

Guidelines for Reporting/Referral Procedures

What to do if you have safeguarding concerns about a child/young person



MSCB

MANCHESTER SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN BOARD



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Definitions

What is a child in need?

(s17 of the Children Act 1989)

Children who are defined as being 'in need', under the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (s17(10) of the Children Act 1989) plus those who are disabled. The critical factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are what will happen to a child's health or development without services, and the likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development.

What is significant harm?

(s47 of the Children Act 1989)

Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. The local authority is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, when it has reasonable cause to

suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (s47 of the Children Act 1989). To make enquiries involves assessing what is happening to a child. Where s47 enquiries are being made, the assessment (the 'core assessment') should concentrate on the harm that has occurred or is likely to occur to the child as a result of child maltreatment in order to inform future plans and the nature of services required. Decisions about significant harm are complex and should be informed by a careful assessment of the child's circumstances, and discussion between the statutory agencies and with the child and family.

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or

corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Common indicators of abuse

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse:

Bruises, black eyes and broken bones are obvious signs of physical abuse. Other signs might include:

- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
- Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely, such as thighs, back, abdomen
- Bruising that looks like hand or finger marks
- Cigarette burns, human bites
- Scalds and burns.

Sexual abuse:

- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal areas
- Genital discharge or urinary tract infections
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Sexually transmitted infections.

Behavioural signs of abuse

- The child may refuse to attend school or start to have difficulty concentrating so that their schoolwork is affected

- They may show unexpected fear or distrust of a particular adult or refuse to continue with their usual social activities
- They may start using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age
- The child may describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, 'secret' friendship with an adult or young person.

Neglect:

There are occasions when nearly all parents find it difficult to cope with the many demands of caring for children. But this does not mean their children are being neglected. Neglect involves ongoing severe failure to meet a child's needs.

Here are some signs of possible neglect:

- If the child seems underweight and is very small for their age
- If they are poorly clothed, with inadequate protection from the weather
- If they are often absent from school for no apparent reason
- If they are regularly left alone, or in charge of younger brothers or sisters.

Emotional:

This occurs when a child's basic need for love and praise, security and recognition go unmet, either through deliberate negative actions by parents/carers or by a failure to act positively.

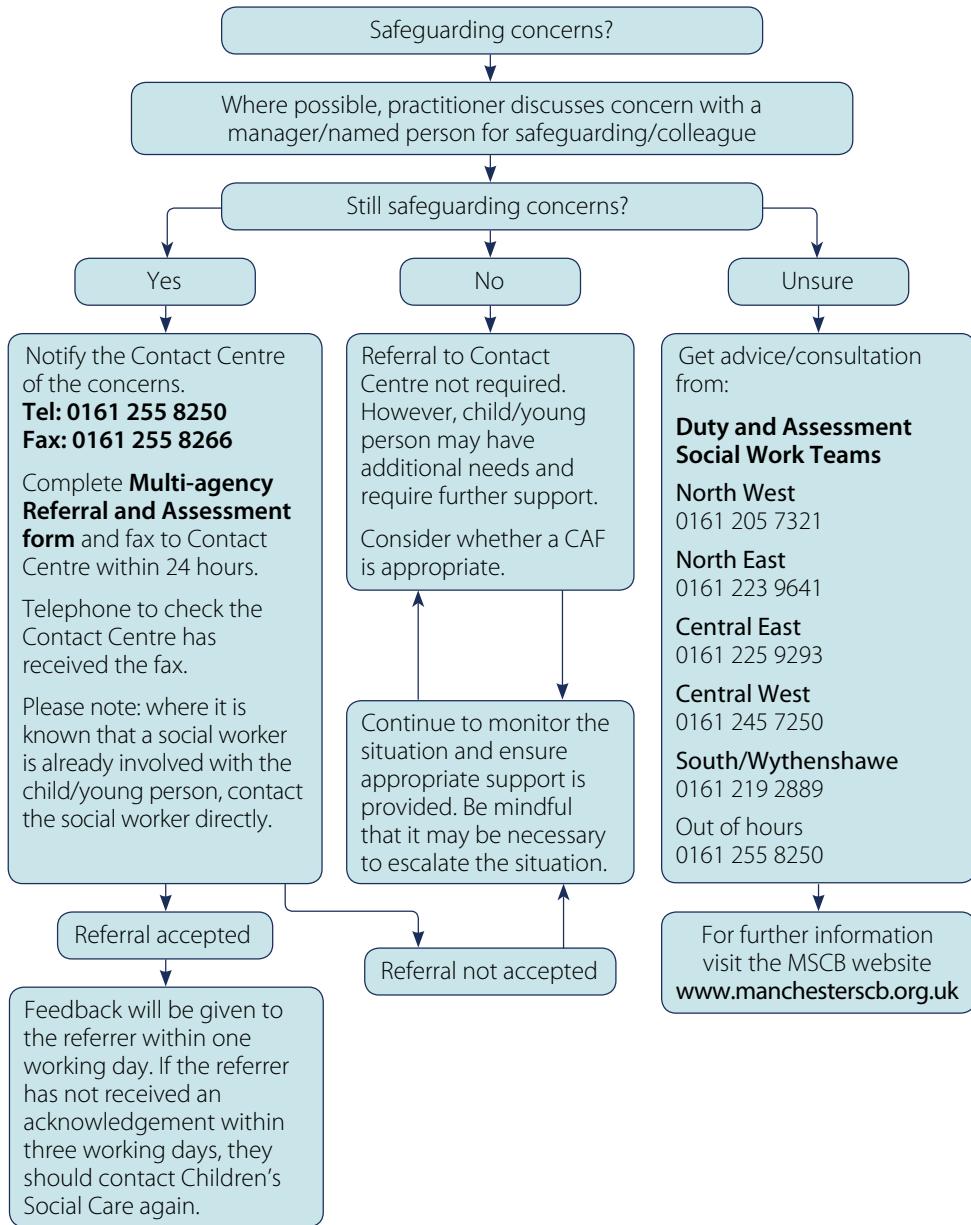
It may involve conveying to children that they are:

