

Children and Young People's Social Care

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If you are not happy with the service provided and want to make a complaint, please contact:

The Quality Assurance and Improvement Adviser (Representations and Complaints)

Post: CYPSQI, Borough of Poole, FREEPOST (RSHZ-GZLK-USLZ), Poole, BH15 2RU

Telephone: 01202 714740

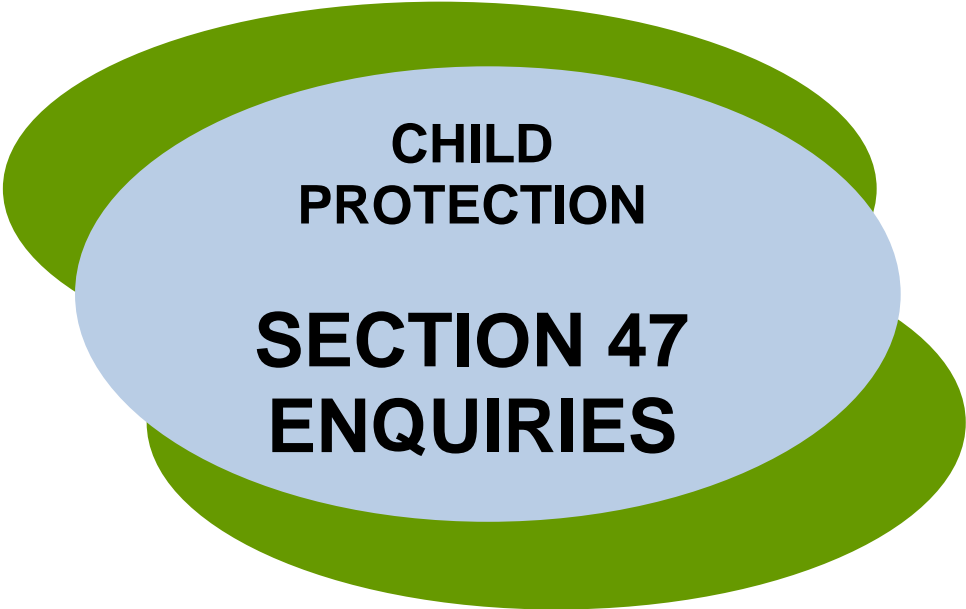
Email: qualityandimprovement@poole.gov.uk

Website: www.boroughofpoole/report

Please ask for a Complaints leaflet

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Borough of Poole Children and Young People's Services



**CHILD
PROTECTION
SECTION 47
ENQUIRIES**

PARENTS AND CARERS GUIDE



What is a Section 47 enquiry?

Following an assessment, or if a referral has been made suggesting your child is at risk of significant harm, a social worker and their manager will hold a strategy meeting or discussion with the Police. If there is reasonable cause to believe that your child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, a **Section 47** enquiry will be started.

They will firstly talk to other professionals involved with your family. The Police are likely to be involved with this if it is believed an offence against a child may have taken place.

What will happen next?

A social worker and, possibly a police officer, will come to visit you. They will explain to you the concerns that have been raised and listen to what you have to say.

They will want to see and talk to your child and any other children if they are old enough. They may also want to talk to other family members or other adults who have a lot of contact with you and your child.

If it is believed that your child has been injured or needs medical treatment, they will arrange for them to be seen by a medical professional. In most situations, you can be there when your child is seen.

If it is believed that an offence may have been committed, your child is likely to be interviewed by a social worker and a police officer which is digitally recorded. This is called an 'achieving best evidence interview'. This interview is relaxed and takes place in a room that is furnished to look like any room in a house.

If you do not agree to your child being spoken to or medically examined, the social worker must seek legal advice.

It may be that no risks to your child are identified. If this is the case you may be offered support or advice, or no further action will be taken. The social worker will write to you to let you know.

What if I am accused of harming my child?

The social worker and police need to consider if your child is at risk of harm. If it is believed that you or someone from the family may have committed an offence, they will be formally interviewed by the police.

In certain circumstances, if it is felt that your child is in immediate danger, the social worker can apply to the court for an **Emergency Protection Order**. Your child may then live temporarily away from you whilst the Section 47 enquiry is finished. Most enquiries, however, are carried out while children remain at home with their families. The social worker will work with you to make sure your child is safe and protected.

You have the right to seek independent or legal advice at any time during the enquiry. You also have the right to read what the social worker has written about you and your child. Please ask your social worker about this.

Child Protection Conference

At the end of the enquiry, it may be decided that a Child Protection conference will be held. This is a meeting with all the relevant professionals, some of whom may be known to you already, such as a Head Teacher or Health Visitor. You will also be invited. The conference will:

- Share and analyse the information that has been gathered
- Make a decision about whether or not your child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and in need of protection
- If necessary, agree that a Protection Plan should be in place to reduce those risks.

A separate leaflet will be sent to you about Child Protection conferences, and there is a DVD that you can watch which shows what typically happens in a conference.

You should talk to your social worker if a conference is planned, as they will answer any questions that you may have.