



# Reading Local Protocols for Assessment

## **SUMMARY**

This document is for professionals who come into contact with children and families and have a concern about a child or a young person in Reading.

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## Foreword

This document is for professionals who come into contact with children and families and have a concern about a child or a young person in Reading.

Understanding how local thresholds and assessments work will help professionals to be clear about what to expect from Children's Services and will enable services to work better together to create safety, stability and support for children, young people and their families.

This document should be read alongside:

- Reading Thresholds Guidance
- Pan Berkshire Child Protection Procedures
- Working Together Guidance 2018

Links to these documents can be found in the appendices.

From 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018, all Children's Services from Reading Borough Council have been delivered by Brighter Futures for Children.

## Background

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out that: 'Local authorities, with their partners, should develop and publish local protocols for assessment. A local protocol should set out clear arrangements for how cases will be managed once a child is referred into local authority children's social care and be consistent with the requirements of this statutory guidance. The detail of each protocol will be led by the local authority in discussion and agreement with the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies where appropriate.'

Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Local authorities undertake assessments of the needs of individual children to determine what services to provide and action to take.

This protocol recognises that the welfare of children is a corporate responsibility of the entire local authority working in partnership with other public agencies, the voluntary sector, and services users and carers. Joint working extends across the assessment, planning, management, provision and delivery of services.

