

Contacting the Police



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1. Relationships With the Police and Planning for Change

Everyone involved in looking after children must develop co-operative relationships with the Police and should seek their advice on matters of concern, security and crime prevention.

Illegal behaviour should not be condoned, but it is important to be mindful of our duty to consider the overall welfare of children; which may mean recognising that illegal activity is taking place and working to minimise risks and consequences.

Unless otherwise set out in writing, for example in a child's **Placement Plan**, any suspicion that a child has or is likely to commit an offence must be discussed with the Supervising Social Worker and social worker and a decision taken on the actions/strategies that will be taken.

Any decision to report matters to the Police or consult them should normally only be taken by a manager in consultation with the child's social worker. In residential placements the On-call Manager and ERT must also be informed before any Police contact/involvement.

Where there are concerns that a child is engaged or likely to be engaged in offending behaviour, measures must be adopted to reduce or prevent it. Where the behaviour is persistent or serious, the child's Placement Plan must include a summary of the concerns and the strategies being adopted to change the behaviour.

In this respect, other relevant agencies, including the Police and Youth Offending Team, may be consulted and involved.

If necessary the Placement Plan should indicate whether and in what circumstances the Police should be contacted should suspicions arise about offending behaviour.

2. Managing Serious Disruption

Carers are expected to do all that is reasonable to manage children

Looked after by them, which includes the management of confrontational and disruptive behaviour so long as it is safe to do so.

As a last resort Physical Intervention can be used to prevent children or others being injured or to prevent Damage to Property.

If the potential injury is significant or the potential damage is serious, Restraint can also be used but if this is not possible or control is lost and the risks of injury or damage escalate, the Police may be called for assistance.

If possible, the Supervising Social Worker/Social Worker should give authorisation to such action, but if this is not possible carers should act as they see fit and then inform the Supervising Social Worker/Social Worker as soon as possible thereafter.

Depending on the risk assessment to the individual, staff or other children. Consideration must be given to directly contact the police before other person already mentioned. Once the situation has stabilised all other person must be contacted ASAP.

3. Criminal Activities

If there is a suspicion that a child may be engaged or likely to be engaged in any criminal activity including theft or malicious damage, carers must act to reduce or prevent the behaviour. This must include incorporating strategies into the child's Placement Plan to reduce or prevent the activities.

If it is known or suspected that a child is at risk of participating in drug or substances misuse, see **Drug and Substance Misuse Procedure**.

If the child is known or suspected to be involved persistent or serious offending behaviour, the Police should be contacted. In the case of residential this may be via the community Police Liaison Officer. However, unless there are immediate risks that a serious offence may be committed or evidence destroyed the family placements link worker/social worker should be consulted before a decision is taken.

4. Violence/Assaults or Damage to Property

Guidance for Residential Staff is contained in **Section 6, Residential Staff (Team Teach Guidance), of the Behaviour Management Guidance**.

If a child is known to be violent or likely to cause malicious damage to property, the concerns and strategies designed to reduce or prevent the behaviour must be set out in his/her Placement Plan and risk assessment.

Apart from individual Placement Plans, family placements link workers must provide appropriate support and advice to carers to ensure they create a safe and positive working and living environment for themselves and children.

However, carers must take what action is immediately necessary to prevent violence or assaults from occurring.

This may include the use of Restraint or other forms of Physical Intervention.

Reporting Violence/Assaults?Damage to the Police

During working hours the child's Social Worker should always be consulted regarding any proposed police intervention. This would be the on-call manager out of hours.

The Police will not normally be contacted unless the violence is serious, persistent or the victim wishes to make a complaint to the Police.

Where it is agreed that police intervention is required carers who have witnessed or been the victim of the offence 'must' make and 'follow through' the reporting procedure; unless in need of hospital attention.

At no time should police intervention be used as a carer support strategy.

If victims wish to make such a complaint they should be encouraged only to do so after having given consideration to the implications and consequences for all concerned.

If victims do decide to contact the Police they should be offered support and advice by a manager/supervisor.

5. Notifications and Recording

If the Police are called to provide assistance in managing an Incident of any kind, the manager must be notified as soon as practicable afterwards but within 24 hours. All relevant social workers must also be notified.

It will also be necessary to notify a senior manager and others, if the child is placed in foster care. For more detail, see **Designated Manager (Police Assistance)**.

There are a number of records that must be completed in the event of an Incident, whether or not the Police were called for assistance, which are summarised in **Incidents – General Guidance**.