**Glossary: Children’s Safeguarding**

Terminology in the area of safeguarding children can be complex and changes as services are reshaped. This document is aimed at helping practitioners who work with children and their families to understand the key terminology used within child protection legislation, statutory guidance and practice.

**Abuse and neglect**
These are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger, for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. In the UK child protection system, there are 4 categories of abuse: Physical, Sexual, Emotional & Neglect.

**Adoption**
Adoption is the legal process by which a child or a sibling group of children who cannot be brought up within their birth family become full, permanent and legal members of their new family. Adopters become the child’s legal parents with the same rights and responsibilities as if the child was born to them. In the UK, the majority of adoptions take place as a result of a Court Order which has ordered the permanent removal of the child from their birth family due to issues of abuse or neglect, as opposed to voluntary adoption which is when a birth parent proactively chooses to ‘relinquish’ their child for adoption.

**Adoption Order**
A Court Order under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 giving full parental responsibility for a child to the approved adopters, made on their application to the court. An adoption order severs the legal ties between a birth parent and the child, so that the adoptive parent(s) become the child’s legal parent(s) throughout life. An adoption order does not end when a child turns 18 – the child/adult remains a legal member of his/her new family permanently.

**Advocate**An independent person, separate from the Local Authority, whose main purpose is to work with a child to enable them to express their wishes and feelings. The aim of child advocacy is to encourage empowerment of children and uphold their human rights. They may work with the child under any remit of social work involvement but cannot represent a child within Care Proceedings. Advocates can also work with vulnerable adults.

**Age Assessment**
Where the age of the child is uncertain and there are reasons to believe they are a child the person will be presumed to be a child in order to receive immediate assistance, support and protection in accordance with Section 51 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Assessments must be undertaken in accordance with standards established in case law and should only be carried out where there is reason to doubt that the individual is the age they claim.

**Agency Decision Maker (ADM)**A senior member of staff (usually a Service Director or Director of Children’s Services) who makes formal decisions on all adoption or long term fostering matters (some of which will be made on the basis of a recommendation of the Adoption/Fostering Panel). In cases where a child’s social worker is recommending they be placed for adoption or long term fostering, the agency decision-maker’s role is to determine, on behalf of the Local Authority, whether it is proportionate to present a care plan of adoption or long term fostering for that child within the Care Proceedings. The overall determination of the child’s permanence rests with the Court which holds the sole power for making relevant Orders.

**Allegation**A claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically one made without proof. It is imperative that allegations made against any professional or person in position of trust are reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer for full investigation. Where an allegation is made against an adult which suggests a crime has been committed against a child, these should be discussed with the Police in the context of a strategy discussion to determine whether a Police investigation is also necessary.

It is important for all social care workers to acknowledge the distinction between a disclosure and allegation. A disclosure is sharing of factual information. An allegation is an accusation that someone has done something which has not (yet) been proven. However, just because an allegation or disclosure is later denied or retracted, or not pursued by Police or LADO, this does NOT mean it is untrue and should still be investigated by social care from a safeguarding perspective.

**Analysis**A section of any assessment of a child/family whereby the writer will examine and understand in more detail the information gathered about a child and their family and why this is relevant in the context of the assessment. More specifically, they will weigh up the information in terms of risks and protective factors to explore the level of concern for the child and determine a plan of future action.

**Appropriate Adult**Whenever a Looked After child aged under the age of 18 is arrested, the responsible Local Authority should ensure that the young person has the support of an Appropriate Adult. The PACE Codes of Practice require an Appropriate Adult to be present during the course of the police interview and key stages of investigations conducted in the police station. The provision of an Appropriate Adult is intended to safeguard the rights and welfare of young people in police custody. The following people can be an Appropriate Adult: a parent or guardian; a local authority social worker; a worker from the Youth Offending Service; or another responsible adult aged over 18.

**Assessment**
The process of defining an individual person’s needs, making a judgement about the risk of harm, deciding on the help that they require and determining their eligibility for services. Assessments should be conducted in accordance with Chapter 1 of Working Together 2015, and the Local Protocol for Assessment.

**Asylum Seeker**A person who has fled persecution and made a formal application for asylum within the UK and whose claim is being processed.

**Attachment**Attachment is the emotional bond that typically forms between infant and caregiver, and it is the means by which the helpless infant gets their primary needs met. The central theme of attachment theory is that primary caregivers who are available and responsive to an infant's needs allow the child to develop a sense of security. The infant knows that the caregiver is dependable, which creates a secure base for the child to then explore the world.

**Attachment Disorder**Attachment disorder arises when a child under the age of three suffers an early life trauma like abuse, separation from a parent, or illness. They miss out on the love, comfort and nurturing that they need, and fail to form normal loving relationships with their primary carers. This is turn can delay their cognitive and social development, affecting their behaviours and their ability to form relationships later in life.

**Care Leaver**An adult who has spent time in foster or residential care, or in other arrangements outside their immediate or extended family before the age of 18. Their time in care could have lasted for a few months or from birth until their 18th birthday.

**Care Order (CO)**A Court Order made under Section 31 of the Children Act, placing the child in the care of the Local Authority. The Order is usually made at the end of Care Proceedings if the permanence plan for a child is to remain outside of the care of their birth parents on a long term/permanent basis. For the duration of the Order, the Local Authority shares parental responsibility with the parent but is able to make daily decisions about the child’s life even where the parent does not agree or consent.

**Care Plan**Every Looked After child must have a Care Plan completed and updated by the social worker. The overall purpose of the plan is to safeguard and promote the interests of the child, prevent drift and focus work with the child and the family. The Care Plan must be regularly reviewed at Looked After Reviews.

**Care Proceedings**
Court proceedings can be brought by the local authority under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 if there is concern that the child concerned is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm attributable to the care being given to the child, or the care that is likely to be given if an Order were not made. Where a child is deemed to be beyond parental control, proceedings can also be brought to ensure the safety and wellbeing of that child. These proceedings are known as Care Proceedings.

Where care proceedings are brought, the Court can make a range of orders under the Children Act 1989. If the Court is satisfied that the threshold criteria are met, it can make a Care Order or Supervision Order.

Any parent whose child is the subject of Care Proceedings will be entitled to Legal Aid and as such will be able to access representation by a lawyer free of charge. All Care Proceedings should be concluded within a maximum timescale of 26 weeks.

**Celebrations Hearing**
Part of the adoption process, a celebrations hearing takes place after the court hearing that has granted an adoption order, and are a chance for adoptive families to celebrate the making of an adoption order. Adoptive families visit the court and meet the judge, who will give a certificate and usually invite families and friends to take photos. Celebration hearings have no legal standing, and are not part of the adoption process.

**Child**
Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

**Child Arrangements Order**
A Court Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 that regulates with whom a child is to live, spend time with or otherwise have contact with, and when a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact with any person. Each Child Arrangements Order is decided on the circumstances of the individual family and on what is in the best interests of that particular child.

