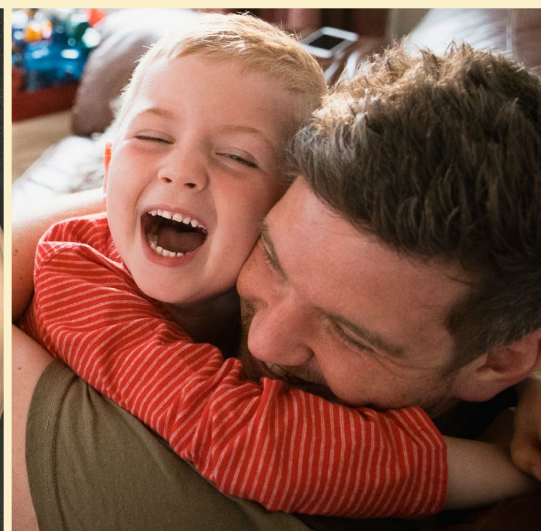


Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership

Child Protection Enquiry



Keeping Children Safe

If concerns have been raised about your child(ren)'s welfare, then a social worker and/or the police may need to do some checks to make sure your child(ren) is safe and well. This is called a child protection enquiry (sometimes called a Section 47 enquiry).

It is important that you are fully involved with the enquiry and we will explain exactly what the concerns are so that you can work with us to complete the enquiry. If there is anything you do not understand ask for it to be explained further and we will help you.

Your child(ren)'s safety and wellbeing are everyone's priority.

Immediate protection from danger

If a child(ren) is in serious danger, we may feel that it is necessary to remove your child(ren) from their home to prevent them from coming to harm.

Child protection enquiries and non-mobile babies and children

Any injuries to babies or children who are not yet mobile will cause concern. If your child has an injury before they can walk, roll or crawl, professionals will investigate this to establish the cause.

Your family's circumstances and your explanation of the injury, along with your child's developmental stage will always be considered.

Where we are concerned for your child's welfare, we may refer your child to children's services. We will decide whether an urgent medical assessment is needed which will be arranged at the earliest opportunity.

Stages of a Child Protection Enquiry

Stage 1 Initial Checks

We will talk to professionals who know your child(ren) such as their school, GP or health visitor. We do this because important decisions about your child(ren)'s safety and welfare need to be made. We will ask your permission first, but if we think your child(ren) is at risk of harm we can do this without your permission.

Stage 2 Strategy Meeting

Once the initial checks are complete, a manager from children's services will hold a strategy meeting with professionals who know your child(ren) to share information about your child(ren)'s welfare and decide what we need to do to keep your child(ren) safe.

We will talk to you after this meeting and may ask for your permission to talk to your child(ren).

Stage 3 Visiting your family

A social worker will visit you to explain their concerns. They may ask to see your child(ren) on their own and will try to make sure that they are not upset by this. They will talk to your child(ren) about your family life - what is going well as well as any problems or worries they may have.

We may ask for your permission for your child(ren) to see a paediatrician if we are concerned that they have been physically harmed. If you refuse, we may seek legal advice to proceed. If a criminal offence against a child(ren) is suspected this may result in court action.

Stage 4 Decision Making

When the enquiry is complete we will decide whether there are child protection concerns. If there are, you will be invited to a Child Protection Conference to discuss these.

You can get more information about child protection conferences in Leaflet 2 Child Protection Conferences, information for parents and carers.