**Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Group -** Briefing for staff

[**Pan Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/) Survey

A huge thank you to the 46 of you who completed our survey on the effectiveness of the Pan Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures. It was fantastic to hear that 94% of you said the site helps you with your practice!

All of your feedback regarding site accessibility, including the use of search function and the quick link spider diagram has been shared with Phew, the website provider, who are looking at how to make improvements to these features.

Drawing on your feedback, the Pan Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures Group will continue their efforts to ensure content is clear and succinct, but with enough technical detail to support you in your safeguarding practice. We will also be paying closer attention to signposting where local practice or arrangements differ.

We plan to re-run the survey in March 2021 and hope to get more feedback to help make the site even better for you.

**Tip! Add the** [**Pan Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/) **to your favourites on your web browser for quick and easy access!**

[**Female Genital Mutilation**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkypso/children-in-specific-circumstances/female-genital-mutilation/#s5013) **(FGM)**

A working group of practitioners from across the county have led on an extensive re-write of the FGM policy. The revised policy gives greater clarity on the use of FGM protection orders (FGMPOs) and provides more detail to support you to recognise the indicators of this form of child abuse.

**[Children in hospital](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyzpq/children-in-specific-circumstances/children-in-hospital/" \l "s4998)**

This policy was previously incorporated in the [Children living away from home policy](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkypho/children-in-specific-circumstances/children-living-away-from-home) but is now a standalone policy. The policy covers all children who are in-patients, including those in psychiatric settings and specialist hospitals. A section on ‘Considerations during transitions’ has been added. This includes discharge planning for new-borns from neonatal intensive care units and transition planning for children with long-term.

***A reminder that any child who is an in-patient in a hospital, and about whom there are child protection concerns, should be discharged home with a referral to establish; that the home environment is safe, the concerns by medical staff are fully addressed and there is a plan in place for the on-going promotion and safeguarding of the child's welfare c*onditions moving into adult services.**

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[**Working with families who are uncooperative and/or not engaging with professionals**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqyq/children-in-specific-circumstances/working-with-families-who-are-uncooperative-and-or-not-engaging-with-professionals/#s4364)

The guidance is designed to help professionals to identify parents and carers who are hostile, aggressive, or using disguised compliance techniques as a mechanism to keep professionals at a distance; or attempting to persuade professionals that sufficient change has occurred or is occurring to reduce the need for further intervention.

A section has been added on **Drawing up a Contract of Expectation** / **Written Undertaking**

*A 'Contract of Expectation' or a 'Written Undertaking' is an agreement regarding a specific issue where a practitioner has concerns that require an undertaking from a parent or carer that something will or will not happen.*

*Such agreements do not constitute an arrangement for partnership working and these are not to be confused with a 'Written agreement'.*

*They act as a means of outlining an expectation of a parent or carer made by Children's Services in order to inform the parent or carer and other agencies of a specific risk or concern and how to act should the expectations outlined not be met. This leaves the parent/carer in no doubt about the actions they do /don't take, will impact on the plan for the child.  It may be appropriate to use a ‘Contract of Expectation' or a 'Written Undertaking' alongside a wider written agreement to cover a specific concern.*

**Consent in the MASH/SPA/FDFF**

The MASH/FDFF/ SPOA environments are unique because they enable multiple sources of information to be considered and shared in a secure and safe location.

The Confidentiality and Consent section of the [**Information Sharing and Confidentiality Procedure**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/pkypph/information-sharing-and-confidentiality/information-sharing)has been updated to include more guidance on obtaining consent.

There is no absolute requirement for agencies in the MASH/ FDFF/ SPOA to obtain consent before sharing information, nor is there a blanket policy of never doing so. There is an obligation to consider on all occasions and on a case by case basis whether the information will be shared with or without consent. A practitioner's determination should always be reasonable, necessary, and proportionate in line with the seven golden rules of information sharing. It should always be recorded together with the rationale for the decision.

Information sharing in these circumstances is governed by a legal framework that helps to balance the individual's right to privacy with the need to protect children and young people at risk or who may need support.

The professional holding the information must always consider relevance and proportionality before releasing information from the MASH/FDFF/SPOA.

