

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

The Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Group met on 8 July 2024.

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

## Early Help Plan/ Strengthening Families Assessments

This policy has undergone its annual review, with no significant changes made. Please be reminded that the Early Help Plan is a nationally standardised approach designed to work with families, capturing their views, needs, strengths, and goals in a single, cohesive support plan. It provides a coordinated response to support children and families with multiple and complex needs.

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## Person with a learning disability who is a parent / carer

Please note the following updates to this policy:

- It has been clarified that if there are concerns about a parent's or carer's ability to care for their child due to any impairment or brain dysfunction, an assessment of their parenting needs and abilities should be conducted by Children's Services as a first step. This assessment must consider the equality duty outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
  - The terminology has been updated from "learning disabled" to "parent/carer with a learning disability."
  - If a parent or carer with a learning disability appears unable to meet their child's needs, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care following the [Making a Referral Procedure](#).
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## Parenting Capacity and Mental Health Difficulties

Parents with mental health difficulties may be at greater risk of neglecting their own wellbeing, which can impact their children's physical, emotional, and social needs. It's essential to prioritise protecting children from abuse and neglect over maintaining the privacy of those failing to safeguard them, in line with [Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#)

When planning care for parents with mental health difficulties, it is crucial to consider the needs and risk factors of the children involved. Children's Social Care, along with other relevant agencies, should participate in discharge planning, and any changes to risk assessments must be communicated to all involved agencies according to information-sharing guidelines. Practitioners should adopt a whole-family approach, recognizing that changes for one family member can affect others, including children.

Children's Social Care must share relevant information about child protection processes with adult mental health practitioners, as this information could significantly impact a parent's mental state and is vital for risk assessment. A new resource, the "Our Time" website, has been added the policy, providing support and resources for children of parents with mental illness, as well as for parents and professionals. You can access it at [Our Time](#).

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## Arrangements Regarding Recruitment and Selection of Staff

This policy now includes the following clarifying points:

- Reference requests should be sent to official email addresses rather than personal ones. It's recommended to follow up written references with a phone call to ensure accuracy.
  - It's crucial to remain vigilant about gaps in employment or inconsistencies in CVs, as some individuals with substantiated allegations may avoid scrutiny by working in non-regulated roles during interim periods.
  - The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) provides security advice and information on overseas criminal record checks. Visit the [National Protective Security Authority | NPSA](#) for details.
  - Agencies should have clear internal procedures for roles involving work with children and young people, ensuring job descriptions and person specifications meet professional standards. References from previous employers should accurately assess the individual's qualities and include any relevant disciplinary actions, convictions, or safeguarding concerns.
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## Children and Young People Susceptible to Violent Extremism

This policy has been updated with the following key points:

- Prevent addresses all forms of terrorism, including extreme right-wing, Islamist (e.g., Al-Qaida, Daesh), and single-issue terrorism.
- The risk of radicalization may coincide with other vulnerabilities. Indicators can include identity or personal crises, challenging personal circumstances, unmet aspirations, and experiences of criminality, although there is no specific profile.
- A new [Prevent National Referral Form](#) has been introduced (effective from 1 August). If you have concerns, please complete and email completed forms to:
  - For Brighton & Hove referrals:  
[PreventReferralsbrightonandhove@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:PreventReferralsbrightonandhove@sussex.pnn.police.uk)
  - For East Sussex referrals:  
[PreventReferralseastsussex@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:PreventReferralseastsussex@sussex.pnn.police.uk)
  - For West Sussex referrals:  
[PreventReferralswestsussex@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:PreventReferralswestsussex@sussex.pnn.police.uk)

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