

Ability to recognise and respond to concerns about child protection

Knowledge of policies and legislation

An ability to draw on awareness of national and local child protection standards, policies and procedures
An ability to draw on knowledge of contractual obligations, legislation and guidance which relate to the protection of children and young people
An ability to draw on knowledge of local policies and protocols regarding:
confidentiality and information-sharing
recording of information about young people and their families
An ability to draw on knowledge of the statutory responsibilities of adults (e.g. parents, carers, school staff) to keep children and young people safe from harm
An ability to draw on knowledge that practitioners are responsible for acting on concerns about a child or young person even if they are not directly responsible for their care

Knowledge of child protection principles

An ability to draw on knowledge of the benefits of early identification of at-risk children and young people and families and carers who can then receive appropriate and timely preventive and therapeutic interventions
An ability to draw on knowledge of the importance of maintaining a person-centred approach, which ensures a consistent focus on the welfare of a child or young person and on their feelings and viewpoints

Ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which neglect and abuse presents

An ability to draw on knowledge of the concept of significant harm:
a threshold that justifies intervention in family life in the best interests of children and young people
An ability to draw on knowledge that there are no absolute criteria for significant harm, but that this is based on consideration of:
the degree and extent of physical harm
the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect
the extent of premeditation
the presence or degree of threat
the actual, or potential, impact on a child's or young person's health, development or welfare
An ability to draw on knowledge that significant harm can be indicated by a 'one-off' incident, a series of 'minor' incidents and an accumulation of concerns over time
An ability to draw on knowledge that abuse and neglect take many forms and include:
physical abuse
emotional abuse
sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
neglect

Ability to recognise possible signs of abuse and neglect

An ability to recognise behaviours shown by children and young people that may indicate abuse or neglect, and which may require further investigation, for example a child or young person who:
appears to be frightened or intimidated by an adult or peer
acts in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development
An ability to recognise possible signs of physical abuse, for example:
explanations which are inconsistent with an injury
unexplained delay in seeking treatment
parents or carers who seem uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
repeated or multiple bruising or other injury on sites unlikely to be injured during everyday activities or accidents
An ability to recognise possible signs of emotional abuse, for example:
indicators of serious attachment problems between parent and child
markedly aggressive or appeasing behaviour towards others
indicators of serious scapegoating within the family or care environment
indicators of low self-esteem and lack of confidence
marked difficulties in relating to others
An ability to recognise possible behavioural signs of sexual abuse, for example:
inappropriate sexualised conduct (e.g. sexually explicit behaviour or conversation inappropriate to a child's or young person's age)
self-harm and suicide attempts
involvement in sexual exploitation or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
An ability to recognise possible physical signs of sexual abuse, for example:
genital discomfort
blood on underclothes
pregnancy
An ability to recognise that allegations of sexual abuse by children or young people may initially be indirect (to test the practitioner's response)

Ability to respond where a need for child protection has been identified

An ability to ensure that actions taken in relation to child protection are consistent with relevant legislation and local policies and procedures
--

Ability to report concerns about child protection

An ability to report concerns about risk to appropriate agencies and to share information with relevant parties, with the aim of drawing attention to emerging concerns
An ability to follow local referral procedures to relevant agencies for investigation of concerns or signs of abuse or neglect
An ability to record information, setting out the reasons for concern and the evidence for it
An ability to contact and communicate with all those who are at risk, ensuring that they understand the purpose for the contact with, and referral to, other agencies
An ability to follow local and national procedures where there is difficulty contacting a child or young person and their family and there is a concern that they are missing from

the known address

An ability to follow guidelines on how confidentiality and disclosure will be managed

Ability to record and report on actions that the practitioner is responsible for

An ability to document decisions and actions taken, the evidence for taking these decisions, what further help is required and how this will be actioned

Interagency working

An ability to draw on knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of other services available to a child or young person and their family or carers

An ability to collaborate with all potentially relevant agencies when undertaking assessment, planning, intervention and review

An ability to ensure that there is timely communication with all agencies involved in the case, both verbally and in writing

An ability to escalate concerns within one's own agency or between agencies (e.g. when the implementation of the child protection plan is problematic or to ensure sufficient recognition of risk factors and/or signs of abuse)

Ability to seek advice and support

An ability for the practitioner to make use of support from other members of staff in order to manage their own emotional responses to providing care and protection for children and young people

An ability to recognise the limits of one's own expertise and to seek advice from appropriately trained and experienced individuals (such as senior colleagues, social workers and other child protection experts)