



# **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**

## **Self-Directed Learning Session**

# Introduction

- Working Together is the statutory guidance instructing local authorities and partner agencies how to protect children
- The guidance should be understood and followed by strategic and senior leaders and frontline practitioners of all organisations that work with children and families
- It was updated in July 2018. This self-directed learning session has been developed to ensure that practitioners working with children and families understand the updated guidance and what their role and responsibilities are in safeguarding children

# Aim

- This is a self-directed learning session which you can work through at your own pace
- You will learn about:
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 – a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
  - Using a child-centred approach to safeguarding children
  - Assessing need and providing help
  - Threshold for social care intervention and referral
  - Information sharing
  - The procedures following a referral to Children and Families Direct
- Please complete this self-directed learning session and read *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* - <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/nottingham-city-safeguarding-children-board/inter-agency-procedures-and-practice-guidance/>

# Safeguarding: definition

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes



# Child Protection: definition

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

# Child-centred approach

Practitioners should:

- always keep the child at the very centre of their work
- see and speak to the child; listen to and take their views seriously
- work in collaboration with children and their families when deciding how to best support their needs being met
- follow the principles of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 - that state that the **welfare of children is paramount** and that they are best looked after within their families, with their parents playing a full part in their lives, unless compulsory intervention in family life is necessary.

Please see the bite-sized guides to ‘child-focused practice’ and ‘the voice of the child’ here -

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/nottingham-city-safeguarding-children-board/learning-from-practice/#bitesize>



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# What children want from professionals

## Children have said that they need

- vigilance: to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- stability: to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- respect: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- support: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- advocacy: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views
- protection: to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee

