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**Referral of Child Protection Concerns to
Bedfordshire Social Services Department
from Yarlswood Immigration Removal
Centre**

Procedure

Sue Warboys
Head of Fieldwork Services
28th April, 2005
To be reviewed April 2007

Procedure for the Referral of Child Protection Concerns to Bedfordshire Social Services Department from Yarlswood Immigration Removal Centre

Duty to Make Enquiries

The Children Act 1989 states the duty of the Local Authority to make enquiries when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child living in their area is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (Section 47).

Making a Referral

Upon receipt of any information relating to the possible risk of harm to a child or children at Yarlswood IRC, the Child Service Manager or in their absence the Head of Residence/ Duty Manager must notify Bedfordshire Social Services Department.

Referral during office hours should be made to the First Response team on 01234 223599 (Children and families team asked for) within 24 hours of the identification of the concerns.

Outside office hours urgent referrals should be made to the Social Services Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0870 2385465 or to the Police on 01234 841212.

Where the suspected abuse is by another child/young person both children (suspected abuser and abuse should be referred).

Generally, parental permission should be sought before referral to the Social Services Department but this should not be done where such discussion and agreement will place the child at increased risk of significant harm e.g. where a parent is known to be violent and referral would increase hostility to the child.

If the concerns relate to issues of neglect and dysfunctional emotional relationships over a period of time it will be appropriate to have discussed these concerns with the parent(s).

Information to be provided by Yarlswood

The person referring should, whenever possible, complete the Inter-Agency Referral Form BIC101 (Appendix 1). www.issuk.org.uk - International Social Service (UK), Cranmer House (3rd floor) 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DD.

If the concerns are so urgent they require immediate action the referring staff member from Yarlswood must follow up their telephone call with the completion of the Inter-Agency Form.

Advice and Consultation on unclear situations

Where there are concerns or nagging doubts, but it is not clear whether the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm the Yarlswood Child Service Manager or their representative should:

- Consult with their line manager or professional colleague who has designated responsibility for Child Protection.
- Check in Yarlswood's records of any indications of previous concerns.
- Contact First Response Team on 01234 223599 and discuss the concerns with the Duty Social Worker.

- Agree a course of action with the Duty Social Worker.
- If the duty social worker considers that a referral should be made, identifying details should be provided and a referral completed by Yarlswood to the Social Services Department.

Receiving a Referral

The Duty Social Worker receiving a referral will:

- Give their name and designation
- Assist the Yarlswood staff member to give as much information s possible. This information will need to include:-
 - The nature of the concerns
 - How/when and why they have arisen
 - The background and history of the family/child(rens) circumstances
 - What are the needs of the child/ren and family?
 - Identification of any concerns about abuse or neglect
 - Whether urgent action is needed

Immediate Protection of the Child

On receipt of the referral.

Contact between Police and Social Services Department

Consultation will then take place between the two agencies and a Strategy Meeting agreed.

The Strategy Meeting/Discussion should take place within 24 hours of the referral.

The purpose of the Strategy Meeting/Discussion is to:-

- Decide whether a Section 47 enquiry should be initiated or continued.
- Plan how enquiries should be handled including the need for a medical assessment and/or treatment.
- Collate all known details of the allegation, incident or suspicions of harm involving the child/siblings or any other children involved.
- Plan the timescales and scope of the enquiry.
- Allocate tasks to relevant agencies, (if any).
- What liaison the immigration Service is necessary.
- Whether Interpretation Services are necessary.

A written record of the Strategy Meeting/Discussion will be made by the Social Services Department and copied to Yarlswood within 48 hours. (BIC no 126 Appendix 2).

Should the child be in need of urgent medical treatment this should be arranged without delay by Yarlswood staff and the Social Services Department Duty Officer then informed as to what action is needed.

Should the situation require an immediate response e.g. in the case of ongoing violence the police should be notified directly and the Social Services Department Officer informed.

Where there is a serious risk to the child necessitating removal of the child from his/her parents care the Social Services Department will liaise with Yarlswood staff to secure alternative accommodation and or support e.g. with extended family/another centre. An emergency Protection Order/Police Protection or accommodation under Section 20 of the Children's Act '89 will only be sought in exceptional cases and will be the least preferred option in the best interests of the child.

