Assessment and then the case was closed shortly after as it was established the injury to JB neck was caused by his older sibling when they had a play fight. At the same time mum left dad and went to live with her mother and took 3 children and the baby, as the risk was reduced and mum willing to engage Children's Services recommendation was for the case to be stepped down to a Families First Assessment to continue support and actions identified in the assessment. The lead professional was to be health.</p> <p>CPSLO advised that records indicated that this FFA never got off the ground as mum backtracked and did not engage, her view was the children and herself were in a safe place as she was living with her mother and had a lot of family support from her sister also. The relationship with the children's father had broken down and she had a non-molestation order on him.</p> <p>Mother also signposted to Herts Sunflower for support and advice. CPSLO advised that it stated on the last assessment by Children's Services that if mum resumes her relationship with the children's father and there are further concerns a Request for Support is to be made to Children's Services.</p> <p>School have identified that there is a need for a risk assessment to address any potential danger that father may present to JB and the other children in school community. The risk assessment is that father not permitted on school grounds as he is an unassessed risk, if he refuses to comply with this and shows up at the school for the two sibling's police will be called.</p>
<p>Information shared with Parents / carers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Date/time</i></li> <li>• <i>Are they aware of school's concerns / actions carried out to support / safeguard CYP?</i></li> <li>• <i>Parent/carer's response</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you have consent for this? If not rationale for not sharing information?</i></li> </ul>	<p>Initially today we had not been able to speak to mum we do not have her mobile number and she is not answering the home phone as she is at her mother's.</p> <p>Given the information at present, no call to dad as the situation is an unassessed risk.</p> <p>03/10/2023, met with mother at school and discussed the concerns and discussed that school would like to make a Request for Support to Hertfordshire Children's Services.</p> <p>Mum said that she'd been at her mother's because she wanted a couple of hours break from being in the house with dad. Mum was initially upset and reluctant for the school to make a Request for Support. Through conversation we explained what involvement from Children's Services may look like, which reassured mum.</p> <p>Mother gave consent to share information with key staff and advised that Children's Services may want to speak to her older child's secondary school as part of welfare checks.</p> <p><i>The only reasons not to share information with parents are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Doing so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm through this action</i></li> <li>• <i>There would be an impact on a criminal investigation</i></li> <li>• <i>The delay in being able to get in touch with parents before making the Request for Support would impact on the immediate safety of the child</i></li> </ul>
<p>Feedback given to child [yes/no (why), date and time]</p>	<p>JB has been reassured that he has done the right thing by talking to staff and that adults will help to make sure that he, mummy and his siblings are safe.</p>

**Record of Concern Action form**  
**Actions / Request for Support and rationale**

For completion by DSL / DDSL

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**Request for Support made to Children's Services?**

4.  Yes, Which agency/service: Hertfordshire Children's Services  
 No

5. Rationale for actions and above decision:

Rationale for decision to make Request for Support is due to previous Request for Support made finding that risk was significantly reduced when parents ended their relationship as father was not in the family home, however this dynamic has changed with JB disclosing a recent incident of physical chastisement/abuse towards sibling. There are also concerns over mother's alcohol use as well as the previously advised FFA not taking place as offered.

**If referring:**

6. Parental consent gained?

- Yes  
 No (*pick one from below and attach supporting evidence*)

The only reasons not to gain parental consent are when:

- The child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent  
 There would be an impact on a criminal investigation  
 A delay in making the Request for Support would impact on the immediate safety of the child

Feedback given to reporting staff member  <i>[yes/no and date and time]</i>	03/10/2023 - Mrs Smith has been advised of the above actions and Request for Support.
Feedback given to other staff members?  <i>[who, rationale for doing so, date and time]</i>	04/10/2023 - All staff to be advised that JB's father is currently not to be on the school site and that they should inform a member of the leadership team if he comes to the school.
Further Action Agreed	Risk assessment regarding father being allowed on-site will be reviewed at least termly for the remainder of the academic year.
Full Name of DSL	Jane Doe
Time and date form completed	15:45, 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023
Signature of DSL	<i>Jane Doe</i>