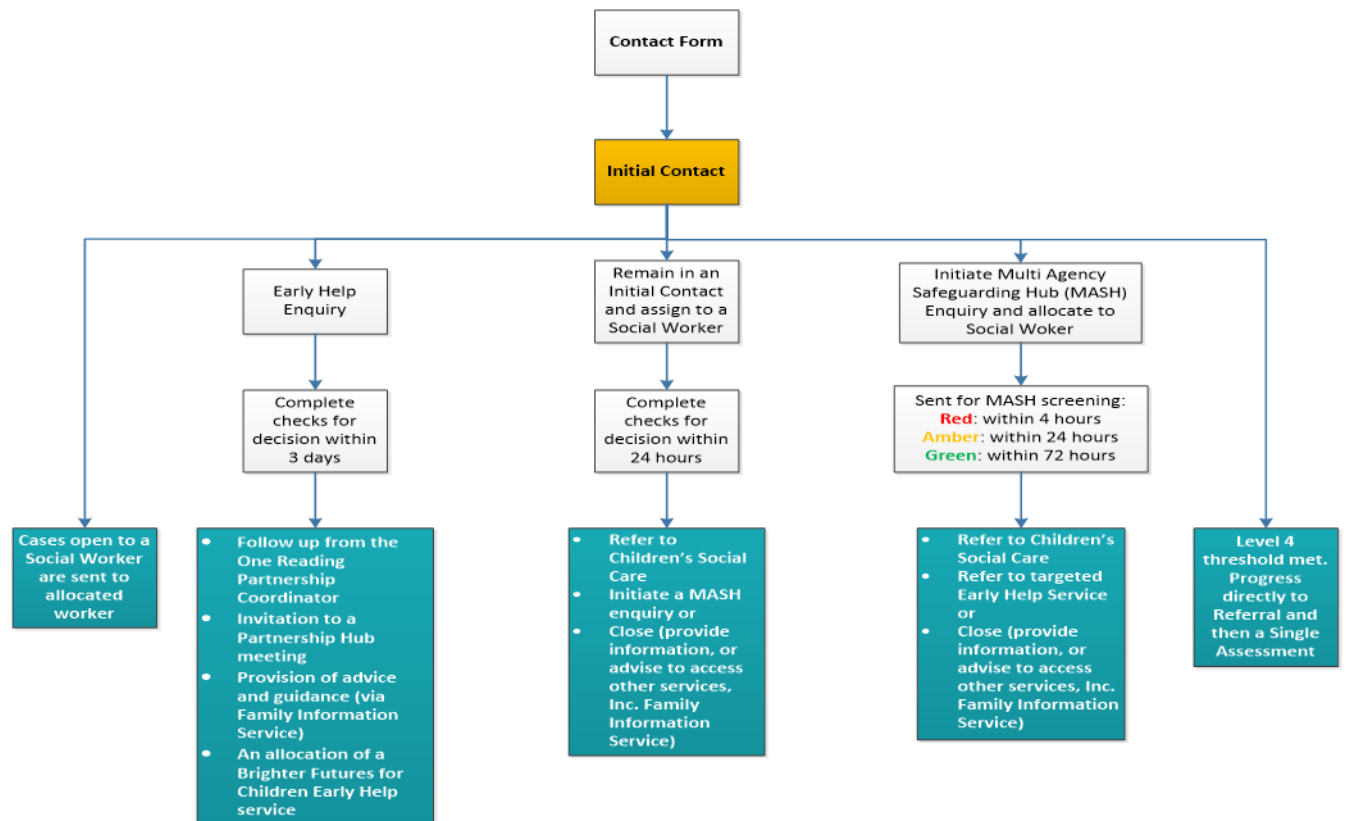
## Childrens Single Point of Access

The Children's Single Point of Access (CSPOA) is where to raise a concern about a child (pre-birth to 18 years old) in Reading, including safeguarding, child protection and the needs of children with disabilities. It includes representation from Children's Social Care, Police, Health, Early Help, Education, Youth Offending Service, Housing, Berkshire Women's Aid, Adult Services, Drug and Alcohol Team and Probation. It is a single point of contact for all early help and children's social care services, including disabled children. It acts as a front door to manage all safeguarding referrals and determines the level of response that is offered.

Having a Single Point of Access enables timely, informed, evidence-based decisions to ensure a child's safety and support needs are recognised. This has been developed in partnership with services across Reading to create a simple communications channel for everyone.

Contact details for the Children’s Single Point of Access, and the Emergency Duty Service for out of hours referrals can be found in the appendices. Contacts to the Children’s Single Point of Access via the web form will receive an automatic reply acknowledging the enquiry. The enquiry will be reviewed by the team and a reply advising the best course of action will be sent.

The Children’s Single Point of Access pathway, for both professionals and the general public is:



## Types of Assessment

Where a referral to the Children’s Single Point of Access requires the initiation of a further assessment, there are three main options depending on the level of need:

- an early help assessment (Level 2, Reading Threshold guidance)
- the single assessment (S.17, Children Act, 1989); under Level 3, Reading Threshold guidance
- Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) Education, Health and Care Assessments (The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014).

In all cases, assessment will be undertaken alongside provision of services.

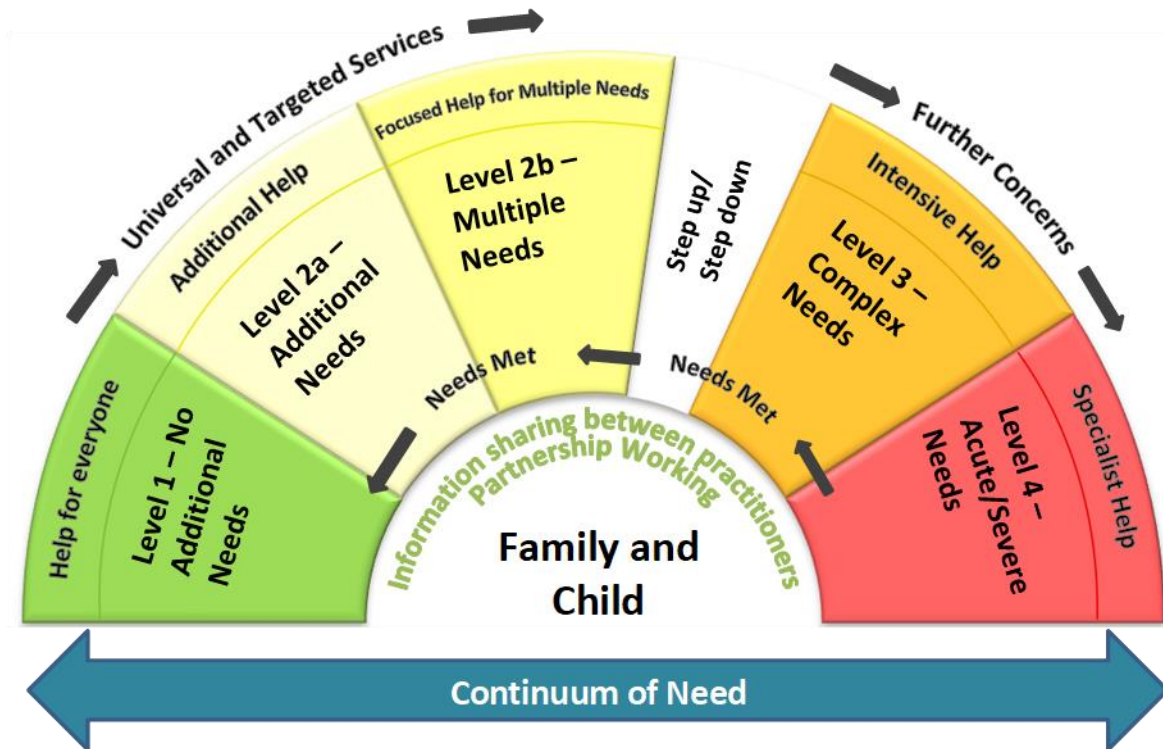
For a child at risk of suffering significant harm (Level 4, Reading Threshold guidance) the single assessment will be undertaken as part of the child protection process (S.47, Children Act 1989) including a strategy discussion being convened and Section 47 enquiries being completed.