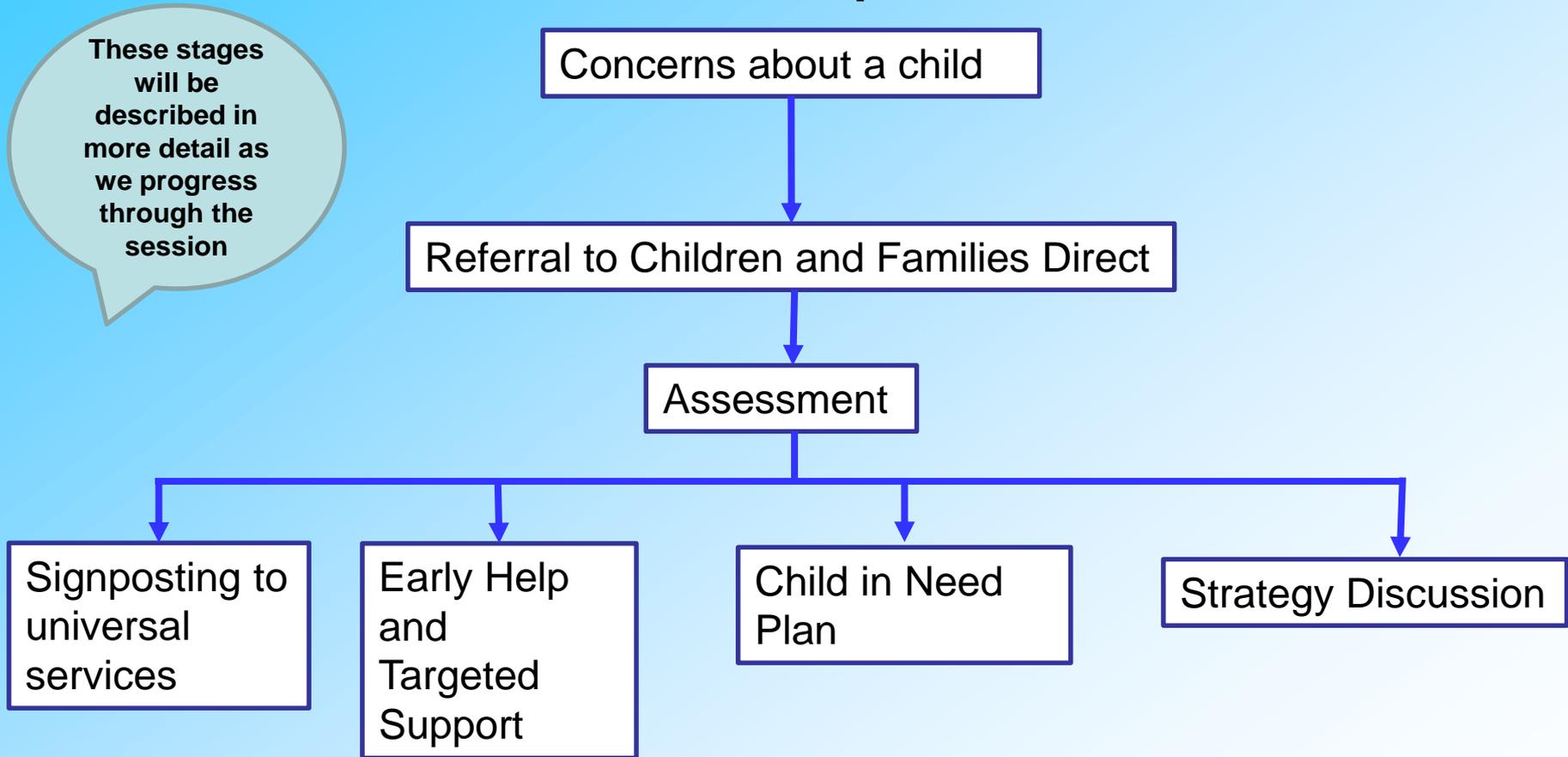


# Multi-agency approach

- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility
- Multi-agency working brings together practitioners from different agencies to provide an integrated way of working to support children, young people and families.
- No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.



# Overview of referral to social care and next steps...



At any point during the process, S47 enquiries can be initiated where a strategy discussion concludes that a child is likely to suffer significant harm

# Children and Families Direct

**Children and Families Direct is the easy way to access family support and safeguarding services within Nottingham City.**

There are many services available to support children and families. Children and Families Direct is a 'one stop shop' which means you can access all of them using just one telephone number or email address.

Children and Families Direct is operational **Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm.**

**Children & Families Direct**

**0115 876 4800**

**[candfdirect@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:candfdirect@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)**



Outside of these hours the telephone number should be used for emergency safeguarding enquiries only.

# Children and Families Direct

## Making a referral or a request for services

- To make either a safeguarding referral or a request for services please complete the Multi Agency Request for Services Form (MARF). Once completed send by email to: [candf.direct@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:candf.direct@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)
- For support and guidance on completing the MARF please refer to the MARF practice guidance and the **mock case examples** of a safeguarding referral and a request for support services
- The MARF, along with the support and guidance on it, can be found here - <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/children-and-families-direct/>



# Information Sharing

- Effective information sharing is essential for early identification of need, assessment and services to keep children safe
- Serious case reviews show us that missed opportunities to share information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare of children
- Fears about sharing information must not prevent practitioners from protecting children from harm or abuse
- Guidance on sharing information can be found here:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721581/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_practitioners\\_safeguarding\\_services.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)



# Myth-busting guide to information sharing

Sharing information enables practitioners and agencies to identify and provide appropriate services that safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Below are common myths that may hinder effective information sharing.

## **Data protection legislation is a barrier to sharing information**

No – the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information, but rather provide a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately. In particular, the Data Protection Act 2018 balances the rights of the information subject (the individual whom the information is about) and the possible need to share information about them.

## **Consent is always needed to share personal information**

No – you do not necessarily need consent to share personal information. Wherever possible, you should seek consent and be open and honest with the individual from the outset as to why, what, how and with whom, their information will be shared. You should seek consent where an individual may not expect their information to be passed on. When you gain consent to share information, it must be explicit, and freely given. There may be some circumstances where it is not appropriate to seek consent, because the individual cannot give consent, or it is not reasonable to obtain consent, or because to gain consent would put a child's or young person's safety at risk.

