

Copies of this booklet may be obtained in large print, Braille, on audio cassette or in other languages. To obtain a copy in an alternative format please telephone 01344 352000.

#### Nepali

यस प्रचारको सक्षेपं वा सार निचोड चाहिं दिइने छ ठूलो अक्षरमा, ब्रेल वा क्यासेट सून्नको लागी । अरु भाषाको नक्कल पनि हासिल गर्न सकिने छ । कृपया सम्पर्क गर्नुहोला ०१३४४ ३५२००० ।

#### Tagalog

Mga buod/ mga hango ng dokumentong ito ay makukuha sa malaking letra, limbag ng mga bulag o audio kasette. Mga kopya sa ibat-ibang wika ay inyo ring makakamtan. Makipag-alam sa 01344 352000

#### Urdu

اس دستاویز کے خلاصے یا مختصر متن جلی حروف، بریل لکھائی یا پھر آڈیو کیسٹ پر ریکارڈ شدہ صورت میں فراہم کئے جا سکتے ہیں۔ دیگر زبانوں میں اس کی کاپی بھی حاصل کی جا سکتی ہے۔ اس کے لیے براہ مہربانی ٹیلیفون نمبر 01344 352000 پر رابطہ کریں۔

#### Polish

Streszczenia lub fragmenty tego dokumentu mogą być dostępne w wersji napisanej dużym drukiem, pismem Brajla lub na kasecie audio. Można również otrzymać kopie w innych językach. Proszę skontaktować się z numerem 01344 352000.

#### Portuguese

Podemos disponibilizar resumos ou extractos deste documento em impressão grande, em Braille ou em audiocassete. Podem também ser obtidas cópias em outros idiomas. Por favor ligue para o 01344 352000.

Child Protection Enquiries and Investigations:  
Information for Parents and Carers  
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# Child Protection Enquiries and Investigations

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

# About this leaflet

This leaflet explains what happens when our Department receives information that your child may be at risk. This is called a Child Protection Investigation or Enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act.

Under the Children Act 1989, Children's Social Care have a duty to make enquiries and assess the situation when they receive a report that a child may be at risk of significant harm or abuse. The referral can be from a professional or from a member of the public.

When we make these enquiries, we follow the Government guidelines set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006'. Our local Child Protection Procedures follow these government guidelines.

We realise that this can be a stressful and worrying time. However, we believe that most parents want what is best for their children and if there are difficulties we would like to help resolve these. We do believe that wherever possible children are better being brought up by their family, as long as this is safe.

## **Child Abuse Investigation Unit**

Thames Valley Police  
Telephone: 01753 835485

## **Children's Legal Centre**

Telephone: 0120 6873820

## **Police Domestic Violence Unit**

Telephone: 01344 823481

## **Emergency Duty Team**

Telephone: 01344 786543

## **Law Society**

Telephone: 020 72421222

## **NSPCC**

Telephone: 0800 8085000

## **Parentline**

Telephone: 0800 8002222

## **Samaritans**

Telephone: 08457 909090

## Further Information about Complaints

You can find more detailed information about making a complaint in one of our leaflets. Alternatively ask your social worker or our complaints manager.

## Other Useful Contacts

### **Citizens Advice Bureau**

40-42 The Broadway  
Bracknell  
Berkshire  
RG12 1AG

Telephone: 0845 1202969

Fax: 01344 867171

### **Family Rights Group**

The Print House  
18 Ashwin Street  
London  
E8 3DL

Telephone: 0800 7311696

Advice Line Mon - Fri : 1.30pm - 3.30pm

### **Berkshire Woman's Aid**

Telephone: 0118 950 4003

### **Childline**

Telephone: 0800 1111

## Contents

**What is child abuse or significant harm? . . . . . 6**

**The enquiry/investigation . . . . . 7**

**What happens next? . . . . . 9**

**Who do I contact for further information? . . . . . 10**

**Comments, Compliments and Complaints . . . . . 11**

# What is child abuse or significant harm?

## 1 What is child abuse or significant harm?

Professionals who work with children believe that there are four main ways in which children suffer harm or abuse. These are:

- Physical

When adults injure or hurt a child or knowingly do not prevent them being injured.

- Emotional

When children are persistently denied love and affection. Children suffer when they are constantly shouted at, threatened, ridiculed or taunted. Children also suffer when their carers are in an abusive relationship. The child may lose confidence and self esteem and become nervous or withdrawn.

- Neglect

This occurs when adults fail to meet children's basic needs such as food, clothing, warmth and medical care. Leaving young children on their own is another example of neglect.

- Sexual

When children are used by adults to meet the adult's sexual needs. It includes showing pornographic material, such as videos or magazines.