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**
Child Criminal Exploitation is where an individual or group uses their position of power to take advantage of a child or young person under the age of 18 and coerces, controls, manipulates or deceives them into criminal activity. This could be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants such as money, clothes, and mobile phones; for the financial gain or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator; or through violence or the threat of violence.

CCE involves children with many vulnerabilities being exposed to, and/or being a victim of: physical and emotional violence, neglect, going missing, sexual abuse, sexual grooming and exploitation, modern day slavery, human trafficking and domestic abuse.

Even if the activity appears to be consensual, the victim may have been criminally exploited. CCE does not always involve physical contact, it can also happen through use of technology. This could include making contact through social media and posting videos on YouTube which glamorise gang violence, drug taking and knife crime, as well as using and making music videos to make threats to other young people.

CCE is often linked to ‘County Lines’ – please refer below.

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**
Specialist multi-disciplinary team to provide assessment and treatment for children and young people with emotional/mental health issues. They specialise in behavioural, emotional and mental health difficulties in children and young people and can be accessed through referral by GP, social worker or school.

**Child and Family Assessment**
Previously, children’s social work assessments were carried out as part of two separate processes; the initial and core assessment. The Child and Family Assessment removes the distinction between the two so that all families are subject to a single assessment that is proportionate to their needs. Social Workers have a maximum of 45 working days to complete the assessment, however it is expected that the majority of assessments will take less than 45 days to complete. The timeframe for completion of the assessment is determined by the level of risk/concern identified for the child.

**Child in Need**
Children are defined as being ‘in need’, under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. They are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services [section 17(10)] . This includes children who are disabled.

Critical factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 centre upon what will happen to a child’s health or development without services being provided, and the likely effect the services will have on the child’s standard of health and development. Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need.

The Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (the Assessment Framework, published in 2000) sets out arrangements for undertaking assessment processes in determining whether a child is “in need” under the Act. It is the basis upon which primarily social workers will prioritise a child’s need for supportive help or services, though these are not necessarily confined to services provided by the local authority.

**Child in Need Plan**A Child in Need Plan should be drawn up for children who are identified as Children in Need who require services or support to ensure their needs are met. It should be completed following a Child and Family assessment where services are identified as necessary.

**Child in Need Review**These are meetings which take place on a regular basis – at least every 6 weeks. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and monitor the progress of the Child in Need Plan. Attendees should be the child’s social worker, parent/carer and any professional working with the child or family. A judgement should be made about whether it is in the best interests of the child to attend these review meetings.

**Child Looked After (CLA)**A child cared for by the Local Authority either on a voluntary basis with the consent of their parent/legal guardian, or as a result of a Care Order being made by the Court. They may live with foster carers, other family members or in residential care. Also sometimes used interchangeably with “looked after child (LAC)”.

**Child Looked After Review (CLA Review / CLAR)**A Child Looked After Review (CLA Review) is a meeting with all those that are concerned with the child in care and their care plan; for example this may be the child’s parents, foster carer, social worker, school and youth worker. The meeting is coordinated and chaired by the child’s Independent Reviewing Officer (see relevant section in this document). At this meeting, all attendees will look at how things are going for the child, whether their care plan meets their needs and whether there need to be any changes for the future.

CLA Reviews should be convened at the following intervals:

* An initial CLA Review should be conducted within 20 working days of the child becoming Looked After;
* The second CLA Review should be conducted within three months of an Initial CLA Review;
* Subsequent CLA Reviews should be conducted not more than six months after any previous review.

**Child Protection**The process of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is a specific activity that is undertaken to protect a child who is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. All agencies should proactively aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**Child Protection Advisor**An experienced social work professional within Children’s Services who has a key role in promoting and monitoring standards for children in need of protection who are subject to a Child Protection Plan. They have a responsibility to provide a high quality service to children in need of protection through the effective chairing of complex Child Protection Conferences and acting as a point of advice and challenge for good standards in Child Protection work.

**Child Protection Conference**
A formal multi-agency meeting which decides whether the child is at continuing risk of significant harm and whether the child is to be subject to a child protection plan. All agencies/practitioners involved with the child and family are invited and expected to attend, and the family themselves, to assess all relevant information, and plan how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. These meetings are chaired and overseen by a Child Protection Advisor.

**Child Protection Enquiry / Child Protection Investigation**A formal process, under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, of gathering information about a child and family when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm. The enquiry is led by a Social Worker within Children’s Services and will involve them speaking to the child and family, and any agencies they are/have previously been working with, in order to determine whether the child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm. Depending on the concern that is being investigated, the enquiry can be undertaken as a ‘single agency’ meaning it is led solely by Children’s Services, but where there is believed to be a criminal element that also needs investigating (e.g. a crime against a child) then the enquiry will be ‘joint agency’ which mean Children’s Services and Police will undertake the investigation together. The decision about single/joint agency investigations is made within a strategy meeting/discussion. Both the Police and the NSPCC also have powers to carry out such enquiries, though this is less common.

**Child Protection Medical**A child protection medical is requested by social workers in situations where there is a suspicion that a child may have been physically harmed as a direct result of abuse or neglect. It is carried out by specialist paediatricians to look for any signs that a child or young person has been abused or neglected. This is different from a clinical examination undertaken by a child’s GP, which aims to establish what is wrong with the child or young person and what treatment may be needed.

**Child Protection Plan**
A detailed multi-agency plan setting out what must be done to protect a child from further harm, to promote the child’s health and development and, if it is in the best interests of the child, to support the family to promote the child’s welfare.

**Child Protection Review Conference**
These ensure that children who are the subject of a child protection plan remain monitored and that their individual child protection plan remains valid. The first review conference should be held within 3 months of the initial conference. Further reviews should take place within 6 months of each other for as long as the child's name remains subject of a child protection plan.

**Child Sexual Exploitation**
A form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

**Child’s Permanence Report (CPR)**An important document most commonly completed within the adoption process, but sometimes within the fostering process also. It is an essential tool to enable a child’s social worker and other professionals to plan for the future life of a child when a decision has been made that the child cannot remain in the long term care of their birth parents. It is completed by the child’s social worker and contains comprehensive information about the child’s family background, life experiences, health and the circumstances that led to the child being in care. CPRs are sent to prospective adopters who have expressed serious interest in adopting that child. It is a source of information to help prospective adopters decide whether to proceed, as it provides essential information about the child’s background and heritage which is used in the matching process. Adopted adults can also request a copy of their CPR, and it contains important information about their life history.

**Children Act 1989 and 2004**
Government legislation on which the foundations of safeguarding and child protection is based. The policies and procedures within Buckinghamshire Children’s Services (and all other Children’s Services departments within the UK) are informed and driven by this legislation. This includes both public law (care proceedings) and private law (family proceedings).

**Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)**
The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) looks after the interests of children involved in family proceedings. It works with children and their families, and then advises the courts on what it considers to be in the children's best interests. CAFCASS only works in the family courts. Examples of matters that may be taken to family courts are: when parents who are separating or divorcing can't agree on arrangements for their children; an adoption application; when children are subject to an application for care or supervision proceedings by Children’s Services. Social workers employed by CAFCASS are appointed as Family Court Advisors (FCAs).