# Myth-busting guide to information sharing (part 2)

## **Personal information collected by one organisation/agency cannot be disclosed to another**

No – this is not the case, unless the information is to be used for a purpose incompatible with the purpose for which it was originally collected. In the case of children in need, or children at risk of significant harm, it is difficult to foresee circumstances where information law would be a barrier to sharing personal information with other practitioners<sup>14</sup>.

## **The common law duty of confidence and the Human Rights Act 1998 prevent the sharing of personal information**

No – this is not the case. In addition to the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, practitioners need to balance the common law duty of confidence and the Human Rights Act 1998 against the effect on individuals or others of not sharing the information.

## **IT Systems are often a barrier to effective information sharing**

No – IT systems, such as the Child Protection Information Sharing project (CP-IS), can be useful for information sharing. IT systems are most valuable when practitioners use the shared data to make more informed decisions about how to support and safeguard a child.

# Family Support Pathway

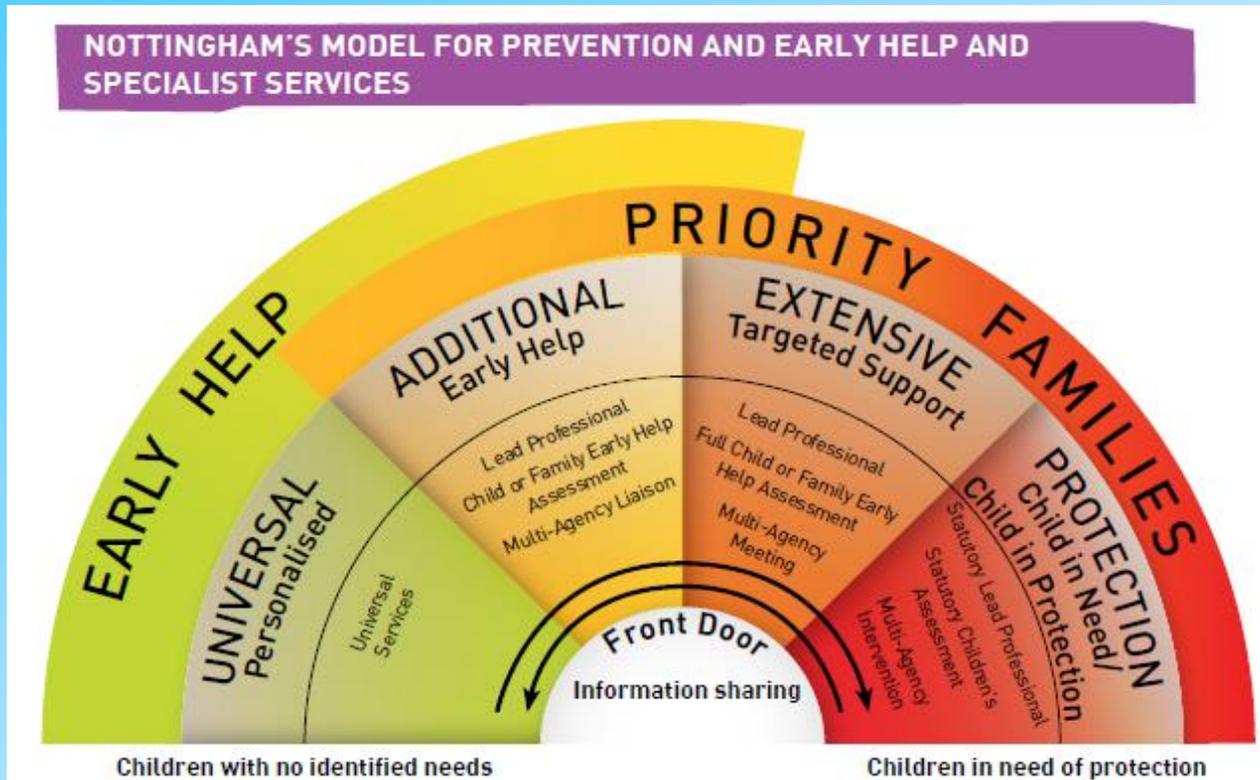


Professionals should familiarise themselves with the Family Support Pathway, which sets out the threshold for access to support and services for children and families.