# Comments, Compliments and Complaints

## 5 Comments, Compliments and Complaints

### What if I have a comment or compliment?

It is good for us to know what we are doing right and useful for us to hear your ideas about how we could be doing things better. If you have any compliments or comments about the service you have received, you can either contact the staff who have been working with you and let them know or contact a Senior Manager in Children's Social Care.

### What if I am unhappy with the service I have received?

If you are unhappy with the service that you have received, in the first instance, you should speak to the staff who have been working with you, or their manager.

If you feel unable to speak to them, or you feel that they have not dealt with your concern satisfactorily, you can contact our Customer Response Officer:

Patricia Morris  
Complaints Manager  
Social Care and Learning  
Bracknell Forest Borough Council  
Seymour House  
38 Broadway  
Bracknell  
RG12 1AU

Telephone: 0800 1694491 (24 hour answerphone)

Fax: 01344 352119

Email: [patricia.morris@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:patricia.morris@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

## 4 Who do I contact for further information?

Children's Social Care  
Social Care and Learning  
Bracknell Forest Borough Council  
Time Square  
Market Street  
Bracknell  
RG12 1JD

Telephone: 01344 351582

Minicom: 01344 352045

Fax: 01344 351521

### **Our opening times**

Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 5.00pm

# The enquiry/investigation

## 2 The enquiry/investigation

When a child protection concern about your child has been raised with Children's Social Care, these concerns are discussed with the Police and it is agreed whether the Police and Children's Social Care need to make enquiries together or whether Children's Social Care will do it alone. The Police are involved if it is thought a crime has been committed. A strategy meeting is called to plan the enquiries.

To help us understand whether or not there are serious concerns we will need to make an assessment. As part of this assessment we want to hear about what you think about the concerns which have been raised. We also want to learn about any problems you may have i.e. with housing, finance, and what difficulties your child may be experiencing. We obtain information from other agencies who have been involved with you and your children such as schools, health visitors, doctors, police etc. This is so we can arrange, if necessary, appropriate support and help. We want to hear about what is going well not just about things which are not so good.

We will want to find out more about the concerns that were reported to us, so during the course of the enquiry:

- We will want to speak to your child/children on her/his/their own. We cannot do this without your permission and without your child's agreement.
- In some situations we will want to arrange a medical for your child/children. This cannot be done without your permission and your child's agreement. You will usually be able to attend the medical and speak to the doctor yourself. The purpose of the medical is to find out if any treatment is needed and also if there is an injury, what caused this.
- If your child makes an allegation of sexual or physical assault an investigation may be carried out jointly by Police and Social Worker. In these circumstances we may want to do a video interview. We need your permission and your child's agreement to do this. You will usually be able to accompany your child and may be able to watch the interview on a video link.

We aim to complete the enquiry/investigation as soon as possible. If there are delays, we will explain why and tell you the reasons for this.

## **Do parents have to agree to enquiries?**

We always try to work with parents at every stage of a child protection enquiry. We will ask your permission to interview your child or to arrange a medical. We will also take into account your child's wishes and feelings about such action.

If parents refuse to give permission and Children's Social Care think that a refusal is against the interests of the child, we can apply to the Magistrates Court for an order to interview them or to have them medically examined.

If we seek such an order, we will advise you to seek legal advice.

We cannot move your child out of the home without your permission unless we obtain a Court Order. If we believe an adult living in your home poses a risk to your child we would ask them to move out whilst an assessment is being made.

If your child is in immediate danger, your child may have to be removed from your home. This can be done with your agreement or by using the Police's protection powers.

# What happens next?

## **3 What happens next?**

After the enquiry/investigation/assessment, if it is decided that your child is not at risk of suffering significant harm, no further action will be taken under child protection procedures, but the Social Worker may believe that you and your child need help and support. This can be arranged by the Social Worker or by calling a planning meeting. However if the Social Worker thinks there are problems which cannot be resolved in this way they will call a Child Protection Conference. If this is the case you will be given a leaflet which describes the process. Basically this meeting will decide whether or not your child needs a protection plan and what help/support you all need.

Your rights as a parent are not affected by either course of action.

We want to work in partnership with you and your family and you have the following rights.

### **You have a right:**

- To be heard
- To be kept informed and involved
- To seek legal advice
- To ask for explanations
- To be supported
- To complain (please ask for a leaflet)
- To appropriate confidentiality
- To have an interpreter (if you have a problem communicating in English)
- To have your cultural and religious background taken into account.

### **Your child has a right:**

- To be heard and taken seriously
- To have their views and feelings considered
- To be protected
- To be supported
- To ask for explanations
- To complain
- To be kept involved and informed, according to his/her age and understanding
- To appropriate confidentiality
- To have feelings