

**Getting it Right *Practice Standards*
for Child Protection (CP) Visits**

1. **Service area:**  Safeguarding and Children’s Services
2. **Date effective from:** December 2018
3. **Responsible officers:** Senior Management Team

 Safeguarding and Children’s Services

1. **Date of Review:** December 2020
2. **Status:** Mandatory
* Mandatory (all named staff must adhere
* to guidance)
Optional (procedures and practice can
vary between teams)
1. **Target Audience:** All Children’s Social Care Staff
2. **Related Document(s):** All Policies and Procedures

**What is a CP visit?......................................................................................**

A CP Visit is a visit made to a child who is a subject of a child protection plan at their home, or the household where s/he is living. Therefore, a visit made to the same child at their school or elsewhere is **not** a CP visit.

A CP visit will only be deemed to have taken place if the child has been **seen** at their home or the household where they are living. On CareFirst, this is recorded as a Statutory Visit.

Any **failed** CP visit, (that is one where the child was not seen) must be brought to the attention of the Practice/Team Manager immediately and a further CP visit attempted within 48 working hours of the last failed visit. Repeat or continued failed visits must be discussed with the Practice/Team Manager and a course of action agreed to ensure the child is seen and that s/he is safe and well.

All CP visits should be a combination of announced and unannounced visits.

**The Frequency of CP visits to a Child who is the subject of a CP Plan**

The frequency of CP visits by the Lead Social Worker (or similar visit by any other professional) will be discussed at each child protection conference where that child becomes or remains a subject of a child protection plan, and specified in the ‘outline’ child protection plan.

In addition to the above, each child protection conference will consider the need for joint visits by the Lead Social Worker and a Health Visitor (or any other professional) to each child that becomes or remains a subject of a child protection plan where that child is less than 2 years of age. The same consideration will also be given to children aged 2 years and over where this is considered necessary. Any joint visiting requirement will be specified in the ‘outline’ child protection plan.

The minimum required frequency of CP visits for all children aged 1 year and over is **at least** once every two weeks by a suitably qualified social worker, usually the allocated Lead Social Worker. CP visits for a child under one year must be weekly unless otherwise specified in conference.

The child protection plan may specify a greater frequency of visits.

For children aged under 2 years, even where a joint visiting requirement has not been specified in the child protection plan, the allocated Lead Social Worker and the child’s Health Visitor should conduct a joint visit to see the child in his/her home environment **at least** once every 4 weeks. (This means, in a 4-week period, the child will be visited at least twice by a suitable qualified Social Worker. One of the visits will be a joint visit with the child’s Health Visitor.) The record of the Core Group should reflect the discussion and decision made with regard to the need for any other joint visit by professionals.

The child protection plan may specify a frequency of joint visits by any professionals.

Where a child is Electively Home Educated (EHE) that child should been seen weekly unless otherwise stated in the child protection plan.

The child protection plan may specify a greater frequency of visits dependent on the child’s specific circumstances. The frequency of visits should not be reduced by the Core Group without the specific agreement of the CP Chair.

All CP visits should be proportionate with the perceived and real risks to the child. This may include a combination of announced and unannounced visits.

Any visit made to the home where the child/ren live by the Lead Social Worker (or suitably qualified social worker) will be regarded as a CP visit and recorded as such, even if the visit is over and above the minimum requirements stated above or as specified in the child protection plan.

**Additional Visits to a Child who is a subject of a CP Plan......................................**

Where a child is aged 2 years or over s/he may need to be seen at a location other than his/her home or the household where s/he is living so that actions or focused pieces of work specified in the child protection plan can be fulfilled.

All such visits will be additional to the identified frequency of CP visits as outlined in the CP Pclan and should be recorded under Observations on CareFirst.

**The Purpose of a CP visit…………………………………………………….**

Every CP visit should have a defined, agreed and understood purpose as it forms part of the ongoing assessment of the health, safety and well-being of the child measured against the issues of concern to include the reasons why the child became a subject of a child protection plan. The purpose of any CP visit should **not** be a simple ’tick-box’ process to indicate whether the child has been seen.

Each visit is also to ensure that the child or young person is safe, well and in an environment that is of a standard that allows the child or young person to feel safeguarded and reassured that their needs will be appropriately met.

At every CP visit it should be the intention to see the child, to see the child on their own (where age appropriate) and to the see the child’s bedroom. It is important to see that the child or young person has a clean and appropriate bedroom, furniture suitable for their needs and where necessary has privacy.

At every CP visit the Lead Social Worker should:

* Provide the child with the opportunity to express how they are feeling and the space to raise any issues or worries they may have.
* Assess the suitability and quality of the home environment to include all those who are living in the household.
* Assess the quality of relationship between the child, their parent(s)/carer(s), siblings and any other persons living in, or frequent visitors to, the household.
* Identify any issues of concern as well as safety and protective factors

Irrespective of whether the child or young person may or may not be able to verbalise their feelings, the record of the visit should include observations of their mobility, signs of any injury, confidence in their environment and their attachment/reaction/response with, to and from parent(s)/carer(s).

For some disabled children there may be a need to consider the use of ‘communication tools’ to enable them to express their views.

**Recording of a CP visit……………………………………………………….**

Recording of CP visits on each child’s CareFirst record is mandatory and must be completed within **one** working day of the date and time that the child was visited.

The record of each CP visit to each child subject to a CP Plan **must** accurately show:

* the status of the child/young person (Relevant options under 1.1.1 ‘Status of the child/young person’ are ‘CP Plan’ or ‘CP Plan & Looked After Child’ if the child is CP & LAC);
* whether the child was seen (Options under 1.1.4 ‘Has the child/young person been seen’ are ‘Yes’, ‘No’, ‘Unborn’);
* whether the child was seen alone (Options under 1.1.5 ‘Has the child/young person been seen’ are ‘Yes’, ‘No’);
* if the child was not seen alone the reason why **must** be provided (under 1.1.6 ‘If no, give reasons as to why not.’);
* whether the child’s bedroom was seen (under 1.1.3 Observation/Statutory visit details);
* a clear statement as to the Purpose for the visit, the Findings/Outcome and any Analysis plus Conclusion and Recommendations (under 1.1.3 Observation/Statutory visit details);
* whether the record of the CP visit has been completed (Options under 2.1.1 ‘Has the assessment been completed’ are ‘Yes’, ‘No’). Only ‘Yes’ should be selected when the record has been completed to ensure an authorisation task is sent to your Practice/Team Manager.

The procedure for Implementation of Child Protection Plan - Lead Social Worker and Core Group Responsibilities is available in the NSCB CP Procedures via the link below:

[NSCB: 3.7 Implementation of Child Protection Plan - Lead Social Worker and Core Group Responsibilities](http://northamptonshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_implem_child_prot.html)