

**A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE**  
**Key Changes**  
**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010**



**We have summarised key changes from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 for practitioners working with children and families. As these statutory changes became effective from 1 April 2010 this document is designed to help you get the information you need quickly and easily. It should not be considered inclusive of all changes.**

**The guidance can be accessed in its entirety via [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010](#)**

**CHILD FOCUS**  
**(Chapter 1)**

- **ASK THE CHILD** - You should develop a direct relationship with the child wherever possible and find out from them what is going on and what they feel they need.
- **GIVE THE CHILD INFORMATION** - You should give children honest and accurate information about their current situation and the future possibilities, and their right to protection and help so that they know where to go and who they can contact, especially when they are not living at home.
- **ENSURE CHILD KNOWS WHO TO CONTACT** - You should make sure that all children have access to independent advice and support, can express their views, feel involved and take part in the decisions that are made.

**INDIVIDUAL CASE MANAGEMENT**  
**(Chapter 5)**

**EMPHASISE THESE KEY PRINCIPLES WHEN MAKING CASE DECISIONS**

- **FAMILY HISTORY** – use information about the family's history and functioning to inform decision making
- **BALANCE** - analyse the inter-relationships between strengths and protective factors and vulnerabilities and risk factors to determine significant harm
- **CHILD'S VIEW** - consider the child's own assessment of his or her safety and welfare
- **CAPACITY FOR CHANGE** - assess the likelihood and capacity for change and improvement in parenting, weighing up the family's strengths and supports
- **DOCUMENTATION** – review previous documentation and always create accurate recording of actions (why and how did you come to these decisions?)

**Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board - working in partnership to safeguard children in Hampshire:**  
Hampshire County Council Adult and Children's Services (including schools and colleges), 11 District Councils, NHS Hampshire, 5 NHS Trusts, Hampshire Police, Hampshire Probation, CAF/CASS, Wessex Youth Offending Team, Armed Forces and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. [www.4lscb.org.uk](http://www.4lscb.org.uk)

## **WHEN IT COMES TO REFERRALS AND ASSESSMENTS BE ALERT TO:**

(Chapter 5)

- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- SUBSTANCE MISUSE
- MENTAL ILLNESS
- LEARNING DISABILITIES

When taking a referral or gathering information from someone with a role in child's life, ASK SPECIFICALLY about DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE MISUSE, MENTAL ILLNESS AND LEARNING DISABILITIES in regard to both the child and the parent or any carer.

## **COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK – CAF**

(Chapter 2)

- Recognise that carrying out a CAF is not a prerequisite for making a referral, though if one has been completed it should be used to support a referral to children's social care.
- When using the CAF, BE ALERT to situations where children are affected by DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE MISUSE, MENTAL ILLNESS OR LEARNING DISABILITY.
- AT ANY TIME, referrers can discuss concerns with a qualified social worker. Locally, contact the Professional Line of Hantsdirect at 01329 225379.

## **INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

(Chapter 5)

- Must be completed within TEN (10) DAYS – was previously 7 days

## **CORE ASSESSMENT**

(Chapter 5)

### **ASK THESE QUESTIONS**

- What is likely to happen if nothing changes in the child's current situation?
- What are the likely consequences for the child?

## **STRATEGY MEETINGS**

(Chapter 5)

- DOCUMENT - the dates on which the child was seen by the lead social worker during the course of the enquiries
- DOCUMENT - if the child was seen alone, and if not, who was present and why
- CONSIDER - if either the parents or other adults in the household are experiencing problems such as DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE MISUSE OR MENTAL ILLNESS
- INVOLVE - it is important to think about involving professionals from adult services in strategy meetings if the above challenges exist

**Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board - working in partnership to safeguard children in Hampshire:**  
Hampshire County Council Adult and Children's Services (including schools and colleges), 11 District Councils, NHS Hampshire, 5 NHS Trusts, Hampshire Police, Hampshire Probation, CAF/CASS, Wessex Youth Offending Team, Armed Forces and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. [www.4lscb.org.uk](http://www.4lscb.org.uk)

## INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE

(Chapter 5)

- Must be completed within FIFTEEN (15) WORKING DAYS of a strategy discussion, or the strategy discussion at which the section 47 (child protection) enquiries were initiated, if more than one has been held.

### The conference MUST

- CONSIDER all the evidence, taking into account what is happening now together with information about family history and functioning
- MAKE JUDGEMENT about actual or likely significant harm
- DECIDE what action to take to reach the best outcomes for the child
- DECIDE whether the child should be subject to a child protection plan

### WHO ATTENDS

In addition to the typical CORE GROUP members including universal services involved with the family, an emphasis has been placed on the following:

- Professionals from the youth justice system
- Adult services, including mental health, substance misuse, domestic violence and learning disability

All invitees should make every effort to attend, **at the very least** they must send a written report and, where possible, a well briefed agency representative.

