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Child Protection Policy

We are committed to protecting children (a person below the age of 18) from harm. Our team has an ethical responsibility to recognize children suffering from or at risk of abuse or neglect to ensure they receive proper care that promotes health and welfare. We also have a responsibility to ensure children are not at risk from members of our team.

We are not responsible for making a diagnosis of abuse or neglect but must share any concerns appropriately.

Our Safeguarding Leads are **Christopher Needham** and **Michael Clark** and any queries or concerns can be discussed with them.

Our Commitment to Child Protection

We endeavor to safeguard children by:

- listening to children
 - we will ask children their views when discussing treatment options
 - we will seek their consent in addition to parental consent
 - if a disclosure of abuse is made we will take it seriously;
- providing a safe environment
 - we endeavor to provide a welcoming environment
 - we will consider whether young people wish to be seen alone or accompanied by their parents
 - we will ensure that the dental team never put themselves in vulnerable situations by seeing young people without a chaperone;
- taking child protection very seriously and responding appropriately to concerns;
- adopting a code of conduct for all the dental team;
- providing a safe and appropriate environment;
- adopting a holistic approach, that focuses on individual needs and provision of any necessary support
- ensuring that accurate, adequate, and updated records are kept.
- ensuring that staff are clearly instructed and understand that it is never acceptable under any circumstances:
 - for them to hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children.
 - to develop relationships with children, which could in any way be deemed inappropriate or exploitative.
 - to act in any way that may be deemed abusive or through their acts or in actions, place children at risk of abuse.
 - to act in ways that shame, humiliate or degrade or children

- to discriminate against children;
- ensuring that staff are clearly instructed and understand that all incidents, accidents and/or complaints of any type involving children are reported in accordance with the practice incident reporting policy as soon as possible to the child protection lead.
- encouraging staff to report any concerns in relation to perceived abuse and to have their concerns treated confidentially, with the necessary support and protection
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents/carers and children appropriately by following the Department of Health Child Protection flowchart for action if necessary;
- following carefully procedures for staff recruitment and selection, including enhanced DBS checks for all staff;
- providing effective management for staff by ensuring access to supervision, support and training;
- appointing a Safeguarding Lead;
- reviewing our procedure and good practice at regular intervals.