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Protocol Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and all candidates on its register to share this commitment and to be fully aware of the importance of child protection. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Five areas have been highlighted within the Every Child Matters agenda as being vital to children's and young people's wellbeing to be addressed by school:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

To achieve this, children need to feel supported and valued by a network of reliable professionals. Protocol Education's policies and procedures adhere to the current legislation as defined in the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the guidance given by the Government in the report "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education". Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for them to learn in education settings
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting

In view of their daily contact with children, candidates working through Protocol Education are well placed to observe abuse or neglect. It is their responsibility to report suspected or alleged abuse.

- If a candidate is working within a school or nursery it is his/her duty to take note not only of major incidents, but also of signals which give cause for suspicion or concern. When this occurs the candidate must report any concerns to the school's designated member of staff with particular responsibility for child protection work and liaison with youth services. It is also the candidate's responsibility to adhere to the specific guidelines set out in each school's Child Protection Policy.
- If a candidate is working outside of the school or nursery environment it is his/her duty to report any concerns to the Social Services Department. Candidates have a responsibility of explaining on first contact that they cannot keep information confidential. If abuse is suspected the concern should be recorded at branch level and then discussed with the Operations Director and reported to Social Services. If a candidate has reason to believe that a young person is being abused then the safety and welfare of that child has to be the paramount consideration in deciding what action needs to be taken.
- If there is an allegation of abuse made against a candidate working through Protocol Education it should be reported to the Branch Manager and Line Managers. Action will be taken in accordance with Protocol Education's Complaints Procedure.

Under no circumstances should a candidate ever intervene on his/her own. Protocol Education wishes to inform all candidates of the position outlined in the 1996 Education Act that any form of physical contact with a child in the form of corporal punishment is prohibited. **Failure to comply with the spirit of the relevant legal requirements will result in your removal from our register.**