This document supports professionals to understand their role within the pathway, and to contribute to making decisions about the level of support or assessment needed.

It can be found at -  
[http://www.nottinghamchildrenspartnership.co.uk/media/455730/family-support-pathway-2016-17\\_nov-2016.pdf](http://www.nottinghamchildrenspartnership.co.uk/media/455730/family-support-pathway-2016-17_nov-2016.pdf)

# Family Support Pathway



Nottingham City offers a wide range of support services enabling the needs of children, young people and families to be met through universal services. If needs cannot be met within universal services, practitioners will need to consider if additional and more extensive, or specialist and protective support is required.

# Family Support Pathway

Universal	Self help	Children and families are doing well and there are no significant concerns about health, development or achievement that cannot be met within universal services.	Routine Health and Educational Assessments
Additional	Early Help	Children and families are experiencing problems requiring universal services to work together with other support services to prevent problems increasing.	Child or Family Early Help Assessment
Extensive	Targeted Help	Children and families are experiencing a range of increasing problems that require extensive multi-agency support to meet the needs of the whole family and crisis is likely to be prevented.	Child or Family Early Help Assessment or Statutory Assessment may be required
Child in Need	Specialist Help	Children are 'in need' if they are disabled or unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health or development unless services are provided (Children Act 1989).	Statutory Assessment
Protection		Children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.	