Further information regarding these assessments is provided below.

If a referral is made for a Parent/ carer assessment these are signposted through to TuVida (Carers Hub)

## Levels of Need

The thresholds for different levels of need and services in Reading are described in this diagram. It shows the levels of need and the relationship between them. It is important to remember that children and young people will move up and down these levels – they are not static.



### Level 1: No additional needs:

Children with no identified additional needs will have their health and developmental needs met by universal services. These are children who consistently receive child focussed care-giving from their parents or carers. The majority of children living in Reading receive universal services alone.

### Level 2a: Additional needs:

Some children will have additional needs. Their health and development may be adversely affected and would benefit from extra help in order to make the best of their life chances. These children require additional targeted support from a single agency to address the concern that has been identified.

### Level 2b: Multiple needs:

Children whose needs are of greater depth and significance and must be met or their health, social development or educational attainment may be significantly impaired, and they may have long-term poor outcomes. Children are vulnerable and may be living with considerable adversity. This is the level at which there is a need for a clear coordinated multi-agency response and a multi-agency Early Help Assessment may be appropriate.

### Level 3: Complex needs:

These are children who are unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of

services; or children who are disabled. They may require longer term intervention from statutory, specialist or integrated targeted services. The Early Help Assessment can be used as supporting evidence to gain specialist or targeted support. This is the threshold for a statutory assessment led by children's social care under section 17, Children Act 1989.

#### Level 4: Acute/Severe needs

Children are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm, abuse and neglect and this is the threshold for child protection enquiries. Children and young people will be referred to children's social care and dealt with under section 47, 20 or 31 of the Children Act 1989. This will also include children who have been remanded into custody and statutory youth offending services.

### The Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to piece together a clear picture of the family's current situation by gathering information from other professionals, as well as the family and the child themselves. This information is used to assess risks and needs and to develop hypotheses, test out interventions and create plans for change. The assessments continue during periods of intervention and are continually shaped by new learning about a family's life and circumstances which helps to adapt the plans and intervention to meet changing needs.

The assessment process enables practitioners to build an understanding of the child(ren) and family by gathering a range of information about what has happened before, what is happening now and what needs to happen next to facilitate change or to ensure that children are safe and that their needs are being met. It provides a narrative of the child's life, who they are, who they know, what is happening to them and how their experiences are impacting upon them. It should capture their lived experience and reflect their wishes and feelings and desired outcomes. Whilst it remains the parents' responsibility to bring up their children, we recognise that they may need assistance from BFFC to do so.

Assessments will also consider Contextual Safeguarding, an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature exploitation, violence and abuse.


Assessments will be progressed under S.17 (11c) with regards to a child with disabilities without the need for a safeguarding element.

### Early Help Assessments (EHAs)

Early Help Assessments (EHAs) are completed for children assessed as having additional needs at Level 2. The assessment is multi-agency, focussed on the whole family and coordinated by a Lead Professional Key Worker. Early Help plans are developed through the assessment and determine the desired outcomes and interventions required to achieve these, including the visiting frequency of professionals involved. When a child is stepping down from Children's Social Care, Reading's Early Help teams will develop a plan based on the Single Assessment or Child in Need Plan.

### The Single Assessment

Brighter Futures for Children uses a single assessment in line with the requirements in Working Together 2018. This replaces both the initial and core assessment and includes pre-birth assessment on unborn children. The single assessment incorporates the three domains of the Assessment

 Framework Triangle (DoH, 2000): the child's developmental needs; parenting capacity and family and environmental factors. The assessment records information concerning the child's development which is monitored through the duration of the plan so that progress can be tracked.

The timescale for completing any assessment of a child or young person's needs will reflect their individual circumstances, but in any event will not exceed 45 working days. All assessments will be completed within 15 working days if a decision is taken to proceed to an Initial Child Protection Conference. See appendix 2 for a process flow chart.

All assessments undertaken by a social worker will be in consultation with their manager. The manager has the final decision on the outcome of the assessment.

### Children in Need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is 'unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled'.

In these cases, assessments are carried out under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Assessments which consider children's social care needs may also be carried out to support children with specific needs, for example, young carers or those who have committed a crime. The assessment process may also be used for children whose parents are in prison and in all cases for asylum seeking children.

