



# GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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FOR ALL AGENCIES AND SERVICES IN CAMDEN  
WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## 1 Introduction

Organisations that provide services for children and families have a duty to put in place a written policy detailing how children using the service will be kept safe. As this can be a daunting task, Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) has developed this guidance to help organisations develop their policy; the guidance sets out what steps should be taken to develop the policy, what should be in the policy and who to contact for further information.

The CSCP can also help organisations develop their safeguarding responses by providing information and advice on policy and high quality safeguarding training to the designated officers within organisations tasked with overseeing safeguarding. For more information, please visit the Partnership's website at: <https://cscp.org.uk/>

## 2 Why develop a child protection policy?

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children and any agency or organisation working with children and young people must have in place a written policy stating how the organisation will safeguard and promote the welfare of the children they work with and a named member of staff who is the designated safeguarding lead with responsibility for children's safety and welfare.

Each service may work in a different way with children and families depending on the service or activity offered by that service and will consequently have different levels of expertise around safeguarding and child protection.

Although there is national, local and Camden Safeguarding guidance relating to child protection and safeguarding, each individual service may feel that additional guidance, as an addendum to existing legislation, further facilitates safe practice and makes it easier for staff to apply the legislation in the context of their service.

## 3 How to develop a child protection policy

- Any protocol or policy your service develops must refer to, and meet the requirements of national, local and Camden safeguarding guidance and legislation (see Appendix 1 for details of current national and local legislation and guidance).
- It is advisable that you use the information in section 4 to ensure your policy includes all the relevant information.
- Following identification of the need for a policy within your service, it is important that the working group of relevant people is co-ordinated, in order to develop the policy.

## 4 Process to be followed

- Write the policy, ensuring adherence to existing legislation (see Appendix 1).
- The draft policy should be discussed at the highest decision making level within your organisation where responsibility is taken for the services you deliver.
- Submit the draft policy to the CSCP at: [CSCP@camden.gov.uk](mailto:CSCP@camden.gov.uk)
- If you need to discuss the policy prior to submission please contact the CSCP on **020 9794 6658**.
- The policy will be sent to members of the policy Subgroup for comment and replies will be co-ordinated by the CSCP. Services can expect a reply within 4 weeks of submitting the policy.
- Where the policy Subgroup have requested substantial changes, services will need to amend the policy accordingly and re-submit for ratification. The CSCP Development Officer will advise on this. Smaller changes will not require re-submission.
- Once ratification agreement is given your policy can carry the Camden SCB logo.
- It is advisable for you to set a review date for your policy within your service and disseminate through your internal systems.

## 5 What your policy should include

### **Introductory statement**

- What your service offers to children and families and a description of how you work with children and young people.
- A commitment to provide systems for recognition and referral for all staff in Child Protection and Safeguarding issues.
- Keeping children safe in order for them to benefit from being with each other and develop their potential in a variety of ways applicable to your setting.
- Which members of staff your policy will apply to.

### **Working in partnership with parents**

This can include a statement on how your service will keep parents informed about your role in child protection and safeguarding matters, what action will be taken to safeguard and promote children's welfare when working with them and when action will be taken under child protection procedures to further protect a child.

### **Recognition of indicators of abuse**

Please refer to Appendix 2 for information on definitions of abuse and associated indicators.

### **Role of the senior designated member of staff for child protection and safeguarding in your organisation**

- Consultative role for all staff, including de-briefing for staff following referral, as necessary.
- Ensuring written referral completed and any other written accounts collated, completed and sent to the Children and Families Contact Service within 48 hours of telephone referral being made.
- Referral and liaison role with Children's Safeguarding and Social Work.
- Dissemination of policy and good practice to all staff.
- To follow procedures in cases where there are allegations made against a member of staff.
- To ensure staff have received the necessary safeguarding training and that this is regularly updated.

### **Referral procedures**

- Concern, suspicion or direct disclosure from any member of staff to be reported immediately to the senior designated member of staff who will make a decision on whether or not to make a referral.
- All referrals should go to the Children and Families Contact Service where there are child protection or safeguarding concerns.
- All referrals should be in writing to the Children and Families Contact Service using an e-CAF referral form; private and voluntary organisations do not need to use the e-CAF template but must send in written referrals.
- Urgent child protection referrals may be phoned through to the Children and Families Contact Service on 02079743317 but a written referral must be followed up within 48 hours.
- If designated safeguarding members of staff are unsure about whether or not to make a referral, they can contact the Children and Families Contact Service and get advice from a social worker.
- Please note that safeguarding and child protection referrals should be made to the local authority where the child ordinarily lives; if your organisation works with children who live in authorities other than Camden this must be stated in the policy.

### **Confidentiality and consent**

- Please refer to the government's advice on information sharing for information on obtaining consent to share information and make referrals to Children's Safeguarding and Social Work, and when consent can be dispensed with.
- Relevant staff to be given information on a 'need to know' basis.