The table above describes the different types of services that are available

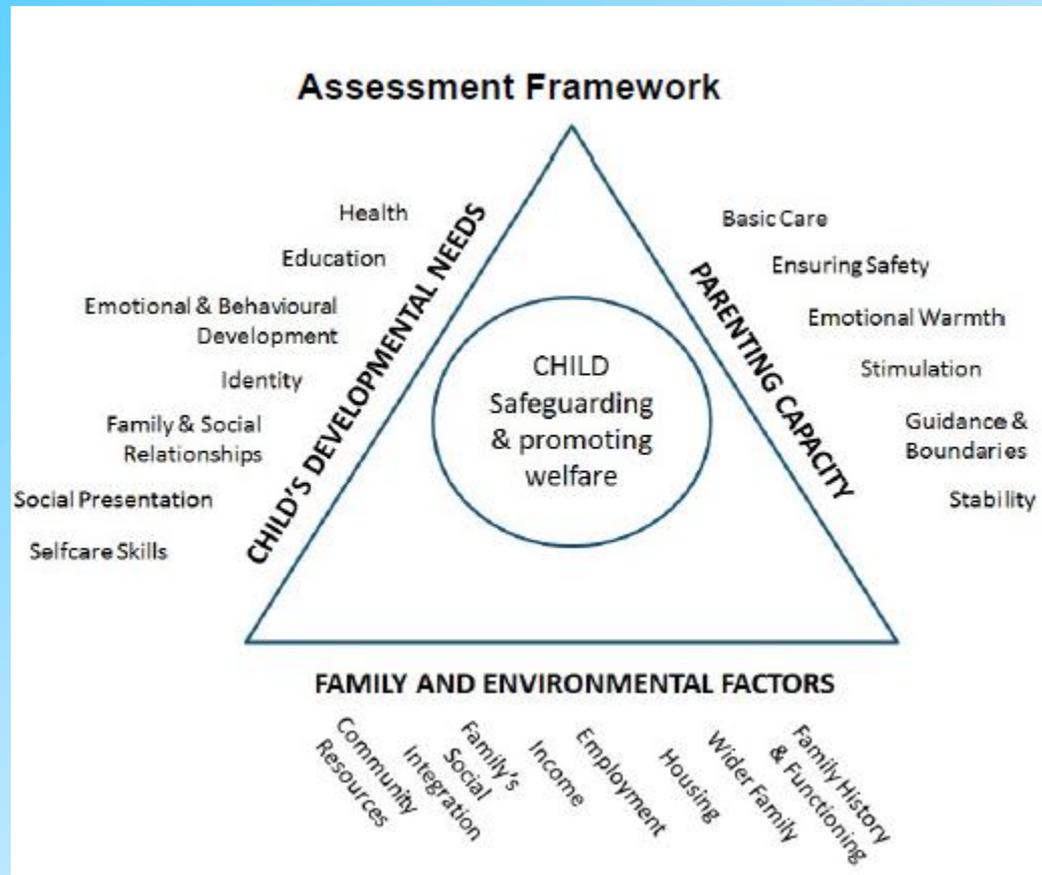
# Assessment

Once a MARF has been received by Children and Families Direct and has been accepted as a referral, an assessment will be undertaken to:

- Gather information about a child and family
- Analyse their needs and/or the nature and level of any risk and harm the child is experiencing
- Decide whether the child is a child in need or is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- Provide support to address those needs to improve the child's outcomes and welfare and where necessary take action to make them safe

Assessment should be a dynamic process, which analyses and responds to the changing nature of and level of need and/or risk faced by the child from inside or outside of the family

# Assessment Framework



The assessment will be completed using the above framework.



# Children in Need and escalation to Child Protection (1)

- under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare
- local authorities undertake assessments of the needs of individual children and must give due regard to a child's age and understanding when determining what, if any, services to provide. Every assessment must be informed by the views of the child as well as the family, and a child's wishes and feelings must be sought regarding the provision of services to be delivered. Where possible, children should be seen alone
- a child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 by a social worker
- some children in need may require accommodation because there is no one who has parental responsibility for them, because they are lost or abandoned, or because the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care. Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, the local authority has a duty to accommodate such children in need in their area

# Children in Need and escalation to Child Protection (2)

- some children in need may require accommodation because there is no one who has parental responsibility for them, because they are lost or abandoned, or because the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care. Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, the local authority has a duty to accommodate such children in need in their area
- when assessing children in need and providing services, specialist assessments may be required and, where possible, should be co-ordinated so that the child and family experience a coherent process and a single plan of action
- under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child (who lives or is found in their area) is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make such enquiries as it considers necessary to decide whether to take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Such enquiries, supported by other organisations and agencies, as appropriate, should be initiated where there are concerns about all forms of abuse, neglect. This includes female genital mutilation and other honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats including radicalisation and sexual or criminal exploitation
- there may be a need for immediate protection whilst an assessment or enquiries are carried out

# Strategy discussion

- Local authority children's social care should convene a strategy discussion to determine a child's welfare and plan rapid future action if there is reasonable cause to suspect **the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.**
- A local authority social worker, health practitioners and a police representative should, as a minimum, be involved in the strategy discussion. Other agency representatives may also be included
- The discussion might take the form of a multi-agency meeting or phone calls and more than one discussion may be necessary.
- A strategy discussion can take place following a referral or at any other time, including during the assessment process and when new information is received on an already open case.
- The discussion should be used to:
  - share available information
  - agree the need for, and timing of, any criminal investigation
  - decide whether enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 must be undertaken