### WHAT MUST BE INCLUDED

- FAMILY HISTORY & FUNCTIONING - information on the family history of any adult in the role of caring for a child, BOTH PAST & CURRENT
- EFFECTS ON CHILD - what effect is this level of functioning having on the parents' capacities to meet the child's needs?
- ANALYSIS - an analysis of the information gathered and recorded using the Assessment Framework dimensions (CHILD'S DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS, PARENTING CAPACITY, FAMILY & ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS)
- JUDGEMENT – is the child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm?
- ACTION – how can we best to meet the child's developmental needs?
- RECOMMENDATION – (for the Social Work report only) what is the local authority's recommendation?
- DOCUMENTATION – (for the Social Work report) include whether child was seen by the lead social worker during each visit, who else was seen and when and why the child was not seen alone (if this occurred)

**LEAD SOCIAL WORKER**  
(Chapter 5)

- Every child with a CHILD PROTECTION PLAN should have an identified LEAD social worker (previously referred to as KEY social worker)
- Responsible for ensuring the CHILD PROTECTION PLAN is developed into a detailed inter-agency plan
- Must see the child both ALONE and with the OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS according to local procedures
- Records all DECISIONS and ACTIONS agreed at core group meeting AS WELL AS the written views of those not in attendance

**CORE GROUP**  
(Chapter 5)

- Includes lead social worker, child if appropriate, family members, professionals in direct contact with family, and foster carers if involved
- While the lead social worker has lead responsibility for the formulation and implementation of the child protection plan, ALL MEMBERS OF CORE GROUP are jointly responsible for carrying out these tasks
- First CORE GROUP meeting should take place within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference

**CHILD PROTECTION PLAN**  
(Chapter 5)

- Should include PLANNED OUTCOMES, REALISTIC STRATEGIES and SPECIFIC ACTIONS to bring about the changes needed
- If the parents are not willing to co-operate with the plan, the local authority should consider what action to take and this may include starting family proceedings.

**INTERVENTIONS**  
(Chapter 5)

- Must be designed to meet the child's unmet needs
- Must address vulnerabilities and risk factors based on the options and resources that are available
- Consider which agency or professional and approach the family is most likely to cooperate with

**WHEN DEVELOPING INTERVENTIONS DISCUSS**

- What is of the most immediate benefit and what might take longer?
- What should be the sequence of interventions and why?
- What is the likelihood of achieving sufficient change within the child's time frame?

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (Chapter 5)

- The planning and reviewing processes for LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN who are ALSO the subject of a CHILD PROTECTION PLAN should be integrated into ONE SINGLE PROCESS.
- The child protection plan will become part of the care plan, and in most cases, unless there are particular risks, it will not need to continue.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) has the responsibility to consider the child's overall safety and may chair the child protection conference where a looked after child remains the subject of a child protection plan.
- Where this is not possible the IRO will ATTEND the child protection review conference
- Significant changes to the care plan should only be made FOLLOWING the Looked After Child's review.

## DEFINITION CHANGES (Chapter 1)

SEXUAL ABUSE – definition now reads: sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, ***or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual Abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.***

EMOTIONAL ABUSE – definition expanded to include cyberbullying

KEY SOCIAL WORKER – is now called LEAD SOCIAL WORKER for children with protection plans

VOLUNTARY SECTOR – is now PRIVATE and THIRD SECTOR

INVOLVED IN PROSTITUTION – is now CHILDREN AT RISK OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

SCHEDULE ONE OFFENDER – is now INDIVIDUALS WHO POSE A RISK TO CHILDREN

## YOUNG PEOPLE AT SERIOUS RISK OF HARM (Chapter 6)

An emphasis has been placed on the following groups of young people at risk:

COMMUNITY BASED VIOLENCE – includes GANG, GROUP and KNIFE crime

GANG VIOLENCE – additional guidance available specific to this group

TECHNOLOGY RISKS – has been added identifying a responsibility to understand, identify and reduce the risks of new technology to keep children safe online

## **FAITH COMMUNITIES**

(Chapter 12)

- Churches, in addition to other places of worship and faith organisations, should report all allegations against people who work with children to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Must have effective arrangements in place for working with sexual and violent offenders who wish to worship, including a contract of behaviour

## **EFFECTIVE SUPPORT, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION FOR YOU**

(Chapter 4)

**Working to ensure children are protected from harm requires sound professional judgements to be made. It is demanding work that can be distressing and stressful.**

### **BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

#### **HOW DO YOU DO THIS?**

- Access regular advice, support (from peers, managers, named and designated professionals) and ongoing professional development
- Fully understand your roles, responsibilities and the scope of your professional discretion and authority (*Roles, responsibilities and duty of different people and organisations are explained in Chapter 2. Please read those relevant to you.*)
- Apply good evidence based practice, follow procedures and develop your skills and knowledge

#### **WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR?**

- Quality supervision that:
  - focuses on the child
  - avoids drift
  - stays objective
  - challenges fixed views
  - tests and assesses the evidence base for assessment and decisions
  - addresses the emotional impact of work on you
  - records key decisions within the child's case records

## **EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE AND SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE**

(Chapter 9-12)

Chapters 9-12 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 contain updated evidence-based non-statutory, practice and guidance on working with children on both a broad level as well as with specific issues. The information is too large and specific to note in this document but all are strongly encouraged to review this information for further information and advice.

**Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board - working in partnership to safeguard children in Hampshire:**  
Hampshire County Council Adult and Children's Services (including schools and colleges), 11 District Councils, NHS Hampshire, 5 NHS Trusts, Hampshire Police, Hampshire Probation, CAF/CASS, Wessex Youth Offending Team, Armed Forces and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. [www.4lscb.org.uk](http://www.4lscb.org.uk)