An assessment must be carried out on request from a parent/ carer or the child themselves who consider they require support as a result of the child's disability to enable outcomes to be achieved.

Children with disabilities, who may or may not meet the criteria for CYPDT or an EHCP, also require:

- An assessment to establish needs as set out in the Chronically Sick and disabled persons act (1970) to enable access to Short Breaks and provisions of services to ensure outcomes are recognised and met
- this may also include aids and adaptations; Housing equipment needs via an Occupational Therapist

Any assessment of a child or young person with specific communication needs must be undertaken with appropriate support in place to ensure that the child can, within reason, understand and contribute to the assessment.

### Children in need of protection

Concerns about the risk of or actual harm to a child may be the reason for a referral to the Children's Single Point of Access or concerns may arise during the course of providing services to the child and family. In these circumstances, Children's Social Care will initiate enquiries to find out what is happening to the child and whether protective action is required.

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst the assessment is carried out. The duty also applies to children in police protection or those subject to emergency protection.



Where children are considered to be at risk of or suffering significant harm, the Pan Berkshire Child Protection procedures will be followed ([Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Children Procedures Manua](#)). The single assessment will be undertaken at the same time as any protective action or service provision.

## Planning and Review Mechanism

**Early Help:** The frequency of Team around the Child/Family (TAC/TAF) meetings are agreed in the planning stages but should be no less than three monthly. Multi-agency review meetings will assess the effectiveness of interventions delivered and plans are amended to respond to the family's needs. This may include consulting with Children's Social Care if improvements are not being achieved or levels of risk are escalating.

**Children in need:** Where ongoing work with a child is required, led by a social worker, a plan will be developed within 30 days of assessment. This plan needs to support work provided by all agencies involved with children in need and include tangible, required outcomes for the children concerned based on clear assessments of need.

Children and young people, regarded as Children in Need, must be seen every 6 weeks and their wishes and feelings listened to and recorded. A meeting to review the Child in Need plan must be held every 12 weeks (as a minimum). At this regular meeting, the Child in Need plan is reviewed and updated accordingly. This plan must be SMART, relate directly to the assessment conclusions and aimed at sustainable and long term outcomes for the child. There needs to be a contingency option in place to action if outcomes are not being met. The outcome of the assessment is a Child In Need Plan or a review of the plan. This will identify the support required, an agreed Lead Professional and an agreed timescale for review. An updating assessment should be completed annually/ 2 years

**Child in Need of Protection & Looked after Children:** When a child first becomes looked after or subject to a child protection plan, the single assessment will inform and be reflected in the plan and reviews that take place within these processes. See appendix 3 for the process flow chart for Children Looked After by Reading Borough Council.

**Reviews:** The Initial Child Protection Conference must take place within 15 working days of the initiation of Section 47 enquiries. The first review conference takes place 4 weeks after, then 3 months and then 6 months. Midpoint reviews take place mid way between child protection conferences, and are led by the Independent Reviewing Officer/Child Protection Chair. The review points should be agreed by the social worker with other professionals and with the child and family. The review should evaluate the impact of any change on the welfare of the child, noting developmental changes that indicate progress in achieving outcomes. Dates for the review meetings should, wherever possible, are set at the end of the last meeting. After each review meeting the updated child's plan will be sent to all professionals who are party to the plan, and all relevant family members within 15 working days.

**Visiting frequency:** Visits should take place at a frequency set out in the multi-agency planning and review meetings, and conform to statutory guidance for looked after children. The visiting frequency of each individual professional should be agreed and specified within the plan. For children on a Child Protection Plan, visits will be a minimum of once every 10 working days. For Looked after Children visits will be a minimum of once every 6 weeks, then once in a stable long-term placement, the plan can be changed (with agreement) to no less than once every 12 weeks.

## Recording and Reviewing Assessments

While the formal statutory assessment concludes, assessment forms an ongoing part of intervention with children, young people and their families. Assessments will be used to inform decisions regarding the need for a plan, which may result in an early help plan, a child in need plan, child protection plan, care plan or pathway plan. These set out the outcomes to be achieved, how these will be measured; and within what timescales. Once formulated the plan should be reviewed on a regular basis and at least every 6 months to ensure the child's needs are being addressed and appropriate services are being provided. Regular reviews will ensure the progression of the plan.

