

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may or may not cause injury and includes physical ill treatment, causing unjustifiable physical discomfort, for example injury, pain or impairment.

Abusive Action	Signs & Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting • Slapping • Pushing • Kicking • Inappropriate restraint • Withholding or misuse of medication • Squeezing • Biting • Suffocating • Poisoning • Drowning • Killing <p>A requirement for someone to work in an unsafe environment can be construed as physical abuse.</p> <p>Physical abuse may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. This is called Fabricated or Induced Illness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cuts, lacerations, puncture wounds, open wounds, bruising, welts, black eyes, burns, bite marks, broken bones and skull fractures; • untreated injuries in various stages of healing or not properly treated; • poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene; • dehydration and/or malnourishment without an illness-related cause; • loss of weight; • soiled clothing or bedding; • broken eyeglasses or frames; • physical signs of being subjected to punishment or signs of being restrained; • inappropriate use of medication, overdosing or under dosing; • cowering and flinching; • emotional distress, low self-esteem, untypical self-harm; • telling you they have been hit, slapped or mistreated; • aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts; • reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather; • depression; • withdrawn behaviour. <p>Remember: Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and tumble of daily life. However, important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the ‘soft’ parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks.</p> <p>A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.</p> <p>Children may also display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear of parents being approached for an explanation; • running away from home.

NOTE: The following lists under each category of abuse contain examples of possible indicators. The presence of one or more of these signs or symptoms does not necessarily confirm abuse. Remember if you are ever uncertain you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for advice, guidance and support