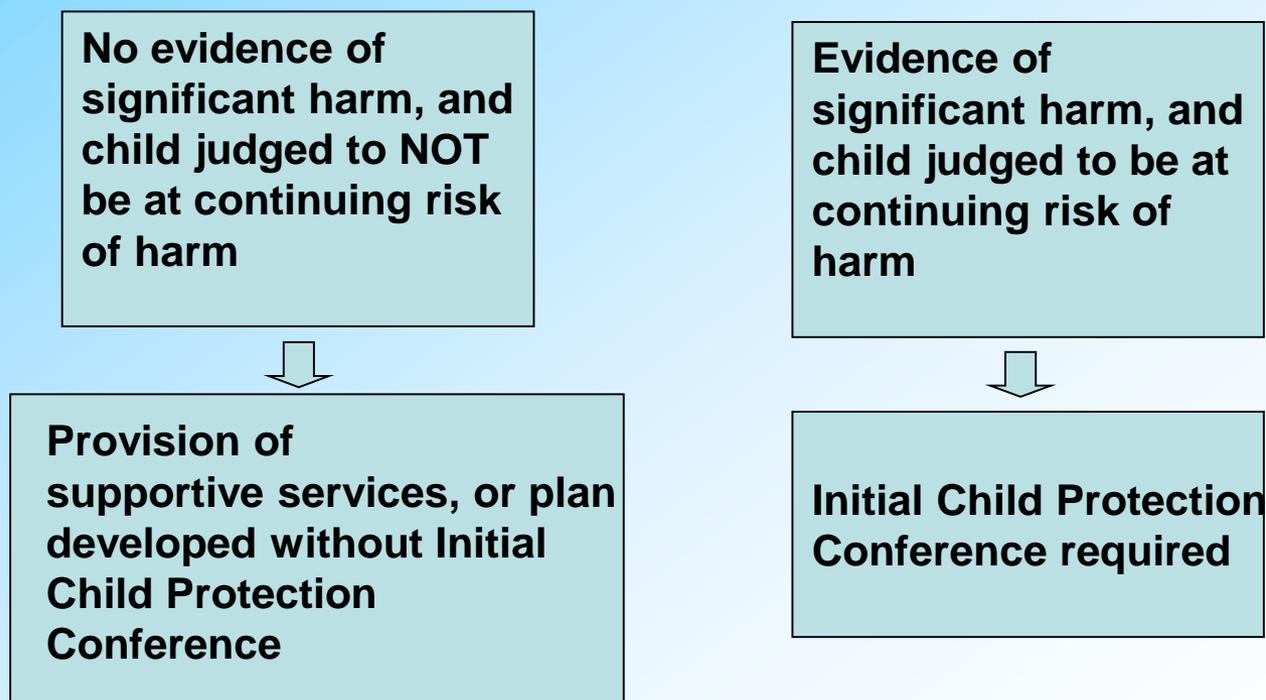


# Completion of S47 enquiries

If the strategy discussion concludes that S47 enquiries are necessary, then the enquiry is initiated to decide whether and what type of action is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child who is suspected of or likely to be suffering significant harm.

Children's Social Care decide how best to proceed, after discussion with other agencies that have been involved.

## Options:



# Initial Child Protection Conference

- Where Section 47 enquiries find that a child is found to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is convened.
- The ICPC brings together family members (and the child where appropriate), with the supporters, advocates and practitioners involved with the family, to make decisions about the child's future safety, health and development.
- Chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)
- Agencies are expected to prepare a report about the child and family for the conference. A template for conference reports can be downloaded from here:

[http://www.proceduresonline.com/nottinghamshire/scb/user\\_controlled\\_lcms\\_area/uploaded\\_files/reports\\_cp\\_conf\\_nottinghamcity.doc](http://www.proceduresonline.com/nottinghamshire/scb/user_controlled_lcms_area/uploaded_files/reports_cp_conf_nottinghamcity.doc)



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# Initial Child Protection Conference

## Need to decide:

- The likelihood of the child suffering significant harm in the future and therefore is at risk of continuing harm
- What action is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, how that action will be taken and with what intended outcomes
- Which category of abuse the child is suffering or at risk of suffering
- Agree members of the core group to develop and implement a child protection plan and associated timescales.
- Agree date for first review



# Child Protection Plan

The aim of the child protection plan is to:

- ensure the child is safe from harm and prevent them from suffering further harm
- promote the child's health and development
- support the family and wider family members to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child, provided it is in the best interests of the child



# Core Group

Members are responsible for developing the recommendations of the ICPC into a detailed protection plan and implementing it.

