

# Working Together to Protect Children and Young People

[www.bfsb.org.uk](http://www.bfsb.org.uk)

## Children at risk of harm or neglect

If you have concerns that a child/young person **may be at risk of harm or neglect** contact your agency's safeguarding lead, or refer to the MASH information at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mash](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mash). If the matter is urgent please contact:

**MASH** **01344 352005**  
(9am-5pm Mon to Fri)

**Out of Hours Duty Team** **01344 351999**  
(5pm-9am and weekends)

If you suspect a criminal offence has been committed contact **Thames Valley Police on 101** or where immediate protection is required **call 999**.

If a child/young person makes a disclosure to you:

- **Explain** to the child that **you will share this information** in order to help them.
- **Listen carefully to** and **take seriously** what the child is saying.
- **Reassure** the child that they have done the right thing.
- Give the child time to talk but **do not probe or ask leading questions**. Investigation is not your responsibility.
- **Do not promise to keep secrets**. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.
- **Write down exactly what has been said** and ensure that the MASH / Police are notified immediately.
- **Do not confront** the person subject to the allegation.
- Ensure that information is **kept confidentially** and only shared with people who need to know.

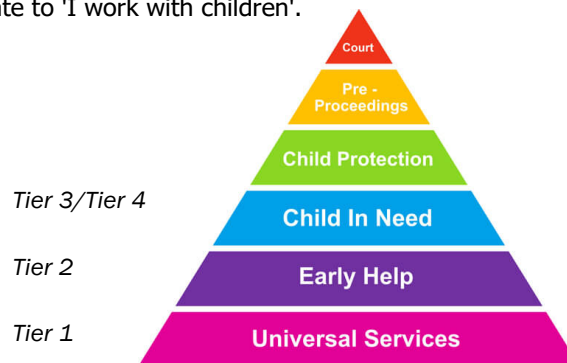


## Sharing information

- **To provide effective support to children and young people we need to work together and share information.** In most circumstances 'informed consent' is required. However, in some circumstances we have a duty to share information and can do so without consent (i.e. where a child is at risk of harm).
- Further guidance on Information Sharing and Confidentiality can be found in the Berkshire Child Protection Procedures. [berks.proceduresonline.com/bracknell/p\\_info\\_sharing.html](http://berks.proceduresonline.com/bracknell/p_info_sharing.html)

## BFSB Thresholds Guidance

To ensure that children receive the right help at the right time please consult our guidance on [bfsb.org.uk](http://bfsb.org.uk) and navigate to 'I work with children'.



## Early Help Assessment Framework (EHA), (previously CAF)

If a child has additional or multiple needs that require support from more than one agency, but are not at risk of harm or neglect, then it is advisable to start an Early Help Assessment. This is an assessment that anyone working with a child, and the family/young person, contributes to. It can be started by any professional or volunteer.

Before commencing an assessment please **discuss your concerns** with your line manager. The **First Contact Team** are available for **advice** and to confirm whether there are any **previous episodes**. All completed EHAs must be sent to the First Contact team via [Early.Help@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Early.Help@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) so that the assessment can be **registered**.

You must seek the 'informed consent' of parents/carers and where relevant the young person, before starting an assessment. For more details the **EHA toolkit** can be accessed at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/eha](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/eha)



## Whistle-blowing or Raising Concerns

Where concerns arise about the ability of an organisation to safeguard children and young people, staff should use their organisation's whistle-blowing policy. Further details can be found at [www.proceduresonline.com/berks/bracknell/p\\_whistleblowing.html](http://www.proceduresonline.com/berks/bracknell/p_whistleblowing.html)

The NSPCC also provides an independent advice line at [www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/)

## Concerns about those who work with children

If you have a concern about a professional's or volunteer's suitability to work with children it must be reported immediately to a Senior Manager (in your service) and the 'Local Authority Designated Officer' (LADO) within one working day. The LADO is also available for advice and can be contacted directly or contact MASH if not available.

### LADO

**01344 351572**

[LADO@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Further information and LADO referral form can be accessed at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/lado](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/lado)

## Berkshire Child Protection Procedures

Detailed guidance to support individuals and organisations in their work to safeguard children can be found at: [berks.proceduresonline.com/bracknell](http://berks.proceduresonline.com/bracknell)

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