

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

The Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Group met on 19 January 2024.

This briefing provides updates on changes to the [Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual](#).

## Elective Home Education

While many parents opt to enrol their children in schools, some choose to provide education at home, a practice known as Elective Home Education (EHE). It's important to emphasise that home education alone doesn't raise safeguarding concerns. Nevertheless, Home education can lack oversight like schools, raising concerns about education quality and child well-being. Isolation, hidden abuse, parental influence, inadequate education, missing out on regular health check-ups and support services provided by schools and possible lack of socialisation are additional concerns impacting home educated children's development and safety. The policy has undergone a review to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness in supporting professionals engaged with families practicing home education.

## Safeguarding children who are absent from education

A collaborative effort by education professionals from across Sussex has resulted in the review of this pan-Sussex policy, in alignment with recent statutory updates outlined in [Keeping children safe in education 2023](#). The updated policy aims to enhance clarity concerning suspension and permanent exclusion procedures, offer detailed insights into part-time timetables, and provide clearer expectations regarding school attendance.



## Male Circumcision

As per the ruling by the President of the Family Division, male circumcision is deemed to cause harm to child but it would not constitute Significant Harm under the Children's Act. This distinction, while seemingly semantic, implies that typically, male circumcision proposals would not raise child protection concerns on their own, although certain aggravating factors could alter this assessment. This policy provides information on; circumcision for therapeutic/medical purposes, the legal position, principles of good practice, doctors' response, recognition of harm, the multi-agency response and the role of community/ religious leaders.

## Surrogacy

Surrogacy poses safeguarding concerns due to legal ambiguity, potential exploitation, psychological impacts on all parties involved, challenges in parental bonding, risks to child welfare, and regulatory gaps in addressing surrogacy-related issues. Health colleagues have led a significant rewrite of this pan-Sussex policy, which now provides better-defined language regarding surrogacy, legal considerations, the parental order process, parental responsibility, and disputes. The policy also offers helpful guidance on informing the child about their birth through surrogacy and assessing the mental capacity of the surrogate.

## Supporting families experiencing hate incidents, crimes and harassment

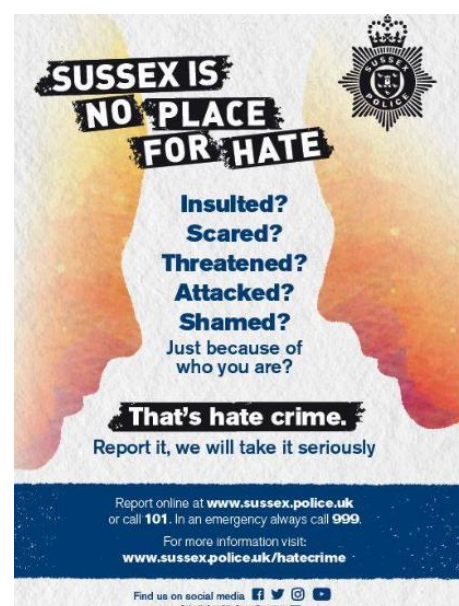
The Home Office mandates police forces to report on five nationally monitored strands of hate:

- Disability or perceived disability
- Race or perceived race
- Religion or perceived religion
- Sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
- transgender or perceived to be transgender

Sussex Police acknowledges that other groups can also be targets of hate incidents and crimes.

Hate incidents and crimes can take various forms including; physical attacks, threats, verbal abuse, harassment, as well as cyber-enabled incidents. Any criminal offense perceived by the victim or another person to be motivated by hate is considered a hate crime, regardless of evidence.

Colleagues from community safety teams and Sussex Police have reviewed the pan-Sussex policy to support professionals in assisting families, children, and young people who may experience hate incidents or crimes.



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