**Children’s Social Care / Children’s Services**
The national terminology used to describe the local authority service that carries out what were previously known as “social services” for children. Children’s Social Care has the lead responsibility for child protection enquiries.

**Chronology**An ordered, dated record of significant events in the child's life. It can help identify patterns of events, concerns, positives, strengths and unmet needs. It should be started at the outset of Children’s Services involvement with a child, and be continually updated with relevant significant information. It should provide a clear account of all significant events in a child’s life to date, based on knowledge and information held by the agencies involved with the child and family and reflect the best knowledge a department has about a child’s history at a point in time.

**Clare’s Law**
Please see ‘Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme’.

**Confidentiality**
Confidentiality is the process of handling information that is identified as being of a personal and sensitive nature.

**Connected Person**
A relative, friend or other person connected with a child. The latter is someone who would not fit the term 'relative or friend', but who has a pre-existing relationship with the child. It could be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as (for example) a childminder, a teacher or a youth worker.

**Consent**
Consent is the clear, voluntary and continuing permission of the person to any intervention or information sharing based on adequate knowledge and information of the purpose, nature, likely effects and risks of that intervention or information sharing, including the likelihood of its success and any other options and their consequences. Consent can be given orally or in writing.

**Contact**The process of a child spending time with a non-resident parent or family member when they are in Local Authority care. This can be supervised (by a professional or approved family member/friend), or can also be unsupervised (if appropriately risk assessed).
See also ‘Supervised Contact’.

**Contextual Safeguarding**Some children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and online. Threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

**Core Group**
A group of people that is identified at the child protection conference as having core responsibility for implementing and monitoring the child protection plan. Members of the core group are parents/carers and practitioners who are working with the child and/or family. The child may also be a member of the core group depending on their age and level of understanding.

**Core Group Meeting**
The core group meetings take place on a regular basis in between child protection conferences – at least every 4 weeks. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and monitor the progress of the child protection plan. A judgement has to be made about whether it is in the best interests of the child to attend the core group meetings.

**Corporate Parent**When a child comes into Local Authority care, the Local Authority becomes their Corporate Parent. Put simply, the term ‘Corporate Parent’ means the collective responsibility of the council, elected members and council employees for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us. A child in the care of the council looks to the council to be the best parent it can be to that child. *Every member and employee of the council has the statutory responsibility to act for that child in the same way that a good parent would act for their own child.*

**County Lines**County Lines is a term used to describe the involvement of organised criminal networks and street gangs in moving illegal drugs from cities to other parts of the UK. In Buckinghamshire, the originating city is usually London. Much of the activity and ‘business’ is conducted over a dedicated mobile phone line. Criminal networks involved in County Lines often exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store drugs, money and weapons. This is frequently reinforced through coercion, intimidation and violence, including the use of sexual violence and weapons.

**Department for Education (DfE)**
Government department responsible for safeguarding children policies.

**Designated Safeguarding Person / Officer / Lead (DSP/DSO/DSL)**
The person within an organisation, agency or company who has lead and overall responsibility for ensuring a company’s safeguarding policy is adhered to. This role is most commonly found in schools, nurseries or early years settings. The Designated Safeguarding Person should be the first point of contact for all concerns about a child within their setting.

**Disability**
There are several definitions of disability. Some people are classified as ‘disabled’ for one purpose but not for another and this may affect access to services or benefits. Disability is sometimes seen as belonging to the individual, so one definition is ‘an aspect of the functioning of a person’s body that has the effect of limiting their inclusion in society’. However it can also be seen as belonging to society in which case a definition is ‘a disadvantage or restriction on doing things that is the fault of society and the way it is run’.

**Disclosure**The action of making new or secret information known. The information being shared is a fact, and usually a secret, that is now being made known. An example of this may be where a child starts to talk about historic sexual abuse they experienced which is known to have occurred.

It is important for all social care workers to acknowledge the distinction between a disclosure and allegation. A disclosure is sharing of factual information. An allegation is an accusation that someone has done something which has not (yet) been proven. However, just because an allegation or disclosure is later denied or retracted, or not pursued by Police or LADO, this does NOT mean it is untrue and should still be investigated by social care from a safeguarding perspective.

**DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour-Based Violence)**A tool used to help front-line practitioners identify high risk cases of Domestic Violence and Abuse, stalking and honour-based violence. It can assist in deciding which cases should be referred to MARAC and what other support might be required. The DASH should only be used by people who have been specifically trained to use it. For further information see <http://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk/>.

**Domestic Abuse / Violence**
The Government defines domestic abuse, or domestic violence, as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents whether directly related, in-laws or step-family. However, this is not an exhaustive list and may also be extended to uncles, aunts and cousins etc.

Women’s Aid, a leading domestic abuse charity, defines domestic abuse as “an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, in the majority of cases by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer.”

Controlling behaviour is defined as a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Coercive Control is now a criminal offence which came into law at the end of 2015. It is defined as a continuous course of behaviour; its aim is to oppress and or restrict victims’ free will; it is measured by the level of entrapment achieved; the abuse is individualised; and generally it is seen in males exerting control over females, but this is not exclusive.

**Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme**The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (also known as ‘Clare’s Law’) is designed to give members of the public a formal mechanism to make enquiries about people who they are in a relationship, or someone who is in a relationship with someone they know, where a concern arises that that person may be abusive towards their partner. There are two aspects to the scheme: Right to Ask and Right to Know.

Right to Ask: Under the scheme an individual can ask police to check whether a new or existing partner has a violent past. This is the ‘right to ask’. If records show that an individual may be at risk of Domestic Violence and Abuse from a partner, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so.

Right to Know: This process allows the Police to proactively let someone know if they are intimately associating with or in a relationship someone who has previously been domestically abusive or violent. Again, the police can release information if it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to do so.

For further information see: <https://www.met.police.uk/advice-and-information/domestic-abuse/>.

**Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO)**A Court Order which is applied for by Police can ban a perpetrator of domestic abuse with immediate effect from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim time to consider their options and get the support they need. The Police can apply for this Order without requiring the support and cooperation of the victim which allows the victim to be safeguarded even if they do not feel willing or able to support Police action against the perpetrator.

**Early Help**Providing help and support to children and their families is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting and responding to crisis later on. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years with the overall aim to be proactive in response to problems that families experience, rather than reactive to the crisis the problems escalate into which are ultimately more harmful for children.

**Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**Replacing the Statements of Special Educational Needs from 1 September 2014, an Education, Health and Care Plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person aged 0-25 who has Special Educational Needs or a disability. It is drawn up by the Local Authority after an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment of the child or young person has determined that such a plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.

**Emergency Duty Team (EDT)**A team of social workers who deal with emergencies out of normal office hours. Also known as the “Out Of Hours” team. In Buckinghamshire, it is currently referred to as the Emergency Social Work Team (ESWT).