### Models of practice used by Children's Services:

- Single assessment tools
- Early Help Assessment tools
- Trauma Informed
- Restorative Practice
- Child Exploitation Screening Tool
- SafeLives Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) risk assessment checklist
- Graded Care Profile
- Specific tool for children with disabilities

### Involving children, young people and parent/carers

Children and young people are central to the assessment and planning process. Their views, wishes and feelings, including those of pre and non-verbal children, should be sought and reflected in early help and single assessments, which should also state what the impact of the child's wishes has been on the outcome of the assessment and the plan. Culture, ethnicity, disability and diversity issues must also be explicitly considered in all assessments and plans as they impact on the child and their experience.

Parents and carers should be fully involved and informed in the assessment of their children; and in identifying appropriate services or resources that will help support them in their parenting role. Parents need to be informed of any risks identified during the course of the assessment and be clear on how they can contribute to improving their children's circumstances as well as the help they can expect from social care and other agencies. Assessments should be shared with Parents and carers and a copy of the document provided.

### Consent

Whilst professionals should in general discuss any concerns with the child and family and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals, this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child or others at increased risk of suffering significant harm. Consent is not required for child protection referrals; however, the referring professional would need to inform parents or carers that a referral is being made, unless by alerting them you could be putting that child or others at risk.

**With the exception of child protection, referrals to Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA) will not be accepted without parental or young person consent being provided.** If consent has not been sought or provided, the reason for this should be shared at the time of the referral being made.

## Partner Agency involvement

Agencies and professionals should always contribute fully to the assessment process and any subsequent action plan to reduce risk and promote the welfare of the child. Where a social worker is undertaking a single assessment, all agencies (statutory and otherwise) working with or providing services to children and their families should be invited to contribute to the process. This will include: provision of information and reports; attendance at meetings; and agreeing actions and services to be provided to support the child and their family. Where partner agencies are not actively working with the family but have relevant information, this should also be shared.

### Specialist Assessments

There are occasions when children and young people referred to Children's Social Care may require more specialist assessments. Where possible, these will be co-ordinated so that the child and family experience a coherent process and a single, outcome focused, action plan.

Any specialist assessments already in place, for example, for children with special educational needs or disabled children, will be considered and inform the single assessment as appropriate, although not all children subject to these assessments will also require a single assessment.

#### Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and young adults with special educational needs or disabilities still in education

Where a child or young person has special educational needs and/or disabilities, their educational needs are ordinarily met by the school. In a small number of cases however, there is a need for the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Team to co-ordinate statutory SEND Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans. The team offers a co-ordinated approach which brings together the views of children, families and relevant multi-agency professionals, and assesses how to meet those needs. The service provides support for eligible young people up to the age of 25 years.

#### Pre-Birth Assessments

Pre-birth assessments are a proactive means of analysing the potential risk to a new born baby when there is concern about a pregnant woman, her partner or ex-partner and where relevant, her immediate family. The main purpose of a pre-birth assessment is to identify what the risks and potential needs of the unborn child and his/her family may be, whether the risks can be reduced and if so, what support will be needed. For further information please see the Berkshire Child Protection Procedures, Pre-Birth chapter - [Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership \(in Reading\)](#).

#### Children in hospital

Section 85 of the Children Act 1989 requires Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) to notify the 'responsible authority' - i.e. the Local Authority for the area where the child is ordinarily resident or where the child is accommodated if this is unclear, when a child has been or will be accommodated by the CCG for three months or more (for example in hospital), so that the Local Authority can assess the child's needs and decide whether services are required under the Children Act 1989. All such cases will be referred to CSPOA and progressed to the Access & Assessment Team for an assessment to be undertaken.

## Young carers

The Children and Families Act 2014 strengthened the rights of young carers to receive an assessment to support their needs. An assessment is started if it appears that a young carer may have support needs or if there is a request from a young carer or parent of the young carer to assess their needs for support.

A young carer's needs assessment includes an assessment of whether it is appropriate for the young carer to provide, or continue to provide, care for the person in question, in light of the young carer's needs for support, and other needs and wishes. The assessment will consider the impact of the child's caring role on their health and development and reach a view about whether any care tasks are inappropriate or excessive. This assessment will have regard to the extent to which the young carer is participating in or wishes to participate in education, training or recreation, and the extent to which the young carer works or wishes to work. A young carer's needs assessment will involve the young carer, the young carer's parents, and any person who the young carer or a parent of the young carer requests to be involved. It should also consider what the young person needs in order to fulfil their caring role.

Young carers may come to attention through a referral to CSPoA or through completion of any of the types of assessments described in this document. When the need for a young carer's assessment has been identified, a decision will be made about the most appropriate person to lead the assessment. In most cases, the assessment for a child / young person with caring responsibilities will be completed by an Early Help professional, under Level 2 of the threshold document.

