

Making a formal referral to Social Services for safeguarding children concerns

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Staff must make a referral to Children's Social Care if there are signs that a child under the age of 18 years or an unborn baby: i) is suffering or has suffered **significant harm**; or ii) is likely to suffer significant harm

Process

1. Discuss the referral with a senior member of staff.
2. Parents should be informed and give consent unless it is thought that this may result in harm to child.
3. Help about whether to refer or not can be sought from social services or the safeguarding children team (ext. 2363). This **threshold document** explains more. **You do NOT need to be certain to refer.**
4. **Before you telephone think about what information you need to share** - Best practice is to complete the safeguarding children referral form first so that all the information to be shared is available:-
 - Demographics, family members and relationships
 - Whether the parents are aware of the referral, and if not, why not (e.g. FII or increased risk to child).
 - The reason for referral and clear identification of the risks to the child
 - Description of any injuries, body map if appropriate.
 - Actions already taken and professionals / organisations already involved with contact details (if available).
 - **Record the name** of the social worker to whom the information is being shared.
 - Known risks for professionals e.g. aggressive dog
5. **Contact the social services department based on the address of the child** - you can look up the postcode on www.gov.uk/find-local-council to see which council area the child lives in (and therefore which social services department).

Contact Details **in hours** (9 - 5pm)

Brighton and Hove	Frontdoorforfamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk	01273 290400
East Sussex	0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk	01323 747373
West Sussex	MASH@westsussex.gov.uk	01403 229900

Contact Details out of hours: (be aware you need to ask to speak to Duty Social Worker - otherwise you speak to a call handler - they need to contact police for significant injury)

East Sussex / Brighton and Hove 01273 335905/6

West Sussex 03302226664

6. **POLICE / Child Protection Team** contact details [here](#)
7. **LINK to FORM** – send the completed referral form as soon as possible. Put a copy in the notes and send internal copy to the Nurse Consultant for Safeguarding Children & Young people (Level 4 RACH).