**Emergency Protection Order (EPO)**
A court order under Section 44 of the Children Act 1989 issued with the aim of protecting a child from ongoing or imminent risk of physical, mental or emotional harm where emergency action is needed. It can be made for a maximum period of 8 days.

Anyone can apply to the court for an emergency protection order if they fear that a child is in danger. Almost all applications are made by the local authority but the police or the NSPCC could also apply. An EPO authorises the applicant to remove the child from their home, or prevent the child’s removal from hospital or other identified safe place.

**Emotional Abuse**The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (particularly important when considering domestic abuse within the home). It may include serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

**Exploitation**Either opportunistic or premeditated, exploitation describes the abusive act of unfairly manipulating someone for profit or personal gain. This includes Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.
See also, ‘Child Sexual Exploitation’ and ‘Child Criminal Exploitation’.

**Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)**Most easily understood as illness (or proclaimed illness) in a child which is fabricated by a parent or carer. The child is often presented for medical assessment and care, usually persistently, often resulting in multiple medical procedures. Acute symptoms and signs of illness cease when the child is separated from the perpetrator. Local Safeguarding Children Boards have specific inter-agency procedures which cover this issue.

**Family Group Conference (FGC)**Also known as Family Group Meetings, it is a meeting used within safeguarding services as an opportunity for family members to get together to make a plan for their child which addresses the concerns which have been identified. The meeting is primarily for the family members and extended network of the child and family to talk about the concerns and how they as a network can support and ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child. These meetings can be used to support a CP/CIN plan, or where statutory services are closing the case and supporting the family to be clear about how they will manage any issues which arise post the case closure.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**A collective term (also known as genital cutting and female circumcision), for all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for cultural or non-medical reasons.

Female Genital Mutilation is a criminal offence in the United Kingdom. It is also a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out Female Genital Mutilation abroad, or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of Female Genital Mutilation abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal.

**Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order (FGMPO)**Where a person is concerned that they or someone they know is at risk of FGM an application can be made for a Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order under Section 73 of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

The FGMPO might contain prohibitions, restrictions or other requirements for the purposes of protecting a victim or potential victim of FGM. This could include, for example, provisions to surrender a person’s passport or any other travel document; and not to enter into any arrangements, in the UK or abroad, for FGM to be performed on the person to be protected.

Breach of an FGMPO is a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years’ imprisonment, or as a civil breach punishable by up to two years’ imprisonment.

**Forced Marriage**A marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities or children, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial and sexual pressure.

A Forced Marriage is different from an arranged marriage, which is a marriage entered into freely by both parties, although their families take a leading role in the choice of partner.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 made it a criminal offence (which can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison) to force someone to marry.

**Forced Marriage Protection Order**If any person is concerned that they or someone they know is at risk of forced marriage an application for a Forced Marriage Protection Order can be made. Section 1 of The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 inserted provisions into the Family Law Act 1996 enabling the courts to make Forced Marriage Protection Orders (FMPO) to prevent forced marriages from occurring and to protect those who have already been forced into marriage.

The order can include prohibitions, restrictions or requirements to protect a victim from a spouse, family member or anyone involved. Involvement can include aiding, abetting, counselling, procuring, encouraging, or assisting another person to force or attempt to force a person to marry. FMPO’s can last for a specified time or if the court so desires, set the FMPO for an indefinite period i.e. until varied or discharged. The order can relate to conduct either within or outside of England and Wales.

Breach of an order is not a criminal offence. However, where a power of arrest is attached to the order the police have the power to arrest anyone who they have reasonable suspicion to believe are in breach of the order. A person arrested for a breach of a FMPO must be brought before the court within a period of 24 hours and will be dealt with under the court’s powers of contempt of court.

Although there is no specific criminal offence of forcing a person into a forced marriage, the forcing parties may be guilty of committing other criminal offences such as: Threats to Kill; Assault; Kidnap / Abduction; or False Imprisonment.

**Foster Carer**When a child cannot be suitably cared for by their birth families, they may instead be cared for by foster carers. Foster carers do not have parental responsibility for the child. This remains with the child’s parents and the Local Authority. Many foster carers will provide a stable home for children who need it until they can be placed with approved adoptive parents who can provide security and stability in the long term. It is possible for a foster carer to go on to adopt their child.

**Fraser Competence**This describes factors that can be used to help judge if a child is able to understand a question, the implications of what is being asked and is able to express an opinion or consent. Each child and young person is an individual and their “Fraser competence” would depend on factors including their age, development and capacity to demonstrate an understanding of the issue under discussion. Previously referred to as Gillick Competent.

**Fraser Guidelines**
The Fraser guidelines give specific guidance on providing advice and treatment to young people under 16 years of age. Refer to the NSPCC website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) or the CQC website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk).

**Genogram**A pictorial representation of a child’s lineage which includes family relationships and dynamics. A genogram is structurally similar to a family tree, but serves a very different purpose. A genogram includes information about relationships and interactions between family members, while a family tree only depicts lineage.

**Guardian (Children’s Guardian)**Within Care Proceedings, the child is entitled to be represented by a lawyer, however, they are not able to give legal instructions to their lawyer by virtue of being a child. Therefore, the Court will appoint a Guardian for the child from CAFCASS (a Guardian in this context means someone who looks after their interests in the case, not somebody who takes over their care). CAFCASS is independent of the Local Authority. The Guardian will choose and give instructions to the lawyer representing the child, about what is best for them and what the child wants to happen to them. If the child is old enough (usually late teens) and disagrees with the Guardian they might be helped to instruct their own solicitor. It is the Guardian’s job to give a view independent of the parents and of the Local Authority to help the Court work out what is best for the child.

**Hidden Harm**
The term 'Hidden Harm' is used with reference to the impact of parental substance misuse on children and young people.

**Honour Based Violence (HBV)**A term used to describe violence or abuse committed within the context of the extended family which is motivated by a perceived need to restore standing within the community, which is presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim. Honour based violence and abuse can take many forms, e.g. threatening behaviour, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, threats to kill and false imprisonment committed due to so called ‘honour’. Murders in the name of ‘so-called’ honour, (often called Honour killings) are murders in which predominantly women are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour which is deemed to have brought shame on the family. Some examples nationally of honour based murders have been for trivial reasons for example, dressing or behaving too westernised, falling in love with somebody not chosen by their family, rejecting forced marriage or being LGBT.

**Human Trafficking**Human trafficking involves recruitment, harbouring or transporting people into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion and forced to work against their will. In other words, trafficking is a process of enslaving people, coercing them into a situation with no way out, and exploiting them.

People can be trafficked for many different forms of exploitation such as forced prostitution, forced labour, forced begging, forced criminality, domestic servitude, forced marriage, and forced organ removal. Trafficking for sexual exploitation gets much attention. However, the majority of people are trafficked into labour exploitation.