Medical Assessment

The Social Services Department will make a decision about whether to request a medical assessment. The purpose of this is to:-

- Assess whether the child has been injured or harmed or whether there are any other medical or developmental concerns.
- Provide an opinion verbally (followed up in writing) about possible causes.
- Arrange treatment for the child, as necessary.
- Avoid repeated assessments.

Medical assessments will usually be necessary if any of the following apply:-

- Any injuries to babies
- There is reasonable suspicion of significant harm to a child.
- There are inconsistencies in the explanations given regarding the cause of the injury or harm.
- There are suspicions of detectable previous injuries.
- There are signs of serious emotional abuse
- There is reason to believe that forensic evidence of abuse may be present.

The medical assessment will be undertaken following discussion with the Consultant Community Paediatrician. They may also be able to undertake the medical assessment, if they feel it is appropriate in the circumstances.

The necessity or not of whether a medical assessment should be completed should be taken at the Strategy Meeting or during the course of a Child Protection enquiry.

Consent to a Medical Assessment

Children may give or refuse consent to a medical assessment if they are deemed to have significant understanding to make an informed decision.

Children of sufficient age and understanding cannot be medically assessed without their consent and their consent even where an Emergency Protection Order has been made.

If the child is not of sufficient age and understanding to give informed consent, consent must be obtained from the person with parental responsibility before the medical assessment can be carried out. If consent is refused by the person with parental responsibility and the medical assessment is deemed necessary then legal advice should be sought from the County Council's legal department.

Timescales

Once the necessity for a medical assessment has been established it should be arranged and carried out within 24 hours preferably at Yarlswood Detention centre for security purposes. A member of Yarlswood staff will accompany the Social Worker and child(ren) for the medical examination together with the parent(s) if appropriate.

Recording Medical Assessments

A written record of a medical assessment will be provided by the doctor concerned within 7 days of the examination.

In advance of the completion of the written record the doctor will provide a verbal account of the medical assessment.

Child Protection Enquiry

In the event of a referral about Child Protection concerns from Yarlswood there will always be contact between the Police and Social Services Department.

This may only be to exchange information for the completion of an Initial Assessment by the Social Services Department.

Cases requiring Initial Enquiries to be made by the Police

The following reports will initially be followed up by the Police:-

- Allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse involved an (alleged) offender who is not part of the child's family.

If the above referral comes to the Social Services Department, the Duty Social Worker will notify the police and request that they initially investigate. If the Police conduct a single agency enquiry, officers must be mindful of the possible on going needs of the child and family. A single agency enquiry by the Police should not preclude the possibility of referral to Social Services Department for supportive or therapeutic services to the child/family.

Joint Enquiries with the Police

Joint enquiries with the Police will take place where there are:-

- Allegations or reasonable suspicions of sexual abuse, physical injury, serious emotional abuse where the alleged perpetrator is a member of the child's family or Yarlswood social networks.
- Additional specialist help will be required if the child's first language is not English. The Senior Immigration Services Officer on-site will be kept informed of developments by the Social Services Department and the Police.

Interview under Best Evidence Procedures

Interviews with children are conducted jointly by the police and Social Services Department.

A child should never be interviewed in the presence of an alleged or suspected perpetrator of abuse, or somebody who may be colluding with a perpetrator. The Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings Guidance for Vulnerable or Intimidated witnesses including children 'should be followed as a recognised good practice guide for all video investigative interviews with children'. (Copy provided)

Venue

Interviews will only be video recorded at the sites approved by the Police and Social Services Department.

Child Protection Conference

Following the Child Protection enquiry a further Strategy Meeting/Discussion will take place between the involved agencies, Yarlswood IRC, the Police and Social Services Department.

A decision will be taken whether to:-

- Take emergency action to safeguard the child's welfare
- Request a Child Protection conference
- Regard the child as a Child In Need
- Make further enquiries
- Take no further action

All such discussions shall be recorded fully on the Strategy Meeting/Discussion form (BIC 138, Appendix 2) which will be copied to the Children Service Manager of Yarlswood.

The outcome of the enquiry will be entered on the Social Services Department central database (MARS) as from 1st April (SWIFT).

A closing transfer summary shall be completed at the point of closure of the case.

