

Safeguarding scenario - What would you do?

A pupil approaches you at lunchtime and says:


"I'm worried about my friend. They've told me something that's happening at home, but they made me promise not to tell anyone."

How should you respond?

 Do not agree to keep the information secret.


Even when a concern relates to another child, safeguarding responsibilities remain exactly the same.

A helpful response might be:





 "Thank you for telling me. You've done the right thing by speaking to me. I can't promise to keep this a secret because I may need to share it with people who can help keep your friend safe. I'll only tell the people who need to know."

What should staff do next?

- ◆ Stay calm and listen carefully.
- ◆ Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- ◆ Avoid asking lots of questions or trying to investigate.
- ◆ Do not make promises about confidentiality.
- ◆ Record the conversation accurately using the child's own words where possible.
- ◆ Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

 Children often disclose concerns indirectly, through worries about friends, siblings or other pupils. These conversations can provide important safeguarding information and should always be taken seriously.

Whether a child is speaking about themselves or someone else, the role of school staff is simple:

-  Listen
-  Reassure
-  Record
-  Report

As a former Headteacher and Safeguarding Consultant, I often remind staff that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and sometimes the most important information comes from a child who is simply worried about a friend.