Children are not considered able to give consent to their own exploitation so any child who has been trafficked is considered to be a victim whether or not they have been forced or deceived. All children, irrespective of their immigration status, are entitled to safeguarding and protection under UK law.

**Indefinite Leave to Remain**When an Asylum Seeker is granted ILR, they have permission to settle in the UK permanently and can access mainstream services and benefits.

**Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA)**Specialist caseworkers who focus on working predominantly with high risk victims of domestic abuse (usually but not exclusively with female victims). They generally are involved from the point of crisis and offer intensive short to medium term support. They work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and mobilise multiple resources on behalf of victims by coordinating the response of a wide range of agencies, including those working with perpetrators or children.

**Initial Health Assessment (IHA)**When a child or young person comes into care they will have an Initial Health Assessment (IHA) – this is a statutory health assessment that is required to be completed within 28 days of coming into care. It is completed by a paediatrician or an appropriately trained medical practitioner.

**Interim Care Order (ICO)**
A temporary court order under Section 38 of the Children Act 1989 which places a child into the care of the Local Authority. It allows the Local Authority to share parental responsibility with the child’s parent/s and the power to make decisions about the child’s daily life such as their living arrangements which may result in the child being placed into foster care. The Order can only be granted if the Court feels there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child has suffered, or may be at serious risk of suffering, significant harm.

**Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**
The person who ensures that children looked after by the Local Authority have regular reviews to consider their care plan and placement. It is the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer to ensure that a child’s views are taken into consideration and that the Local Authority is fulfilling its duties and functions as the child’s corporate parent.

**Interim Supervision Order**
When Care Proceedings are issued; the Court can consider whether to make an Interim Supervision Order which places the child temporarily under the supervision of the Local Authority until the Court can make a final decision about what is best for the child. An Interim Supervision Order will be made where the court has reasonable grounds for believing the threshold criteria of harm has been met.

**Key Worker**Usually an identified person within a setting such as a children’s home who is the allocated person with responsibility for undertaking specifically targeted work with a child. In other settings such as drug/alcohol support agencies, the key worker will be the allocated person responsible for undertaking specifically targeted work with the parent/carer.

**Kinship Care**When a child is cared for by a relative or close family friend rather than their biological parents.

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**Local Authority Designated Officer (for allegations against staff). Has the responsibility to oversee allegations against members of staff across all professional organisations.

**Lead Professional**
Appointing a lead professional is central to the effective front-line delivery of safeguarding services for children. They take the lead to coordinate interventions and provisions, and act as a single point of contact for a child and their family when a range of services are involved and an integrated response is required. Within a safeguarding framework, the lead professional is the Children’s Services Social Worker with responsibility for coordinating the child’s plan.

**Life Story Work**A way of working that can help children separated from their birth families maintain a good sense of their life journey and identity. Children and young people who are in care or adopted may have little understanding of why they don’t live with their birth parents, the reason for them entering care and events that took place in their early lives. This can have a negative impact on their emotional wellbeing and self-esteem and so Life Story Work aims to help children in care begin to understand and accept their personal history. A wide range of people can contribute to the creation of a child’s life story. For example, children and young people, foster carers, birth family members, social workers and teachers.

**Local Authority**
In Buckinghamshire the local authority is Buckinghamshire County Council (as of 1st April 2020 this will change to Buckinghamshire Council) and as such discharges the responsibilities of a Children’s Services Authority as set out in section 63 of the Children Act 2004.

**Looked After Children (LAC)**
A child cared for by the Local Authority either on a voluntary basis with the consent of their parent/legal guardian, or as a result of a Care Order being made by the Court. They may live with foster carers, other family members or in residential care. Also sometimes used interchangeably with “child looked after (CLA)”.

**Local Safeguarding Children Boards/Partnerships**
Local Safeguarding Children Boards or Partnerships are the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do. In Buckinghamshire, this is known as the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

**Migrant Child**See ‘Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child – UASC’.

**Modern Slavery**Modern slavery is a complex crime under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 that takes a number of different forms. It encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and Human Trafficking. The common factors are that a victim is, or is intended to be, used or exploited for someone else’s (usually financial) gain, without respect for their human rights. The perpetrators seeking to take advantage of them could be private individuals, running small businesses or part of a wider organised crime network.

For adult victims, there will be some element of coercion involved, such as threats, use of force, deception, or abuse of power. Child victims and vulnerable adults are not able to give informed consent and therefore exploitation even without any element of coercion could constitute modern slavery.

**Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)**See ‘Referral’.

**Multi Agency Working**
The working together of different agencies, organisations and individuals who provide services for children and their families.

**Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)**
Multi agency meetings which focus on the victims of domestic violence where there is a high or very high risk. They aim to provide a co-coordinated response to support the victim and to link into relevant groups (e.g. MAPPA).

**Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)**
Arrangements which are formally evaluated, considered and put in place to ensure the successful management of the most serious violent and sexual offenders. Regular meetings are held to review these arrangements and ensure the offender is well managed and the victim/potential victims are protected.

**Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**
A team of professionals from a variety of organisations and agencies such as Police, Health and Probation which processes all safeguarding referrals for children believed to be at risk of harm and/or abuse. The premise of the MASH is based on the principle that enabling the sharing of information between agencies at an early stage can help to safeguard children. It is a link between universal services such as schools and GPs and statutory services such as police and social care.

**Need to Know**An escalation and notification process whereby Senior Managers and Director/Executive Director of Children’s Services are notified of a significant incident relating to service users (such as a serious injury to, or death of, a child), staff, services and buildings. The process of informing about and escalating such significant incidents is by way of a ‘Need to Know’ notification – a form completed by the manager with responsibility for the matter. The Executive Director for Children’s Social Care **must** be immediately informed of all major incidents, situations or controversies involving our services, staff, service users and buildings and receive the ‘Need to Know’ notification the **same day** the incident happens or is known about.

**Neglect**
The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
* ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate carer-givers); or
* ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)**A leading charity campaigning and working in child protection in the United Kingdom and the Channel Islands. The NSPCC has various powers available to them (as detailed throughout this document) and provide a wide range of free resources for child protection professionals available on their website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk).

**No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**A term used for people who are subject to immigration control and have no entitlement to state welfare benefits, home office asylum support for asylum seekers, or public housing.

**Parallel Plan**A term used when a Contingency Plan for a child in care is being explored at the same time as the primary plan for the child, for example, the primary plan would be for the child to return home to their parents but if that was not possible the parallel plan might be long term fostering. As part of permanence planning for children in care, parallel plans must be drawn up to ensure that alternative plans have been explored and are available without delay if the preferred permanent outcome proves unachievable.

**Parent**This is a generic term that may include birth parents, step-parents and carers of children.

**Parental Responsibility (PR)**A legal term from section 3(1) of the Children Act 1989, meaning ‘all the rights, duties, powers and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property.’ This is always held by the mother and also by a father where the parents are married when the child is born. An unmarried father also acquires parental responsibility if he becomes registered as the child’s father (for a child born after 01/12/03) by being named on the child’s birth certificate, or through a legal order. Parental responsibility is only removed from parents completely at the point if the child is adopted. PR is also acquired by the local authority if the court commits a child to its care.

