

## Safeguarding scenario - How would you respond?

As a former Headteacher and now Safeguarding Consultant, I often ask staff this question:

### **If a child starts making concerning comments in their creative writing or artwork, how should you respond?**

A story about violence.






A picture showing fear.

Repeated references to being hurt, alone, unsafe or unwanted.

Would you dismiss it as imagination... or would you be curious?






#### **Don't ignore it**

Children do not always tell us directly when something is wrong. Sometimes they communicate through:


-  Artwork
-  Stories and creative writing
-  Role play
-  Casual comments
-  Games and play

These may provide important clues about a child's experiences, worries or emotional wellbeing.

#### **What should staff do?**

-  Take note of exactly what you have seen or heard
-  Record the concern factually
-  If appropriate, have a gentle conversation with the child
-  Avoid leading questions or investigating
-  Share your concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay

Remember, safeguarding is often about recognising patterns and noticing the small things that others might overlook.

 **Children may not always find the words to tell us what is happening. Sometimes their pencil, paintbrush or story does the talking for them.**