### Children and young people involved in the Youth Justice System

Assessments for children involved with the Youth Offending Service (YOS), will be undertaken under the Youth Justice Assessment Framework, currently known as AssetPlus. Where there is specific concern relating to sexual behaviour, the YOS may also be involved in undertaking a specialist AIM (Assessment Intervention Moving on) assessment for the child. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) YOS link worker may also undertake a specialist SAVRY assessment (Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth).

Where a single assessment is also completed, these processes will support and complement each other. This will include consultation between allocated workers in both services to ensure all relevant information is appropriately shared and ensure that children, young people and their family do not have to repeatedly tell their story.

### Domestic Abuse

The principal domestic abuse risk assessment tool used by both the statutory and voluntary sectors is the SafeLives Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) risk assessment checklist, although other risk assessment tools may also be used by the involved professional, as the need requires. The DASH risk assessment contains a range of risk-based questions that can be used by practitioners when abuse is disclosed or suspected, through routine direct questioning and when attending in the provision of emergency protective services. The checklist can be found on the SafeLives website: [Resources for identifying the risk victims face.](#)

The checklist assists in identifying and assessing both the level of single-agency service required and in high risk cases, identifying cases requiring referral to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for co-ordinated multi-agency monitoring and service provision. The risk identified from the checklist may also lead to:

- referral for specialist domestic abuse support for those experiencing abuse, provided by commissioned support services working in partnership with Reading Borough Council
- referral for specialist assessments on managing/reducing risk from perpetrators
- assessing the impact of domestic abuse on children or a 16/17-year-old who is themselves a victim of domestic abuse.

Reading MARAC takes place every month. If a case is very high risk, urgent meetings can be convened with the Thames Valley Police Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit (DAIU) to ensure immediate action is taken if required.

**There are commonly three criteria for referring a case to a MARAC:**

- Professional judgement: if a professional has serious concerns about a victim’s situation, they should refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly.
- Visible high risk: the number of ‘ticks’ on SafeLives DASH risk assessment checklist
- Potential escalation: the number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past twelve months. This criterion can be used to identify cases where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors on the list, but where abuse appears to be escalating and where it is appropriate to assess the situation more fully by sharing information at a MARAC.

If you have a case that needs to be referred to the MARAC, please speak to your designated MARAC Officer who is responsible for making referrals and attending the MARAC on behalf of your organisation. Speak to your manager or designated safeguarding lead to find out who this is.

**Homeless young people**

The Housing Advice Service and the Access and Assessment Teams meet with young people and their parents/carers in order to prevent homelessness and to carry out a joint assessment of circumstances. All 16-17-year olds who present as homeless will be offered a single assessment. Case-law known as the ‘Southwark judgment’ imposes an obligation upon local authorities to provide accommodation and support to homeless 16- and 17-year-olds. If homelessness cannot be avoided, no young person will be placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, even in an emergency. In April 2010, statutory guidance was issued on how councils should consider 16- and 17-year olds at risk of homelessness. This was up-dated in April 2018 to reflect new duties introduced through the Homelessness reduction Act 2017 and other relevant up-dates. [Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.](#)

A detailed procedure/protocol between Reading Borough Housing and Brighter Futures for Children is in place, for more information contact the Housing Advice Service (see Appendix 1).

**Children and young people missing from home and care**

All children who have been reported to the Police as missing, and returned home, will be notified to Children’s Social Care where a return home interview will be arranged. If the child is already known to Children’s Social Care their social worker will be alerted. For closed cases, if any concerns are identified at the return home interview, an Early Help and/or MASH enquiry will be triggered. All children who are reported missing are discussed at the weekly multi-agency MERG (missing evaluation and review) meeting.

## Children and young people at risk of exploitation

All children who are deemed to be at risk of exploitation are required to have an LSCB Pan Berkshire Exploitation Screening Tool completed by the lead professional, followed by a referral to the multi-agency led CETAR (Child Exploitation Triage and Review) meeting, for professionals to consider the extent of the child's exploitation risk. An Exploitation Notification flag will also be added to the child's case file and will remain open until we are satisfied that there are no longer any exploitation concerns or risks.

## Children and young people at risk of trafficking

All children and young people for whom indicators of trafficking have been identified must have a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral completed. The link to the form can be found on the Gov.uk website: [Modern slavery victims: referral](#)

## Children at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)

Responses to children at risk of FGM follow the Home Office Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation which emphasise that FGM is illegal in the United Kingdom and is 'a clear and savage form of child abuse and violence against women'. In addition to legislation specifically criminalising FGM, Children and Families Service's staff must consider other relevant laws including the Children Act 2004, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights 1953.