**Partnership**
The practice of working together in such a way that there is equality of respect for each participant’s views with a commitment to openness and building on the strengths of everyone involved. Partnership does not mean that everyone agrees all of the time but that people have a commitment to find a way to do what is best for children.

**Pathway Plan**A plan which sets out the route to the future for young people leaving the Looked After service and will state how their needs will be met in their path to independence. The plan will continue to be implemented and reviewed after they leave the looked after service at least until they are 21, and up to 25 if in education.

**Personal Advisor (PA)**
A Personal Adviser will occupy a key role in preparing a young person (18+) for independence and providing support after he or she ceases to be Looked After by the Local Authority. The Personal Advisor will hold a pivotal role in the assessment, planning and review of services as set out in the Pathway Plan and will be a main source of support and contact for the young person as they find their way in independence.

**Personal Education Plan (PEP)**All Looked After Children must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which summarises the child's developmental and educational needs, short term targets, long term plans and aspirations and which contains or refers to the child's record of achievement. The social worker is responsible for coordinating and compiling the PEP, which should be incorporated into the child's Care Plan.

**Person in a Position of Trust**'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children. Examples of positions of trust include:

* teachers
* care workers
* youth justice workers
* social workers
* doctors.

It's against the law for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over).

There are many roles which are not legally defined as being positions of trust, such as swimming coaches, faith group leaders or people running community activities for children. This means it's not currently against the law for people in these roles to have a sexual relationship with a 16- or 17-year-old in their care

**Person Posing a Risk to Children**A person who has been identified as presenting a risk, or potential risk, to children.

Previously referred to as a “Schedule One Offender” (see relevant section below) until a Home Office Review of Schedule One in 2004 identified that the term Schedule One Offender is ill defined and to a certain extent unhelpful since it defines people by their offending history rather than any risks they may pose. For example, some individuals who have been convicted of an offence under Schedule One may subsequently be assessed as no longer posing a future risk of harm to children. Additionally, some individuals convicted of violent or sexual offences not detailed or within Schedule One, may still be assessed as posing a future risk of harm to children. Further, there will be cases where a person without a conviction or caution may still pose a risk to children.

It was therefore concluded the term Schedule One Offender should be replaced with ‘Risk to Children’ (RTC), or, ‘Person Posing a Risk to Children’. This clearly indicates that the person has been identified as presenting a risk, or potential risk, to children.

**Practitioner**
A person who practices a specific profession or occupation and in doing so delivers a service to people.

**Physical Abuse**
This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. In the UK, smacking is not against the law but it is illegal to leave a mark from smacking a child or use a weapon to strike a child. Smacking is never encouraged as an appropriate way of disciplining a child.

**Placement**The home where a child in care resides. Examples of types of placements are where a child is living with foster carers (foster placement), in a children’s home (residential placement) or in respite care (respite placement).

**Placement Order**
A Court Order made under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 will usually be made if a child is at significant risk, and if there is no prospect of the child being able to be cared for safely by his/her birth parents or relatives within a reasonable timescale. This is the legal ruling made by the courts which authorises a Local Authority to place a child with approved prospective adoptive parents. A placement order will last until an adoption order is made, or until the courts decide to end the placement order.

**Permanence**
The long term plan for a child’s upbringing (e.g. remain at home with parent, adoption, long term fostering).

**Permanency Planning Meetings**
A meeting held after a child enters care to consider the most effective route to securing permanency for them. The child’s social worker and their manager will attend as well as professionals from fostering and (where applicable depending on the age of the child) the adoption team. The meeting will discuss what is required to achieve permanence in the best way possible for that child, whilst always aiming to keep the child within the birth family where it is safe to do so. The wishes and feelings of the child will be taken into account. The older and more mature the child, the greater the weight should be given to their wishes. The meetings should be held on at least a 6 weekly basis and forms part of the process of ‘parallel planning’ for children.

**Placement Planning Meeting**When a child is taken into care they will be placed usually with a foster carer or within a residential placement. At the start of any placement (ideally before if the move into care is pre-planned), a placement planning meeting should be held between the carer/provider, the child’s social worker and the child (where appropriate). This meeting will discuss in detail how the placement will contribute to meeting the child’s needs as set out in the child’s care plan. A placement plan will be drawn up which will document how on a day to day basis the child will be cared for and how the child’s welfare will be safeguarded and promoted by the appropriate person. Whenever a child changes placement, a new placement planning meeting and placement plan should be drawn up.

**Placement With Parents**An arrangement whereby a child who is subject to either a Care Order or an Interim Care Order is placed into the care of a parent or person with Parental Responsibility or a person who held a Child Arrangements Order (before the CO or ICO was made) specifying that the child is to live with them, for more than 24 hours. These arrangements must be rigorously assessed and agreed by the Director of Children’s Services.

**Police Powers of Protection**Under Section 46 of the Children Act 1989 a Police Constable has the legal right to remove a child from accommodation, or prevent removal, where they have reasonable cause to believe the child would otherwise be likely to suffer significant harm. The child may be kept at the Police Station or removed to a suitable accommodation (e.g. relative’s home or Foster Care via Children’s Services) for up to 72 hours. These powers are most commonly used to protect a child in an emergency. Once executed, the Police Constable must inform the Local Authority Children’s Services of the child being place under their Powers of Protection. The Local Authority in turn should completed enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 189 to determine whether further protective Orders are required to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of the child.

These powers are sometimes referred to incorrectly as a Police Protection Order (PPO). These powers are not a legal Order and should not be referred to as such.

**PREVENT**
A community safeguarding programme aiming to support those vulnerable to radicalisation. Prevent is 1 of the 4 elements of CONTEST, the Government’s counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. For further guidance, please see <https://www.ltai.info/>.

**Private Fostering**An arrangement under Section 66 of the Children Act 1989 whereby a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child has a disability) is placed for 28 days or more in the care of someone who is not the child’s parent or a connected person.

**Private Proceedings**
Private proceedings, or family law proceedings, means a court case that is just between family members, such as parents or other relatives – and which doesn’t involve a Local Authority or other State agency. It is often where there is a dispute regarding child contact or residence of a child.

**Public Law Outline (PLO)**The legal framework for pre consideration and instigation of Care Proceedings.

**Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)**Education facilities for pupils who have very specific needs and are unable to attend mainstream school. Usually either part-time or temporary placements, often following several exclusions from school, but also to include children with mental health problems.

**Radicalisation**The process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. This process can occur online through exposure to and engagement with violent ideological propaganda, or offline through extremist networks. Radicalisation makes those at risk more likely to support terrorism and violent acts of extremism, and possibly even commit such criminal acts themselves. Where young people are identified as being at risk of radicalisation, a referral should be made to PREVENT – see ‘PREVENT’ above.