If there is:-

- Evidence that the child is suffering or may be suffering significant harm and
- There is a casual link to the parent(s) or carer(s) and there is a need for a Child Protection plan a Child Protection Conference will be convened within 15 days of the first Strategy Meeting.

Attendance at the Initial Child Protection Conference

All relevant agencies will be notified of the Child Protection conference with a view to attending.

The Senior Immigration Service Officer on site will be kept informed of developments by the Social Services Department and the Police and attend any Child Protection conference.

Where an enquiry has begun the Senior Immigration Service Officer on site will liaise with the Yarlswood Children Service Manager including, if necessary, extending the length of time the

family will remain at Yarlswood IRC. When the family leave they will also provide details of where the child(ren) will live to the International Social Services Department for necessary follow-up work to ensure that information regarding the case will be passed on to the relevant authorities in that country.

In relation to children who cannot safely remain with their parent(s) and/or care givers Bedfordshire Social Services Department will expect:-

- Every reasonable effort has been made by Yarlswood IRC staff to secure alternative services of support/alternative care e.g. extended family and friends.
- That every attempt has been made by all agencies and Yarlswood IRC to working partnerships with parents to keep the child(ren) within his/her family of origin.

Child Protection Conference

See Appendix 1 Bedfordshire and Luton Area Child Protection Committee: Manual of Procedures. (Appendix 3)

Core Group

See 7.14 of the

The Children Services Centre Manager and/or their representative will attend the Core Group to implement the Child Protection Plan formulated at the Initial Child Protection Conference. Specialist help will be provided to interpret, assist with communications to the child cultural or religious assessment. The cost of specialist help will be funded by Yarlswood Immigration Removal Centre.

Within 42 working days of the Initial Assessment (the referral) the Social Services Department should have completed a Core Assessment in respect of each child who has been placed on the register.

The Core Group representative from Yarlswood Immigration Removal Centre will contribute to the Core Assessment. A recommendation will be made from the Core Group to the Review Conference about:-

- Whether further services should be provided to meet the needs of and prevent continuing risk to the child.
- Whether continued registration is necessary.
- Child Protection arrangements in the event that the family and the child leave the centre and/or country e.g. liaison with International Social Services Department.

Children on Child Protection Register from another Local Authority

Children whose names are on the Child Protection Register of another local authority should be immediately notified to the Conference and Review Service for temporary registration on Bedfordshire Child Protection Register by the other Local Authority.

If the child/ren remain in Yarlswood for more than 21 days then the Bedfordshire Conference and Review Service should be notified immediately and a transfer in conference arranged.

If the child/ren are flown out of the country then International Social Services should be alerted to the whereabouts of the child/ren. Should the child/ren and their family leave Yarlswood the Local Authority which receives the family should be immediately notified.

It is Yarlswoods responsibility to gather all the necessary information including previous Child Protection minutes from the authority who placed the child/ren on the register. The authority who registered the child/ren should immediately be notified of the child/rens detention at Yarlswood.

Written by
Sue Warboys
Head of Fieldwork Services
28th April, 2005

BIC101

Multi-Agency Referral Form

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Family name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post code: _____

Home Tel no: _____ Mobile no: _____ Mobile Phone holder: _____

Previous address/name: _____

Nationality/Immigration status of family members (if applicable): _____

MARS number (if applicable): _____

Principal Carers in Household

Name	DOB	M/F	Relationship to the child	Do they have parental responsibility ?

Other members of household. *Tick first column if this is a child about whom there is specific concerns.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	DOB	M/F	School/Nursery (inc telephone no and key contact person)	Position in Household
<input type="checkbox"/>					
<input type="checkbox"/>					
<input type="checkbox"/>					



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<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>				

Ethnic Origin. *This should be as defined by the family.*

African <input type="checkbox"/>	Asian or any other B/G <input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladesh <input type="checkbox"/>	Black or any other B/G <input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	White British <input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>	Indian <input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed white and Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White/ Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed or any other B/G <input type="checkbox"/>	Other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/>	White Irish <input type="checkbox"/>	White or any other B/G <input type="checkbox"/>	

Family religion: _____

Language spoken: _____

Interpreter required? YES /NO

Professionals/other interested parties.

Name	Address/organisation	Tel No	Nature of involvement

Name of GP: _____ Tel no: _____

Address: _____

1. Referrer's concerns:
Outline what you are particularly concerned about, what you feel needs to change and what you expect from the referral. If relevant, state why you have chosen, at this point, to refer the case.



