


“My child is making things up about home.”

If a parent says this to a member of staff... would your team know exactly how to respond?

As a former headteacher and safeguarding consultant, this is one of the situations I discuss regularly with schools during safeguarding training and audits.

In the moment, it can feel uncomfortable. Staff may want to reassure the parent, ask questions, or try to smooth the situation over. ⚠️ But safeguarding practice matters most in those small, pressured conversations.

- ✅ **Stay calm and professional:** Keep a neutral tone and body language.
- ❌ **Avoid reassuring or minimising:** Comments such as: “I’m sure it’s nothing” or “Children exaggerate sometimes” can undermine safeguarding and create risk.
- ✅ **Acknowledge without judgement:** A simple professional response is enough: “Thank you for letting me know. I’ll need to pass this information to our Designated Safeguarding Lead, as we are required to share any comments relating to a child’s wellbeing.”
- ✅ **Record factually:** Use the parent’s own words wherever possible. Stick to facts, not assumptions or interpretations.
- ✅ **Inform the DSL immediately:** Do not delay or wait to “see if anything else happens.”

 Safeguarding is often about recognising when adults may try to dismiss, minimise or control a narrative around a child’s voice.

Strong safeguarding cultures ensure staff feel confident to respond professionally, consistently and without hesitation, even in difficult conversations.