- Worthless, or unloved
- Inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or be the exploitation or corruption of children.

What to do if you have safeguarding concerns about a child/young person

FLOWCHART FOR REPORTING/REFERRAL PROCEDURES



Safeguarding concerns – Yes

If you have discussed your concerns, where possible, with a manager/named person for safeguarding/colleague, and you still have safeguarding concerns, you should make a referral to Children's Social Care via the Contact Centre.

Making a referral to Children's Social Care

Contact Centre – 24-hour telephone and fax service:

Telephone 0161 255 8250
Fax 0161 255 8266

All referrals must be followed up by fax within 24 hours using the MSCB

Multi-agency Referral and Assessment Form.

Telephone to check the Contact Centre has received the fax.

The form can be found on the home page of the MSCB website:

www.manchesterscb.org.uk/ at the bottom of the blue box headed 'What to do if you have concerns about individual children'. There is also a link to guidance on how to fill in the form.

The Multi-agency Referral and Assessment Form is the process by which referrals/requests for support and advice are made between

agencies. The form has been designed to share accurate high-quality information about a child and their needs, and to assist the referrer to provide information about the child/children concerned using the following three factors:

- Child's developmental needs
- Parenting capacity
- Family and environmental factors.

When completing the Multi-agency Referral and Assessment Form be clear about what your concerns are and why you have them, what actions you have already taken, and what support is required.

NB. If a CAF has already been completed for the child, it can be used to support the referral and attached to the Multi-agency Referral and Assessment Form to avoid duplicating information.

If the referral is accepted by the Contact Centre, Children's Social Care should acknowledge a written referral within one working day of receiving it. If the referrer has not received an acknowledgement within three working days, they should contact Children's Social Care again.

When dealing with safeguarding concerns, in all cases please ensure that:

- You allow the child/young person to say what has happened to her or him
- You make a clear and accurate written record of all your observations, actions and conversation
- You record carefully what the child/young person says in their own words
- In all instances ensure a child/young person receives medical attention as necessary. If in doubt, seek advice
- Where making a referral, and provided this will not place the child at greater risk of harm, talk to the family and carers. There are some circumstances where you would not discuss with parents/carers, such as where discussion may place the child at greater harm and/or there are concerns of sexual abuse. If you are uncertain, make sure you ask for advice. An inability to inform parents should not prevent a referral being made.



Safeguarding concerns – No

REFERRAL NOT REQUIRED/ REFERRAL NOT ACCEPTED

If you have discussed your concerns, where possible, with a manager/named person for safeguarding/colleague and you no longer have safeguarding concerns, you are not required to refer to Children's Social Care via the Contact Centre. You should also follow this guidance if your re-referral to the Contact Centre is not accepted.

NB. Continue to monitor the situation and ensure appropriate support is provided. Be mindful that it may be necessary to escalate the situation and make a referral to Children's Social Care.

The child/young person may have additional needs and require further support. If one hasn't already been completed, you may consider whether a **CAF** is appropriate.

The **CAF** is not for when you have safeguarding concerns, or when you are concerned a child may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm.

The **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)** for children and young people is a standardised approach

to conducting an assessment of a child/young person's additional needs.

The CAF has been designed to help practitioners assess needs at an earlier stage and then work with families alongside other practitioners and agencies to meet them.