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2. Details of any child in the family who has been looked after or whose name has been placed on the child protection/disability register: *Give details of which child, circumstances/reasons and for how long.*

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3. Details of advice given to child, family, referrer or others and any services offered or referrals made.

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4. Existing strengths within the family

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5. Desired outcome of this referral (SMART goals).

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ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK DOMAINS**Child/Young Person's Development Needs:**

All children change and develop over time. Parents have a responsibility to respond appropriately to their child's needs. The purpose of this section is to identify areas of strength and developmental need, in order for resources to be allocated appropriately to ensure the optimum health and development of the child. Please ensure that any disabilities are detailed.

4. Health:

5. Education:

6. Emotional and behavioural development:

7. Identity:



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8. Social presentation:

9. Self-care skills:

10. Family and social relationship:



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Parents'/carers' capacities to respond appropriately to the child's needs: <i>Please give consideration to how the parent/carer can meet the child's needs as detailed above. Record strengths as well as difficulties/problems</i>
11. Basic Care:
12. Ensuring Safety:
13. Emotional Warmth:
14. Stimulation:
15. Guidance and Boundaries:
16. Stability:



Family and environmental factors which impact on the child and family:
Please give details of history and current situation

17. Family History and Functioning

18. Wider family social integration and community resources

19. Housing

20. Employment and income (please include any information concerning financial difficulties)



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OTHER INFORMATION

21. Issues affecting parents'/carers' capacities to respond appropriately to the child's need:

It is important to be aware of the parents'/carers' strengths as well as difficulties they are experiencing. Research shows that the following are most likely to affect parenting capacity: Physical illness, mental illness, learning disability, substance/alcohol misuse, domestic violence, childhood abuse and history of abusing children.

22. Ethnicity:

Give details of the family's ethnicity and how race, culture, religion and language is relevant to the current situation/concerns and possible solutions.

23. Views of family members and significant others:

These views can relate to their current situation, what assistance/service they feel they require or the referrer's decision to make the referral.

24. Arrangements for visiting:

Give details needed when making further contact e.g. periods when an individual will be unavailable, visiting arrangements and potential dangers (violent/aggressive persons, pets, medical conditions, environmental factors).



PARENT/CARER'S SIGNATURE

I understand the information in this referral will be shared between different professionals in different agencies in order to allocate the most appropriate service, or to contribute to further assessment

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Any views:

Tick if verbal consent has been given by parent/carer/young person.

Name of referrer:

Position: Agency:

Address:

Tel no:

Signature:

Date:

Name of Manager:

Signature:

Date:



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Notes of Section 17 & 47 Meetings

<u>TYPE OF MEETING:</u> (tick box)			
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy Meeting (to be held in cases of concern of actual/likely significant harm)			
2. <input type="checkbox"/> CIN Meeting (attach CIN Plan)			
3. <input type="checkbox"/> CP Core Group (attach CP Plan)			
Name of Child(ren):		Date(s) of Birth:	MARS / SWIFT id(s):
Address(es) and Postcode(s) of Child(ren):			
Date of Meeting:	Venue (or state if all or part of discussion is by phone):		Time:
PARTICIPANTS:			
Name	Signature	Agency & Role	Address & Tel No.
APOLOGIES:			
Name	Agency & Role		Address & Tel No.
Strategy Meetings should include:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant events/concerns/information available from referral and agency checks • The child/family's circumstances (including issues relating to ethnicity, communication, special needs) • Immediate considerations (including medical assessments and interviews with the child & arrangements to protect child(ren) if necessary) • Consideration of siblings/other children • Further agency checks required – children & adults • Further information required to complete assessment • Decisions taken – including whether case designated Section 17 or 47 when Strategy meeting commences and whether case designated Section 17 or 47 when meeting ends • Allocation of responsibilities including what action to be taken with timescales • Outcomes sought • Contingency arrangements • Disagreements 			

TEXT (notes of meeting):		
Completed by (Name/role/agency):		Date:
Signatures:		
Name:	Agency & Role:	Date:
Distributed to:		
Name:	Agency & Role:	Date:
Date/Time/Venue of next meeting/review:		
Invitees:		