When the MASH/ FDFF/ SPOA decides a threshold has been met for a referral to a Social Work team for an assessment under S17 or S47, consideration to what they have got consent to share, outside of the MASH/ FDFF/ SPOA environment, should be transparent and recorded.

When conducting an s47 enquiry, the social worker should seek the parents’ permission to conduct s47 checks unless to do so would place the child at risk of significant harm. Managers must record decisions about seeking permission.

[**Sexually Active Children**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqyx/children-in-specific-circumstances/sexually-active-children)

A definition of ‘upskirting’ has been added to the Sexually Active Children policy.

‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

[**Safeguarding children with disabilities**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyplt/children-in-specific-circumstances/safeguarding-children-with-disabilities/#s4174)

This policy has undergone a thorough review.

Language has been significantly updated and signposting to *Safeguarding Disabled Child practice guidance 2009 (DCSF*), *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018* (last updated on 9 December 2020) and to guidance on bruising and injuries in children who are not independently mobile, has been improved.

A more fulsome list of risk indicators has been added as well as additional information on safeguarding Looked After children with disabilities.

***Reminder: Any child with a disability is, by definition, a Child in Need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.***

**Other safeguarding and child protection policies, procedures and guidance updated since the last briefing:**

* [Joint Policy for Children Missing](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkypoh/children-in-specific-circumstances/joint-policy-for-children-missing/#s5019) and [Children and families who go missing](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqxy/children-in-specific-circumstances/children-and-families-who-go-missing/#s4302)
* [Assessment of Young People Accused, finally Warned about or Convicted of Offences Against Children](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/okypsy/risk-management-of-known-offenders-and-those-who-pose-a-risk/assessment-of-young-people-accused-cautioned-or-convicted-of-offences-against-children)
* [Self-harm and suicidal behaviour](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyzpz/children-in-specific-circumstances/self-harm-and-suicidal-behaviour/#s5008)
* [Self-harm and suicidal behaviour](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyzpz/children-in-specific-circumstances/self-harm-and-suicidal-behaviour/#s5008)

[**Honour Based Abuse**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqpp/children-in-specific-circumstances/honour-based-abuse/#s4408)

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020 amends the wording of the section on honour based violence from ‘violence’ to ‘abuse’ to recognise non-violent forms of abuse. All references to honour based violence have been changed to ‘honour based abuse’.

[**Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqxs/children-in-specific-circumstances/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity/#s4327)

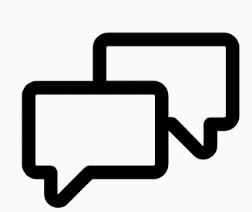
Between December 2020 and June 2021, the pan-Sussex Safeguarding Children will be undertaking a review of all relevant polices in relation to gang violence**,**[exploitation](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqxo/children-in-specific-circumstances/exploitation)**,**[modern slavery and human trafficking](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqyp/children-in-specific-circumstances/child-victims-of-modern-slavery-and-trafficking)**.**

In the interim, the [Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/tkyqxs/children-in-specific-circumstances/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity/#s4327) guidance has been updated to include the definition, and risks implicit, of children and young people drawn into organised crime groups.

This guidance summarises [Ending gang violence and exploitation](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/491699/Ending_gang_violence_and_Exploitation_FINAL.pdf) published by the Government in 2016, followed by [Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863323/HOCountyLinesGuidance_-_Sept2018.pdf) (published by the Home Office in 2018).  Guidance has been updated in light of the following recent publications:

* [Serious Case Review (Child C – a 14-year-old boy)](https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/WFSCB%20-%20SCR%20Child%20C%20May%20final_.pdf) *(Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Partnership – May 2020)*
* [It was hard to escape: Safeguarding children at risk from criminal exploitation](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/870035/Safeguarding_children_at_risk_from_criminal_exploitation_review.pdf) *(Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - June 2020)*





**Currently under review**

* A brand new procedure on families who move across LA boundaries
* Guidance on Children who present with Harmful Sexual Behaviours
* Domestic Violence
* Parental Mental Health
* Cultural competency

**If you would like to talk about any aspect of this briefing, or suggest a Pan Sussex policy/ procedure/ guidance for review please contact** [**Mia.brown@brighton-hove.gov.uk**](mailto:Mia.brown@brighton-hove.gov.uk)