Safeguarding enquiries into instances of FGM will be managed through the Children's Single Point of Access and are governed by the Berkshire Safeguarding Children procedures, in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership has guidance, risk assessment and pathways, plus training, to support practitioners in their understanding of FGM and identification of risk. Please see the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership website for more information: [Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership - FGM](#)

## Radicalisation & Extremism

Vulnerable children living in Reading need to be protected from radicalisation and exposure to extremist ideology as their vulnerability could lead them to being targeted by radicalised groups or individuals. It is crucial that these children are protected using the Channel Panel process and that social workers and others are provided with appropriate training and access to the Prevent Guidance and given clear understanding of what action to take if they suspect a child or young person is at risk of becoming radicalised. Where there are concerns that relate to a child, all referrals should be made to the Children's Single Point of Access who will refer all cases to the Channel Co-ordinator/Panel. The Children's Single Point of Access will also make a decision on the relevant thresholds whether a Children's Social Care Assessment is required.

For further information see [Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership - Prevent](#)

where there are links to information and training.

## Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement is where a child under the age of 16 years (or 18 if the child has a disability) lives with, and is cared for by, someone who is not their parent or close relative for 28 days or more. This is usually as a result of a private agreement between the child's parents (or

someone else with Parental Responsibility for the child) and the carers, and without any initial involvement from Children's Services.

Responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the privately fostered child remains with the parent or other persons with parental responsibility. However, it is the duty of local authorities to satisfy themselves, via assessment, that the welfare of children who are, or will be, privately fostered within their area is being satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted. It is the local authority in whose area the privately fostered child resides which has legal duties in respect of that child. Children Act 1989 Section 67 (1).

For information visit our [fostering and adoption page](#).

### Children returning to live with their families

Where children have been living away from their families in residential or foster care or with relatives, whether by consent or court order and there is a plan to return the child or young person home, a single assessment will be initiated. The parents, child and professionals will be involved to inform the assessment. The assessment will identify any needs and actions/services required to enable the child to return home safely with appropriate supports and safeguards. The assessment should also consider the needs of any other child living in the home and initiate any further assessments as appropriate. The assessment will be undertaken by the named social worker which will be shared with the Reviewing and Quality Assurance Service at the child's statutory review before any return home is made.

The single assessment process will utilise and be informed by the looked after children review and child protection process as appropriate to the child's circumstances. Independent Reviewing Officers must be consulted to inform the assessment and plan in order to support the child returning home.

On returning home the child will be subject to Child in Need procedures or other order for at least three months. A Child in Need review will take place before any step down to universal services.

### Child Death

All deaths of children under 18 years of age, who are resident in Reading, are notified to the Children's Single Point of Access. Where the death is unexpected, the notification may be made to the out-of-hours Emergency Duty Service or the Children's Single Point of Access depending on the time of day. In this circumstance, a risk assessed response is triggered, known as a Joint Agency Response (JAR) and the Berkshire West Health Led JAR protocol is followed. For further information see [Pan Berkshire Child Death Overview Panel](#).

### Complaints Process

Any parent, carer or young person who is dissatisfied with the service they receive from Children Services has the right to make a complaint. Parents/carers and children can request a copy of the complaints procedure from their social worker or it can be accessed online at [Complaints, comments and compliments](#).

Our Customer Relations Team can find an advocate for children and young people who wish to make a complaint. The team can be contacted:

Customer Relations Team

Call: 0118 937 2905



Write: Freepost RTLS-CKGX-RKLL

Reading Borough Council

Customer Relations Team

Bridge Street

Reading

RG1 2LU

Email: <mailto:complaints@reading.gov.uk>

Text: type SPKUP & your message to 81722





## Appendices

Appendix 1 - Web links and related contacts:

**Pan Berkshire Child Protection Procedures:**

<http://proceduresonline.com/berks/>

**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018:**

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

**Reading Threshold Guidance:**

[Reading Threshold Guidance](#)

**Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership website:**

[Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

**Reading Borough Council Children's Single point of Access:**

- Use the web form (the most secure and effective way of requesting help for a child): [Report concerns about a child](#)
- Call on 0118 937 3641 (available Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm)
- For urgent enquiries out of hours, call the Emergency Duty Team on 01344 786543
- Email the team on [CSPOA@brighterfuturesforchildren.org](mailto:CSPOA@brighterfuturesforchildren.org)

**Out of Hours Emergency Duty Service:**

Any referrals or contacts between 5pm and 9am Monday to Friday or 24 hours on Saturday and Sunday should be directed to our Emergency Duty Service. A record of all referrals to the emergency duty service will be made and referred onto the relevant local office.