**Referral**
A request for help for a child where welfare concerns have been identified. Referrals can be made into Children’s Services from any individual, professional or organisation. Referrals to other services from Children’s Services can also be made (such as to CAMHS for support for a child’s mental health). In Buckinghamshire, a referral into Children’s Services by another agency is completed via the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF).

**Return Home Interview (RHI)**An informal interview/discussion between a person (independent of Children’s Services) and a child who has recently returned from a ‘missing episode’ (see relevant section above) which provides a child or young person with a confidential space to talk about the missing episode. For example, they may discuss the circumstances which led to them going missing, what happened whilst they were missing, and why they returned. The space allows them to talk about anything which may be worrying them or anything they feel they cannot tell anyone else such as their parent/carer or social worker. The Return Home Interview will assess any additional risks posed to the child as a result of their missing episode and can signpost/refer for further support where this is required.

**Resource Panel**The Resource Panel is a multi-agency panel that oversees, challenges, endorses and reviews any financial implication for Buckinghamshire Children’s Services arising from the Care Planning processes for children in care, those at the edge of care, or disabled children.

**Review Health Assessment (RHA)**A review of a child looked after’s health, development and wellbeing which follows on from the Initial Health Assessment. The RHA is required every year for children looked after over the age of 5 years, and every six months for children looked after under the age of 5 years.

**Risk**
The probability of something (e.g. harm to a child) happening. The harsher the damage caused by it happening and the more likely the event, the greater the overall risk.

**Risk Assessment**An assessment of a person or child’s circumstances which:

* Identifies the cause for concern;
* Evaluates the strengths of the family;
* Evaluates the risks to the child/ren;
* Considers the child's needs for protection;
* Evaluates information from all sources and previous case records;
* Considers the ability of parents and wider family and social networks to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
* Considers how these risks can be managed

It is important to ensure that both immediate risk assessment and long term risk assessment are considered. Where the child's circumstances are about to change, the risk assessment must include an assessment of the safety of the new environment.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**
The Children Act 2004 (1.20) defines ‘safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’ as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment;
* Preventing impairment of children’s health and development;
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
* Enabling children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

**Schedule One Offender**Schedule One Offender is a term previously used to describe a person who has been convicted of a serious offence against a child or young person listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. The term has now been replaced by ‘Person Posing a Risk to Children’ (see relevant section above).

**Section 17**Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on Children's Services Social Care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need.

**Section 20**Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 outlines the duties of the Local Authority to provide accommodation for a child in need in their area who appears to need accommodation because of one or more of the following:

1. No person has parental responsibly for them
2. They have been lost or been abandoned
3. The person who has been caring for the child is prevented permanently or not, from providing him or her with suitable accommodation or care.

**Section 20 Accommodation**Often referred to as “Section 20 or S20”, anyone with parental responsibility for a child can voluntarily allow the Local Authority to accommodate that child under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. Section 20 is “voluntary accommodation” and can be withdrawn at any time. The voluntary accommodation can either be with formal Local Authority foster carers or, alternatively, with a family member who has been approved by the Local Authority. The Local Authority does not obtain any form of parental responsibility for the child under this arrangement. Parents/carers should always be offered the opportunity to seek legal advice before agreeing to sign any Section 20 agreement.

**Section 34(4)**
When the child is on an Interim or Full Care Order, the Local Authority may apply to the court for the authority to refuse contact between the child and parent under Section 34(4) of the Children Act 1989. This is only done in cases where the Local Authority believes that further contact between the child and parent would be harmful to the child’s wellbeing.

**Section 37 Report**
On occasion, the court may become concerned about a child's welfare during the course of private family law proceedings and order a Section 37 report to be completed by a social worker the Local Authority. Essentially when ordering a Section 37 Report, the court is asking the Local Authority to consider whether it should be taking further steps to protect the child, namely whether they should apply for a Care or Supervision Order, provide services or assistance to the child / family or take any other action in respect of the child. The Section 37 report differs from the Section 7 report because it is where concerns have been raised about possible child protection issues for the child. Section 7 reports focus on welfare issues.

**Section 47**
Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 outlines the duty of the Local Authority to undertake a Child Protection Enquiry/Investigation where there are concerns that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Section 47 enquiry**
See Child protection enquiry

**Section 7 Report**
This is a Court ordered report which relates to private family law proceedings when the Court is wanting information about a child's welfare from an independent person to help them determine what course of action will be best for the child in question. These are most commonly found in cases of disputed child contact between separated parents, where one parent is seeking more contact or for the child to live with them. These reports are generally completed by a CAFCASS officer, however, if Children’s Services are currently or have recently been involved with the child, a social worker from the Local Authority will complete the report.

**Secure Accommodation / Secure Unit**Secure units are children’s homes that have been specially approved by the Government to ‘restrict liberty’ – that is, to lock young people inside the home for a period of time. Usually, only young people aged at least 13 can be placed in a secure unit. Special permission from the Secretary of State is needed to place anyone under the age of 13 in a secure unit. A council can only restrict a young person’s liberty by placing them in a secure unit if they are likely to injure themselves or someone else if they are placed somewhere else, or if they are likely to run away from anywhere else and then get seriously harmed after running away. Before a young person can be kept by the council in a secure unit for any more than 72 hours, a court has to agree that they are both likely to run away and then likely to be harmed or to injure themselves or someone else. No young person can be kept by the council in a secure unit once these dangers are no longer there, and a court must regularly decide whether or not these dangers have passed.

**Serious Case Review (SCR)**An in-depth review of a case following the death or serious life threatening/life changing injury of a child, or where a child protection issue arises that is likely to be of major public concern. This is conducted on a multi-agency basis on behalf of the LSCB. The purpose of the Review is to establish whether there are lessons to be learned from the case, identify what those lessons are and how they will be acted upon and improve inter-agency working as a result.

**Sexual Abuse**Activity which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not a child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Significant Harm**
The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the child. Local authorities have a statutory duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Sometimes significant harm arises from a single traumatic event. It may otherwise arise from a combination or series of events (acute or long-standing) which when seen in the context of others, means that the threshold for significant harm has been reached. To understand and identify significant harm, it is necessary to consider:

* the nature of harm, in terms of maltreatment or failure to provide adequate care;
* the impact on the child’s health and development;
* the child’s development within the context of their family and wider environment;
* any special needs, such as a medical condition, communication impairment or disability, that may affect the child’s development and care within the family;
* the capacity of the parents to adequately meet the child’s needs; and; the wider and environment family context.

There are no absolute criteria upon which to base a judgement of what constitutes significant harm; when determining whether the threshold for significant harm is met, professionals should take into consideration the:

* severity of the maltreatment; including the degree and extent of physical harm;
* duration and frequency of abuse and neglect;
* extent of premeditation; and
* presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, bizarre or unusual elements.

A court may make a Care Order (committing the child to the care of the local authority) or a supervision order (putting the child under the supervision of a social worker, or a probation officer) in respect of a child if it is satisfied that:

* the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm; and
* the harm or likelihood of harm is attributable to a lack of adequate parental care or control.

Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them the corrosive elements of emotional, physical and, sometimes, sexual maltreatment cause impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case it is necessary to consider the implications of maltreatment alongside the family’s strengths and supports.

Where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child’s health and development, this should be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

**Signposting**Signposting is a method of helping people find the services that they want without necessarily making a referral for them. It offers a better opportunity for users of services to make decisions about the range of services that they can access and which one is right for them.

**SMART Plans**The format used to devise a Child in Need/Child Protection/Care Plan’s which achieve positive outcomes for children. The plans should be: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant to the assessment and have a clear **T**ime-scale for completion.

**Special Guardian**
A person known to the child (usually an adult friend or relative) who has been granted legal parental responsibility for that child by the Court and is expected to care for them until they reach the age of 18 under a Special Guardianship Order (see below).

**Special Guardianship Order**
A Court Order under the Adoption and Children’s Act 2002 which grants parental responsibility for a child to a Special Guardian (see above). The parental responsibility is expected to last until the child is 18 or beyond if in full time education

**Statutory Visit**A statutory visit relates to the visiting requirements of children subject to Child Protection Plans. In Buckinghamshire, statutory visits to children subject of these Plans are at a minimum requirement of every 10 working days. There may be additional expectations laid out in the Child Protection Plan such as unannounced visits. To define as a statutory visit, the child must be seen alone (away from their parent/carer), their living arrangements assessed (must be seen in their usual place of residence) and their sleeping arrangements seen. Statutory visits can only be completed by qualified social workers.

**Strategy Meeting/Strategy discussion**
Meeting or telephone discussion between the Children’s Services, Police and other relevant agencies to plan an investigation under Section 47. This meeting or discussion will always precede any Section 47 child protection enquiry.

**Strengthening Families**
The Strengthening Families Framework is the model used in Buckinghamshire to work with children and families to assess concerns and achieve positive sustained change. The model emphasises the application of professional and family knowledge in assessing risk, promoting parental cooperation and engagement seeing parents as part of solution contributing to required change.

**Supervised Contact**
Supervised contact is used predominantly during Care Proceedings when it has been determined by a court that a child is at risk of suffering harm during contact with a parent or parents. It is usually supervised by the Local Authority’s Contact Service at a specialist centre. Supervised contact ensures the physical and emotional safety of a child. It also aims to assist in building and sustaining positive relationships between a child and their parent or parents. This is carried out by supervisors who are trained to intervene immediately and firmly, if necessary, and work professionally in a planned way with vulnerable children and their parents.

**Supervision**
An accountable, two-way process of reflective dialogue between a social care worker (supervisee) and their line manager (supervisor) which supports, motivates and enables the development of good practice for the individual. Within the supervision meeting, the supervisee’s case work should be discussed to ensure progression of children’s plans, but also reflective discussions should be held in addition to this to aid the knowledge and professional development of the supervisee. As a result, this improves the quality of service provided by the organisation.

**Supervision Order**
A Court Order under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 which imposes a duty on the local authority to ‘advise, assist and befriend’ the child. It may require a child to live in a specified place, do certain activities and report to a particular place at a set time. A supervision order can last for one year, and may be extended yearly to a total of three years. It will last until the child reaches the age of 18, unless discharged at an earlier date.

An important distinction between a Supervision Order and a Care Order is that a Supervision Order does not confer Parental Responsibility to the Local Authority

Within the Supervision Order there is the opportunity to impose obligations on a responsible person. Therefore, requirements will be placed on the parent/carer as well as the child. However, this does require the consent of the responsible person before it can be included in the Supervision Order. The responsible person is required to give details of the child’s address and allow the supervisor reasonable contact with the child

**Threshold Document**
The Threshold Document provides a common approach to identifying and describing levels of need for children and young people. It has been developed for use by practitioners to support joint working and communication between all agencies. It will support earlier intervention by providing a tool to identify needs at the earliest opportunity and a consistent approach to coordinating services.

**Trauma**Trauma is the emotional response to a deeply distressing or disturbing experience which can lead to long term mental health difficulties. Examples of trauma which are relevant to children’s safeguarding might be (but not limited to) sexual abuse, chronic neglect, exposure to drugs/alcohol in utero or exposure to domestic abuse. It is important to remember that what is traumatic for one person, may not be traumatic for another. The level of trauma and subsequent impact depends largely on the person’s age, resilience and any supportive intervention that is delivered after the fact.

**Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC) (also referred to as Migrant Child)**An unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC) is a child who is applying for asylum in their own right and is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who in law or by custom has responsibility to do so. All children, irrespective of their immigration status, are entitled to safeguarding and protection under UK law.

**Universal Services**Universal services are those services (sometimes also referred to as mainstream services) that are provided to, or are routinely available to, all children and their families. Universal services are designed to meet the sorts of needs that all children have; they include early years provision, mainstream schools and Connexions, for example, as well as health services provided by GPs, midwives, and health visitors.

**Viability Assessment**A preliminary assessment process, usually required when a Local Authority is seeking to identify alternative child care arrangements for a child who is unable to remain with their parent. Sometimes called an “Initial Viability Assessment (IVA)”, it is a concise, informative assessment, designed to gather all the necessary information in a short time-frame to determine the suitability of the adult as an alternative carer in the immediate future, and the feasibility of further assessment (Special Guardianship Assessment) for them as possible long term carers for the child.

**Wellbeing**
Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and other specified agencies to co-operate with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in relation to the 5 outcomes first set out in “Every Child Matters”.

**Wishes and Feelings Work**Direct work with a child by a social worker or relevant practitioner to obtain their views on their life, the circumstances they are in and desires for the future. This work can be completed using a variety of methods, e.g. worksheets, finger puppets, general talking, emotion cards etc. The most important thing about this work is that it is relationship based and child focused. All children should have the opportunity to express their wishes and feelings to adults around them and have their voice heard and acted upon.

**Working Together to Safeguard Children**A Government publication which sets out detailed guidance about the role, function and composition of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, the roles and responsibilities of their member agencies in safeguarding children within their areas and the actions that should be taken where there are concerns that children have suffered or are at risk of suffering Significant Harm. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf>.

**Young Offenders Institution (YOI)**Secure accommodation for under 18-year-olds ('juveniles'), when they have been convicted of a crime and receive a custodial sentence, or where they have been charged with a crime and placed on remand. Young offender institutions (YOIs) are run by the Prison Service (except where contracted out) and cater for 15-20 year-olds.

**Youth Offending Service / Team**Youth Offending Service or Team (YOS or YOT) is the service which brings together staff from Children's Social care, the Police, Probation, Education and Health Authorities to work together to keep young people aged 10 to 17 out of custody. They are monitored and co-ordinated nationally by the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

**Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO)**Community sentences which can be given to children and young people who have been convicted of a crime. They were introduced by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, combining a number of sentences into one generic sentence. Each sentence includes different requirements and can last up to 3 years.