- Confidentiality cannot be promised to children – staff must not work in isolation.
- Child protection and safeguarding records must be kept securely.

## **Recording**

- Written referrals must be on a CAF referral form, and any other written evidence needs to reflect a verbatim account of what the child has said.
- Child protection records need to be objective and factual.

## **Monitoring**

Organisations that are working with children where there are child protection concerns may be asked to monitor their situation as part of the implementation of the child protection plan. As a result, the organisation may be requested to pass on information to Children's Safeguarding and Social Work via the conference report or the core group meeting. It will therefore be necessary for the organisation to have a standard monitoring form where relevant information is recorded.

Organisations should note that Children's Safeguarding and Social Work will normally only inform an organisation about a child's status on a need-to-know basis in order to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018.

## **Inter-agency working**

- Attendance at strategy meetings, case conferences and reviews, and for a relevant member of staff to be part of a nominated core group for child protection case planning.
- Liaison with Children's Safeguarding and Social Work and other relevant agencies for ongoing work with children and their families.

It is often useful for groups approaching the Policy S/Group to be able to see existing guidance that has been developed by an agency or service with similar working practice. It would be useful if you would give your consent for your policy to be shared in this instance. Please indicate if you do not agree with this in respect of your policy.

## **Safe working practices for staff and dealing with allegations against staff**

- All policy documents should address this issue.

## **Whistle-blowing**

All agencies involved in safeguarding children are required to have clear procedures for whistle-blowing that allows staff to safely raise concerns and ensure that these concerns are given proper consideration.

## **Other safeguarding issues**

Some children's situation or circumstances may make them more vulnerable to safeguarding and child protection issues, and some organisations may work with specific groups of children and young people who may be more vulnerable to specific safeguarding risks.

Organisations can get more information from the CSCP website; where the organisation works with groups of children who are more vulnerable this should be addressed in the policy, with reference to the relevant CSCP guidance.

## Appendix 1

### Reading list

#### **Essential statutory guidance**

HM Government (2018): 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', The Stationery Office

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Department for Education and Skills (2007): 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused', DfES Publications

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

London Safeguarding Children Board: 'London Child Protection Procedures' (2019)

<https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

#### **Recommended government guidance**

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (DfE 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

HM Government Forced Marriage guidance 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

HM Government multi-agency guidance on FGM 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

#### **Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance**

Available at <https://cscp.org.uk/>

## CHILD PROTECTION; DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS

### Definitions

Child protection is part of the safeguarding agenda that focuses on preventing maltreatment and protecting children at risk of neglect or abuse. Under the Children Act 1989, FSSW have a legal duty to investigate and take any action to protect children where there are concerns that they are at risk of suffering **significant harm**, which is defined as:

**Neglect:** failure to provide basic care to meet the child's physical needs, such as not providing adequate food, clothing or shelter; failure to protect the child from harm or ensure access to medical care and treatment.

**Physical abuse:** causing physical harm or injury to a child.

**Sexual abuse:** involving children in sexual activity, or forcing them to witness sexual activity, which includes involving children in looking at or the production of pornography.

**Emotional abuse:** failure to provide love and warmth that affects the child's emotional development; psychological ill treatment of a child through bullying, intimidation or threats.

### Possible indicators of abuse and neglect

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Neglect</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate or inappropriate clothing</li> <li>• Appears underweight and unwell and seems constantly hungry</li> <li>• Failure to thrive physically and appears tired and listless</li> <li>• Dirty or unhygienic appearance</li> <li>• Frequent unexplained absences from school</li> <li>• Lack of parental supervision</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Physical abuse</b>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns or fractures where the explanation given is inconsistent with the injury</li> <li>• Injuries in unexpected places or that are not typical of normal childhood injuries or accidents</li> <li>• High frequency of injuries</li> <li>• Parents seem unconcerned or fail to seek adequate medical treatment</li> </ul>                                                                                                            |
| <b>Sexual abuse</b>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual knowledge or behaviour that is unusually explicit or inappropriate for the child's age/stage of development</li> <li>• Sexual risk taking behaviour including involvement in sexual exploitation/older boyfriend</li> <li>• Continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation</li> <li>• Physical symptoms such as injuries to genital or anal area or bruising, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy</li> <li>• Unwillingness to undress for sports</li> </ul> |
| <b>Emotional abuse</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental delay</li> <li>• Attachment difficulties with parents and others</li> <li>• Withdrawal and low self-esteem</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Indirect indicators of abuse and neglect</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden changes in behaviour</li> <li>• Withdrawal and low self-esteem</li> <li>• Eating disorders</li> <li>• Aggressive behaviour towards others</li> <li>• Sudden unexplained absences from school</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Running away/going missing</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Parental attributes</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Misusing drugs and/or alcohol</li> <li>• Physical/mental health or learning difficulties</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Avoiding contact with agencies/professionals</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |