

South Yorkshire  
Local **Safeguarding**  
**Children Boards**

Child Protection  
Procedures

Rotherham

## Introduction

**These procedures provide a framework within which agencies and professionals at a local level, work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.**

They apply to children and young people below the age of eighteen. The term children will be used throughout the procedures to apply to children and young people below the age of eighteen.

These procedures replace any previous South Yorkshire Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

### **The purpose of these procedures and who should use them:**

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in South Yorkshire have developed these procedures for local use in line with the guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006', issued by HM Government. They are underpinned by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, and Section 175 of the Education Act 2002. They place a **statutory duty** on organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions are discharged, with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and with due consideration to equality.

These procedures reflect the principles contained within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government in 1991. They are consistent with the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, which provide a comprehensive framework for the care and protection of children, and with the Human Rights Act 1998.

These procedures are to be used in conjunction with the Rotherham Safe and Well Protocol and Practice Guidance which includes the Common Assessment Framework and the 'Framework for The Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families'.

Where Child Protection Procedures are to be implemented, all the needs of the child should be considered. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The Every Child Matters agenda sets out five outcomes that are key to children's wellbeing:

- stay safe
- be healthy
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

Professionals contracted to work for the organisations which are members of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards in South Yorkshire, **should** follow these

procedures. They apply to professionals working in children's services and in adult services where there is contact with children or caregivers.

The Boards and their constituent agencies audit the quality of safeguarding children work on a regular basis. Adherence to these procedures ensures children are safeguarded in a way that promotes the rights of every member of the family.

These procedures are based closely upon research findings, experience and critical scrutiny of practice. They should form part of statutory agencies' quality assurance mechanisms in line with Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

Staff, contractors and volunteers **should** ensure they are familiar with these procedures and adhere to them in all their work with children and families.

Voluntary, community, faith, and private sector organisations that work with children should make arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in line with these procedures.

The Local Safeguarding Children Boards of South Yorkshire will update these procedures, as necessary. Changes for Rotherham will be posted on <http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/safeguarding>, from which an updated copy may be downloaded.

In exceptional circumstances Local Safeguarding Children Boards will consider requests to suspend application of parts of these procedures, as part of research proposals from agencies undertaking new ways of working with children. Any research proposal accepted will be subject to formal review by the Board.

Advice about accessing training in safeguarding children, including Child Protection, can be obtained from:

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Unit on (01709) 382121 Ext 2390

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:**

***31 October 2007***

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# **1 Principles Underpinning Work to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children**

The following principles, which are evidence based, should be followed when implementing these procedures.

**As defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children should be:**

## **Child Centred**

Some of the worst failures of the system have occurred when professionals have lost sight of the needs of the child, and concentrated instead on their relationship with the adults. The child should be seen by the practitioner, and kept in focus throughout work with the child and family. The child's voice should be heard and account taken of their perspective, their wishes and their feelings.

## **Rooted in Child Development**

Work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including Child Protection, should be informed by knowledge of child development. Plans and interventions should be based on a clear assessment of risk, the child's developmental progress and any difficulties being experienced. Interventions should be timely and appropriate.

## **Focused on Outcomes for Children**

When working directly with the child and their family, the plan developed should be based on an assessment of:

- whether the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm
- the child's developmental needs
- the parents/caregivers' capacity to respond to these needs
- the community context.

## **Holistic in Approach**

This approach takes into account all the factors that impact upon the changing needs of the developing child. The analysis of the child's situation will inform planning and intervention in order to secure the best outcomes for the child as set out in Every Child Matters, and will inform a review of the effectiveness of that intervention.

## **Ensuring Equality of Opportunity**

All children should have the opportunity to achieve their optimum development. Vulnerable children may be disadvantaged in their access to appropriate services that will promote their wellbeing, both in the short and long term. Such vulnerability should be taken into account when planning

interventions, and ensure that services delivered are of an equal standard for all.

### **Involving Children and Families**

It is important to work in partnership with children and families, as far as possible, so that they feel respected and informed. Families need to feel that workers are being open and honest with them, to enable them to provide vital information about their child, themselves and their circumstances.

### **Building on Strengths as well as Identifying Difficulties**

Identifying and working with a child and family's strengths and difficulties becomes an important part of any intervention.

### **Multi/Inter-Agency in Approach**

Multi and inter-agency work to safeguard and promote children's welfare should start when there are concerns about a child's welfare, not just when there are questions about possible harm.

### **A Continuing Process**

Services should be provided according to the identified needs of the child and family, in parallel with the ongoing assessment where necessary. It is not necessary to await completion of the assessment process. Immediate and practical needs should be addressed alongside more complex and longer term ones. The impact of service provision on a child's developmental progress should be continually re-assessed. Safeguarding children should be considered a continuing process, not a single event.

### **Informed by Evidence**

Effective practice with children and families requires sound professional judgements that are underpinned by a rigorous evidence base.

### **Safer Working Practices**

All agencies and staff involved in safeguarding children have a duty to help keep children safe. This includes safer recruitment practices as well as procedures for those in continuing employment. By following agreed procedures for recruitment and supervision, and systematically addressing any allegations of abuse by staff, agencies will be fulfilling their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.