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# Effective Supervision and Support

The procedures and time scales set out in this chapter and following chapters should be followed when there are concerns about the welfare of a child or an unborn child.

Individual agencies should clarify within their policies and procedures who staff and others can contact for advice:

* Each school must have a Designated Teacher for child protection purposes;
* The Health Community has an identified senior paediatrician (the Designated Doctor and a senior nurse with a health-visiting qualification (the Designated Nurse to take a lead on all aspects of the health service contribution to safeguarding children;
* Each NHS Trust, including Integrated Care Boards must identify a named doctor and nurse to take a professional lead, including the provision of advice, within the trust on child protection matters;
* All childcare organisations providing registered child care must have an identified child protection lead;
* SeeNorth East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures for further sources of advice and support within NELSCP; [Procedures and resources for professionals | NELC](https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/scp/procedures-and-resources-for-professionals/)

It is good practice to discuss child welfare concerns with and seek advice from colleagues, managers, a designated or named professional, or other agencies but:

* Never delay emergency action to protect a child, including immediate medical intervention where necessary;
* Always record in writing concerns about a child's welfare, whether or not further action is taken;
* Always record in writing discussions about a child's welfare. At the close of a discussion, whether face-to-face or by telephone, always reach clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken.

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. All of those involved should have access to advice and support from, for example, peers, managers, named and designated professionals.

For many practitioners involved in day-to-day work with children and families, effective supervision is important to promoting good standards of practice and to supporting individual staff members.

* Supervision should help to ensure that practice is soundly based and consistent with NEL SCP and organisational procedures;
* It should ensure that practitioners fully understand their roles, responsibilities and the scope of their professional discretion and authority;
* It should also help identify the training and development needs of practitioners, so that each has the skills to provide an effective service. In additional to in house and bespoke training multi-agency training can be accessed via theSafer NEL SCP training page;
* Supervision should include reflecting on and scrutinising and evaluating the work carried out, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the practitioner and providing coaching development and pastoral support;
* Supervisors should be available to practitioners as an important source of advice and expertise and may be required to endorse judgements at certain key points in time;
* Supervisors should also record key decisions within the child's case records.

Safer NEL SCP training page [Safeguarding children education and training | NELC](https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/scp/scp-training-education/)

Everybody who works or has contact with children, parents, and other adults in contact with children should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, evidence that a child's health or development is or may be being impaired and especially when they are suffering, or likely to suffer Significant Harm.

Achieving good outcomes for children requires all those with responsibility for assessment of need and the provision of services to work together according to an agreed plan of action. Everybody who works with children, parents and other adults in contact with children must be clear about:

* Their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including being able to recognise, and know how to act upon, indicators that a child's welfare or safety may be at risk;
* The purpose of their activity, the decisions that are required at each stage of the process and what are the planned outcomes for the child and family;
* The legislative basis for their work see Statutory Framework Procedure
* The protocols to be followed including the way information will be shared across organisations and within agencies and be recorded (see ProtocolInformation Sharing).Which organisation or team / professional has lead responsibility and the precise role of everyone involved;
* What services are available locally (refer to County Wide Service Directory and local offer available onFamilies First Information Service;
* How to gain access to services including referral criteria (seeA Model for Assessment Procedure);
* What sources of further advice and expertise are available including how to check if a child is subject to an inter-agency plan, who the Lead Social Worker / Lead Professional is and how to contact them. For further information on the role of the Lead Professional / processes for managing an inter-agency support plan refer to TAF Handbook for Practitioners available on theNorth East Lincs Children’s Social Care website;
* When and how to make a referral to North East Lincolnshire Children's Services (seeReport a concern about a child process) including how to check if the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Statutory Framework Procedure (statutory-framework)

Information Sharing (information-sharing)

Families First Information Service [Families First Information Service | NELC](https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/children-families-and-schools/families-first-information-service/)

Local

Protocol for for Assessment Procedure (

North East Lincs Children’s Social Care website [Children's social care | NELC](https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/health-wellbeing-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/)

Report a concern about a child process [Concern about a child | NELC](https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/health-wellbeing-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/report-a-concern-about-a-child/)Four key processes underpin work with children and families; these are assessment, planning, intervention and reviewing.

* From the point that concerns are raised about a child and are referred to a statutory organisation that can take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
* Through a Social Work Assessment of the child's situation and what happens after that;
* Taking immediate action, if necessary;
* To the Strategy Discussion, where there are concerns about a child's safety initiating investigation under Section 47 (Children Act 1989);
* Concerns substantiated initiating a Child Protection Conference; and
* What happens after the child protection conference, and the review process.

The Team Around the Family (TAF) provides a standard approach to conducting an assessment of the needs of a child or young person and deciding how they should be met. It has been developed for use by practitioners in all agencies so that they can communicate and work more effectively together. It enables practitioners to identify when a child's health or development is or may be being impaired and will support earlier intervention for children with additional needs.

Practitioners must be familiar with the TAF process including policy and procedures relating to operational practices. It is the responsibility of each agency to ensure that their policies and procedures support and are consistent with the approach outlined within the TAC Handbook.

In most circumstances, practitioners will have undertaken an Early Help Assessment (EHA) to identify the additional needs of a child and family. The findings from the Early Help Assessment may have caused them to be concerned about a child's welfare.

These concerns should be discussed with a manager, or a named or designated health professional or a designated member of staff depending on the organisational setting. Concerns can also be discussed, without necessarily identifying the child in question, with senior colleagues in another agency in order to develop an understanding of the child's needs and circumstances. If, after discussion, these concerns remain and it seems that the child and family would benefit from other services, including those from within another part of the same agency, decisions should be made about whom to make a referral to.

If it is considered that the child and family would benefit from other services which can be provided by the same agency, normal referral pathways should be used. The TAF provides a useful framework for making referrals within the same or other agencies.

If it is considered that the child may be a child in need under the Children Act 1989 (seeStatutory Framework Procedure) or it is considered that the child has additional needs which require a multi-agency response, the practitioner should, in consultation with the family and young person refer the case to the appropriate TAF process. TAF is fully operational across the whole county. Practitioners should refer to theA Model for Assessment Procedurelooking specifically at the pathways section, which outlines what the referral process relating to Early Help/TAF. If practitioners are unsure what referral route is appropriate, then they should contact the Customer Service Centre within Children's Services and ask for an early help consultation with the Early Help Advisors.

See Statutory Framework Procedure

See Local protocol for Assessment

If the concerns identified through assessment indicate that a child may be at risk of or is suffering Significant Harm, the practitioner should refer the case to Children's Services through phoning the Customer Service Centre. If these concerns arise about a child who is already known to Children's Services, the Customer Service Centre will ensure the allocated worker is informed of these concerns. Please see theReport a concern about a child processfor the procedure to follow when making a referral to Children's Social Care when there are concerns that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.

Report a concern about a child process [Concern about a child | NELC](https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/health-wellbeing-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/report-a-concern-about-a-child/)