First meeting: (Chaired by the Social Care Team Manager)

- Should happen within 10 days of the ICPC, but straight after if possible.
- Should agree the detail of the Child Protection plan
- Should agree what is to be done, by whom and by when
- Child given copy of plan in appropriate language
- Minutes distributed within 5 days of meeting.

Subsequent meetings chaired by the Social Worker



# Review Child Protection Conference

- First review meeting held within 3 months of the Initial Child Protection Conference, and others at intervals of not more than 6 months.
- Attended by people involved in the Initial Child Protection Conference and core group
- Chaired by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)
- The purpose is to
  - review the safety, health and development of the child against the planned outcomes of the plan.
  - ensure the child continues to be safeguarded from harm
  - Consider whether the plan should be changed, continued, closed or stepped across to Child in Need plan or to Early Help/ Targeted services



# Signs of Safety



- All agencies in Nottingham city have agreed to adopt the ‘Signs of Safety’ approach when there are concerns about a child or young person.
- Signs of Safety is a strengths-based safety orientated approach: it is about family members and professionals working together to meet children and young people’s needs in the best way possible. It puts children, young people and their parents at the heart of the work.
- Families play a key part in working alongside professionals to understand the worries and concerns that are identified for their child, (who is worried and why), identifying the things that are going well in the child’s life (strengths/safety), and agreeing what needs to be done (goals), to build on the strengths and safety to reduce the worries and risks
- More information on Signs of Safety is here - <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/nottingham-city-safeguarding-children-board/resources-for-professionals/signs-of-safety/>



# Core principles of Signs of Safety



- Establishing constructive working relationships and partnerships between professionals and family members, and between professionals themselves
- Engaging in critical thinking and maintaining a position of inquiry
- Staying grounded in the everyday work of practitioners.
- Plain language – avoid jargon
- It is all about the details



This is the SOS assessment and planning tool. It helps professionals to:

- Record, assess and plan
- Identify concerns
- Identify safety and strengths
- Scale the level of safety

When we think about the situation facing this family:			
What are we Worried About?	<u>What's Working Well?</u> (Strengths & Safety)	What Needs to Happen?	
On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means immediate response required from Children's Social Care (0= no signs of safety)10 means no further action required (10 = high levels of safety )			
0			10

# Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

- Working Together 2018 has brought changes to strategic safeguarding arrangements. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) will be replaced by “safeguarding partners”
- Under the new legislation, three safeguarding partners (local authorities, police, and clinical commissioning groups) must make arrangements to work together with relevant agencies (as they consider appropriate) to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area.
- The three safeguarding partners should agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.
- All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements.
- In Nottingham, the existing Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board will become the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership



# Changes to Serious Case Reviews

- Working Together 2018 has introduced changes to the arrangements for how lessons are learnt from serious child safeguarding incidents. These were previously called Serious Case Reviews.
- At a local level, safeguarding partners (local authorities, police, and clinical commissioning groups) are responsible for identifying and sharing learning from serious child safeguarding cases. The partners must commission and oversee the review of those cases
- At a national level there is now the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel). The Panel is responsible for identifying and reviewing serious child safeguarding cases which it believes raises issues that are of national importance. The Panel began operating on 29 June 2018, and will consider all notifications of serious incidents.
- Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:
  - abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected **and**
  - the child has died or been seriously harmed

# Local and National Learning

## Local Information

- Briefing notes on the learning from local Serious Case Reviews and other multi-agency reviews can be found here - <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/nottingham-city-safeguarding-children-board/learning-from-practice/#learning>
- Bitesize guides on safeguarding topics can be found here - <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/nottingham-city-safeguarding-children-board/learning-from-practice/#bitesize>

## National learning

- The NSPCC runs the national case review repository where you can access published case reviews

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/case-reviews/national-case-review-repository/>