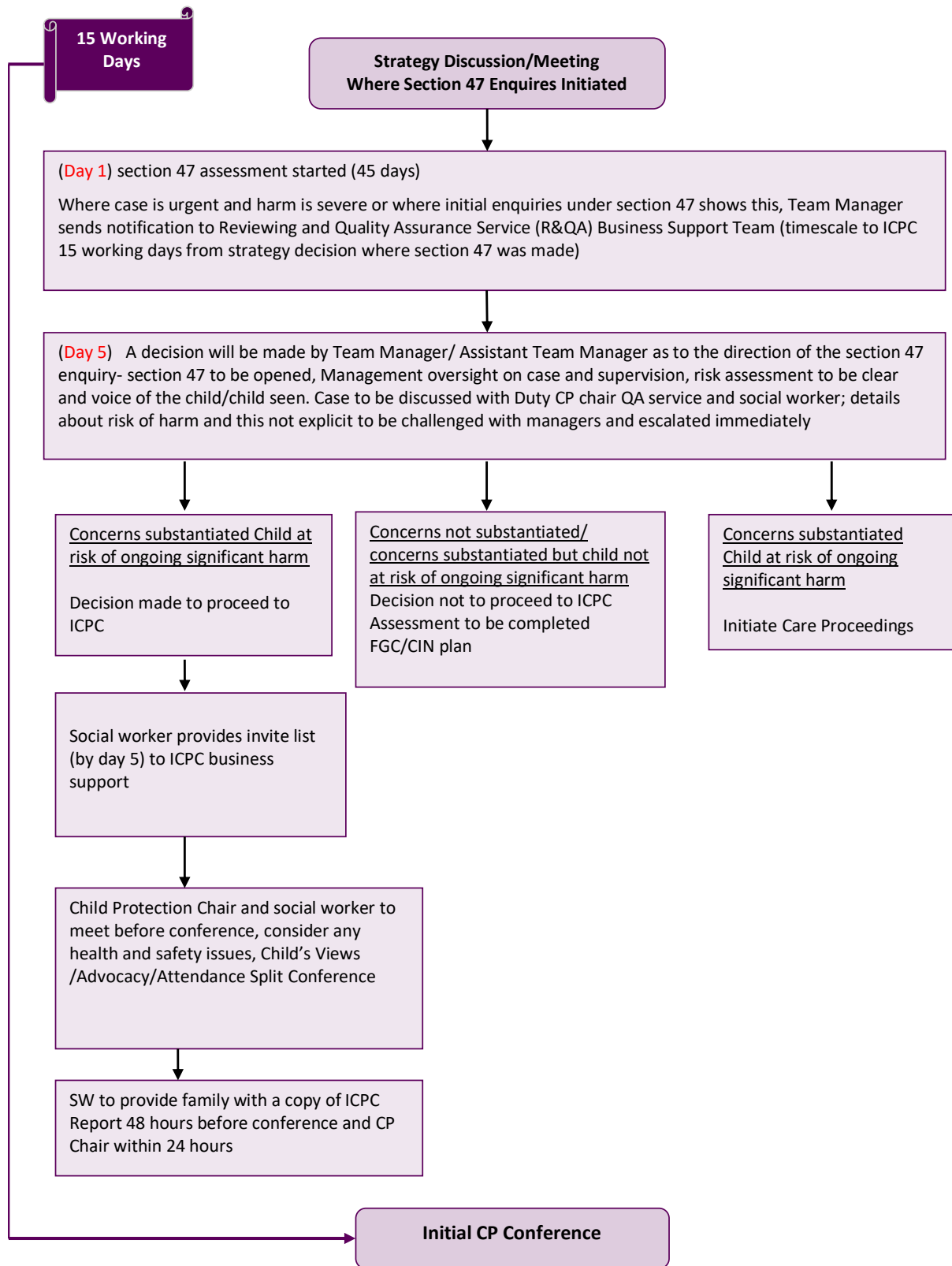
- Call on 01344 786 543.

Reading Local Offer: Local Offer helps you find information about local services, support, activities and events for children and young people aged 0 - 25 years who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). <http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk>

**Reading Borough Council Housing Advice Service:**

- Call on 0118 937 2165 (available Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm)
- Email the team on [housingadvice@reading.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvice@reading.gov.uk)

## Appendix 2 – Process Flow Chart for arranging an Initial Child Protection Conference



Appendix 3 - Flow Chart for Children Looked After by Brighter Futures for Children