If you are unsure whether it is appropriate to do a CAF, discuss with your manager or the CAF Co-ordinator in your district.

Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Team contact details

District CAF Co-ordinators

Wythenshawe
0161 234 7103

South
0161 234 7085

Central West/Central East
0161 234 7103

North West
0161 234 7047

North East
0161 234 7085

Training information

caftraining@manchester.gov.uk
0161 234 7254

Safeguarding concerns – Unsure

If you have discussed your concerns, where possible, with a manager/named person for safeguarding/colleague, and you are still unsure whether to make a referral to Children's Social Care, you can call the Duty and Assessment Social Work Teams for further advice and consultation or access district arrangements for social work consultation.

There are **Duty and Assessment Teams** based at the Children's Social Care Offices:

Duty and Assessment Teams

North West

0161 205 7321

North East

0161 223 9641

Central East

0161 225 9293

Central West

0161 245 7250

South/Wythenshawe

0161 219 2889

Out of hours

0161 255 8250

Moss Side

(Homeless Families Team – city-wide)
0161 881 0911

Chorlton

(Disabled Families Team – city-wide)
0161 226 8131

Useful numbers

Contact Centre

24-hour Telephone and Fax Service

Telephone 0161 255 8250

Fax 0161 255 8266

Duty and Assessment Teams

North West

0161 205 7321

North East

0161 223 9141

Central East

0161 225 9293

Central West

0161 245 7250

South/Wythenshawe

0161 219 2889

Out of hours

0161 255 8250

Moss Side

(Homeless Families Team – city-wide)

0161 881 0911

Chorlton

(Disabled Families Team – city-wide)

0161 226 8131

Police Protection Investigation Unit (PPIU)

A Division (North):

Child Protection and Domestic Violence

Telephone CPU – 0161 856 3707

Fax CPU – 0161 856 6650

Telephone DVU – 0161 856 3703

Fax DVU – 0161 856 3705

Email: northmanchester.ppiu@gmp.police.uk

B Division (Central):

Child Protection and Domestic Violence

Telephone CPU – 0161 856 4416

Telephone DVU – 0161 856 3541

Email: manchestermet.ppiu@gmp.police.uk

C Division (South):

Child Protection and Domestic Violence

Telephone CPU & DVU 0161 856 6053

Fax CPU & DVU 0161 856 6650

Email: southmanchester.ppiu@gmp.police.uk

Safe in the City – Missing from Home Scheme

If a young person is running away, or at risk of running, from home/care and living in Manchester, you can refer to Safe in the City.

Telephone 0161 247 0180

Fax 0161 247 0181

Eclypse – Drug and alcohol support for children, young people and families

Eclypse is a specialist service providing support and interventions for young substance users. The Family Team works with the whole family to provide support where there is parental substance misuse.

info@eclypse-yps.org.uk
0161 273 6686

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Forced Marriage Unit

For advice and information on forced marriage:

Call 020 7008 0151

(Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

Emergency Duty Officer

020 7008 1500 (out-of-office hours)

email: fmu@fco.gov.uk

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre

They are dedicated to eradicating the online sexual abuse of children:

Telephone 0870 000 3344

Email enquiries@ceop.gov.uk

Common Assessment Framework Team

CAF Project Manager

0161 234 7549

CAF Co-ordinators

Wythenshawe

0161 234 7103

South

0161 234 7085

Central West

0161 234 7103

Central East

0161 234 7047

North West

0161 234 7047

North East

0161 234 7085

Training information

0161 234 7525/7254

Database enquiries

0161 234 7549

Safeguarding Children Team

North

0161 438 5120

Central

0161 232 0629

South

0161 946 8219

Vulnerable Baby Service

The Vulnerable Baby Service is a specialist multi-agency case planning for pregnant women and babies up to one year.

0161 232 0629

Local Authority Designated Officer

(LADO) 0161 203 3232

The LADO has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of procedures for the management of cases where allegations are made against adults who work with children and young people.

The *MSCB Procedures for Managing Allegations against people who work with children* can be found on the MSCB website: Professionals>Policies and Procedures.

MSCB website

www.manchesterscb.org.uk

Manchester Safeguarding Children Board has an independent website where further information can be found for:

- Parents and carers,
- Professionals
- Children and young people.

The website contains information on training, policies and procedures, membership of the Board, resource lists and fact sheets.

An electronic version of this Referral and Recognition Guidance is available in the Professionals section, and these and other useful numbers can be found under Links.

The Multi-agency Referral and Assessment Form can be found on the home page of the MSCB website, at the bottom of the blue box headed 'What to do if you have concerns about individual children'. There is also a link to guidance on how to fill in the form.

Emergency services

If you think a child is at risk of immediate harm, please contact the police by calling **999**.