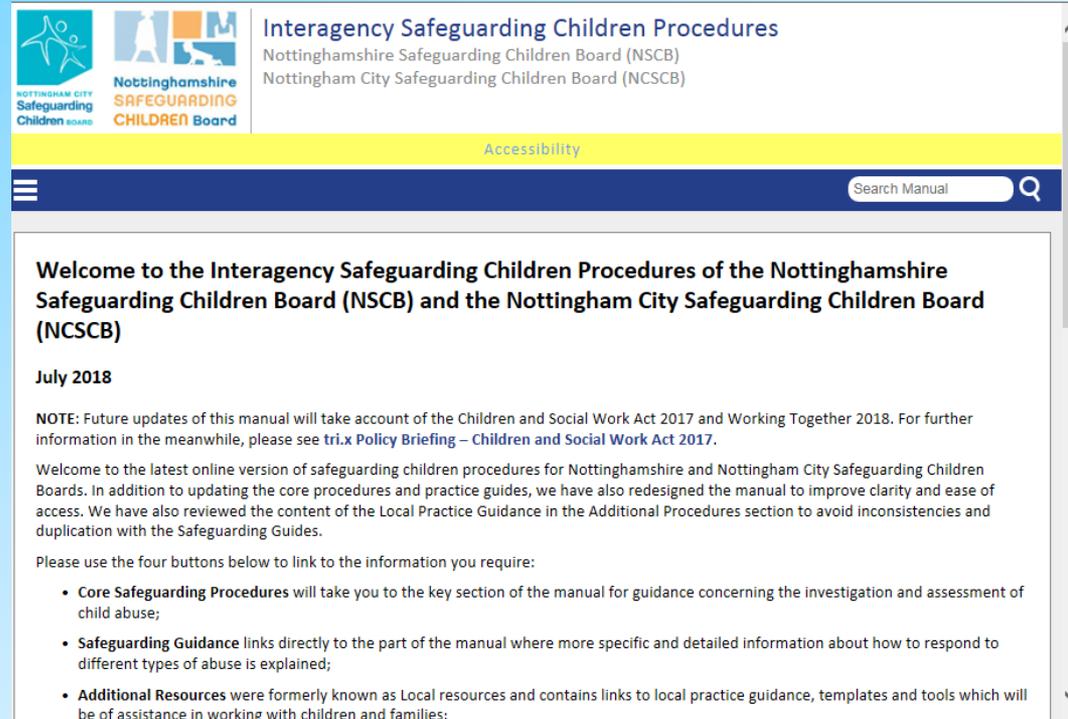


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All the information in this session is drawn from the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Procedures

Everyone should familiarise themselves with the procedures and how to find more detailed information. They can be found at the following link:

<http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/>



**Interagency Safeguarding Children Procedures**  
Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB)  
Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board (NCSCB)

Accessibility

Search Manual

**Welcome to the Interagency Safeguarding Children Procedures of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) and the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board (NCSCB)**

July 2018

**NOTE:** Future updates of this manual will take account of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2018. For further information in the meanwhile, please see [tri.x Policy Briefing – Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

Welcome to the latest online version of safeguarding children procedures for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Boards. In addition to updating the core procedures and practice guides, we have also redesigned the manual to improve clarity and ease of access. We have also reviewed the content of the Local Practice Guidance in the Additional Procedures section to avoid inconsistencies and duplication with the Safeguarding Guides.

Please use the four buttons below to link to the information you require:

- **Core Safeguarding Procedures** will take you to the key section of the manual for guidance concerning the investigation and assessment of child abuse;
- **Safeguarding Guidance** links directly to the part of the manual where more specific and detailed information about how to respond to different types of abuse is explained;
- **Additional Resources** were formerly known as Local resources and contains links to local practice guidance, templates and tools which will be of assistance in working with children and families;



Thank you for completing this self-directed learning session

If you need any support in understanding your role within safeguarding arrangements then please ask your line manager for help, or get in touch with the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board by calling 0115 876 4762 or emailing [safeguarding.partnerships@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.partnerships@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

**Thank you**

