

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

The Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Group met on 6 November 2023. This briefing provides updates on changes to the [Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual](#).

### [Multi-agency guidance for responding and reviewing child deaths](#)

This guidance has undergone an extensive re-write. All practitioners are encouraged to re-familiarise themselves with the arrangements to respond and review a child death. Amongst other topics, the guidance covers; immediate decision making and notifications, the Joint Agency Response (JAR) Protocol, investigation and information gathering, family engagement and bereavement support and the Child Death Overview Panel.

### [The Sussex Joint Protocol to Reduce the Criminalisation of Children in Care and Care leavers](#)

This new local protocol represents the Sussex multi-agency safeguarding partnerships' commitment to reducing the criminalisation of Sussex's Children in Care and care leavers and reflects the principles of [The national protocol on reducing unnecessary criminalisation of looked-after children and care leavers](#).

It has been developed to meet local circumstances and builds upon what is already established practice to support our most vulnerable children. This approach has been developed through a multi-agency steering group which have brought together representatives of partner agencies who are key to supporting children and young people and those who are key to the criminal justice system.

### [NEW Children not brought to appointments or meetings that relate to their welfare, care or health](#)

This new guidance is intended to support practitioners to re-think 'Did Not Attend'. Practitioners should use "Was Not Brought (WNB)" rather than "Did Not Attend" for recording or noting the non-attendance of children who are reliant on someone else to take them to a meeting or appointment. The phrase "Did Not Attend" implies that the child is responsible for not attending. Recording "Was Not Brought (WNB)" is a more accurate representation of the situation and enables practitioners to consider the reasons why a child was not brought to a meeting or appointment, the implications for them not having been brought, and assess the potential risks or safeguarding concerns for them, especially if there is a repeat pattern of cancellations and non-attendance.

### [Safeguarding children in hospital | Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual](#)

More guidance on statutory duties under Sections 85 and 86 of the Children Act 1989 have been added to this policy.

### [Safeguarding Children impacted by Domestic Abuse](#)

Due to the prevalence of domestic abuse across Sussex this policy is kept under frequent review.

Examples of transgender related domestic abuse have been added to the policy.

Experience of domestic abuse is a traumatic event in a child's life. Information on the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people has been updated.

### [Female Genital Mutilation \(or Cutting\) FGM/C](#)

This policy has undergone a thorough review; the definition of FGM/C has been simplified, referencing the [National FGM Centre – Developing excellence in response to FGM and other Harmful Practices](#) guide on traditional terms, amendments have been made regarding FGM Protection Orders, the importance of looking at FGM/C outside of perceived practicing communities has also been added, as well as updates to Recognition, Response and Assessment sections. The policy also now signposts to the [FGM Assessment Tool – National FGM Centre](#) to assist in guiding assessments where FGM/C is a concern.

### [Information Communication Technology](#) – Artificial intelligence & sexual abuse images

Safeguarding and child protection are paramount concerns, particularly in the context of AI-generated content. Whilst AI has the potential to create realistic images, the law is clear that the issue lies in the sexualisation of such content. It is important to recognise that there is nothing inherently illegal about images of naked children (although they should encourage professional curiosity), but when they are sexualised, it comes a serious offence. More information on AI generated images has been added to this policy.

### [Strategy Discussions](#)

Following a Child Safeguarding Practice Review in West Sussex, the following has been clarified:

*When the information on which the decision-making of a previous Strategy Discussion is based changes significantly, or there is a change in circumstances or a decision shift which impacts initial decision making, a further Strategy Discussion should be convened to review that earlier decision-making. Attendance requirements are the same as for the first strategy discussion, including relevant health professionals.*

Other policies which have undergone minor revisions include: [Elective Home Education](#), [Assessment of Young People Accused, Cautioned or Convicted of Offences Against Children](#), and [Honour Based Abuse](#).

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