

Medical examinations may be carried out by:

- your child's own doctor;
- paediatrician; or
- doctors with special knowledge of child protection.

After the medical, the results will be discussed with you and your child by the doctor carrying out the medical, the social worker or police officer.

### Where families can get help

If you need legal advice on your and your child's rights in relation to this investigation, you can contact:

- a solicitor (legal aid may be available);
- local Citizens Advice; or
- the Scottish Child Law Society at [www.sclc.org.uk](http://www.sclc.org.uk)

If there is anything that you do not understand, please ask the workers involved. If they cannot answer your questions, they will try to find the right person who can.

Children have a right to grow up in households where they feel safe, well looked after and protected. If you would like more help or advice about caring for your child, please speak to one of the following.

- A health visitor.
- A nursery teacher
- A social worker.
- Your family doctor.

**This leaflet was given to you by:**

Name:

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Agency:

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Phone Number:

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## CPC IL - a

Social Work Department  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
**Balivanich**  
Isle of Benbecula  
HS7 5LA

Tel: 01870 602425

Social Work Department  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Sandwick Road  
**Stornoway**  
Isle of Lewis  
HS1 2BW

Tel: 01851 703773

Social Work Department  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
**Castlebay**  
Isle of Barra  
HS9 5XD

Tel: 01871 810431

Childline  
0800 11 11

Social Work Out of Hours  
01851 701702

This and further information  
leaflets available at:  
[www.cne-siar.gov.uk/childProtectionCommittee](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/childProtectionCommittee)

# Information for Parents and Carers

# About Child Protection Investigations



## WESTERN ISLES CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE



## Introduction

This leaflet will help families who become involved in child protection investigations to understand:

- why people are concerned;
- what is likely to happen during the investigation;
- what will happen after the investigation; and
- where families can get help.

## Responsibilities of agencies and others

Everyone has a responsibility to make sure children are safe and well looked after. You should report any concerns about a child or young person's welfare or protection to:

- professionals involved with your child or family;
- social work; or
- the police.

## Why are people concerned about your child?

There may be concerns about your child for a variety of reasons, for example, that they have experienced, or are at risk of harm. There are different types of harm to children and they include the following:

- Physical injury – being hit, kicked, punched, burned or scalded
- Physical neglect – not being properly fed or clothed, poor hygiene, illness or injury that has not been treated
- Sexual abuse – Sexual behaviour or language that is not appropriate. This could include being exposed to or involved in mobile phone or internet abuse
- Emotional abuse – being criticised all the time or put down, being ignored, humiliated or exposed to family violence
- Failing to thrive – not growing or developing as expected, with no obvious reason for this

There may also be concerns because your child is, or may be, living in the same house as a person who is a risk to children.

## What is likely to happen during an investigation?

Social workers and the police have a legal responsibility to investigate any concerns which suggest your child, or any other child, has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

In an investigation, it is important that the social worker or police officer contacts you as quickly as possible.

The reasons for this are to:

- make sure your child is healthy and safe;
- protect your child from the actions of any possible offenders; and
- tell you about the concerns that have been raised.

At all times the welfare of your child comes first. Usually the police officer and social worker will want to do the following:

- Speak to your child. Sometimes it may be necessary to do this away from home. Where possible they will ask you to be there and they will ensure your child is safely looked after at all times.
- Speak to you.
- Speak to any other relevant person, for example, other family members, your child's teacher, a health visitor and family doctor.
- Ask for more information, for example, checking the conditions children are living in.
- Arrange a medical examination if necessary.

Police officers may want to interview anyone suspected of harming a child.

Depending on your child's age and how well they understand, the social worker and police officer will usually ask your child to agree to take part in an interview or medical examination.

In most cases, you will be asked by the social worker or police officers to agree to your child being interviewed. However, sometimes this might not be possible. In these situations, why your child was interviewed by a social worker or police officer, or

If you refuse to agree, the social worker or police officer may consider other emergency legal measures to protect your child's welfare.

Where possible, you will be kept up to date by the social worker or police with the investigation. If you need advice or support, this can be arranged. If you feel you have not been treated fairly by any of the workers involved, you will be advised of your rights and given information by them about who you should contact.

## What will happen after the investigation?

The social worker and police officer will collect information about your child's circumstances and assess whether your child is at risk or not. Depending on what they find out, one or more of the following might happen:

- They will take no more action.
- They will offer support/advice/guidance to you and your child.
- There will be a child protection case conference to decide whether more child protection measures are necessary.
- They may ask the person who is a risk to your child to move out of the family home.

In most cases, children are able to stay at home. Children only need to be taken away from home by a social worker if the information suggests there is an immediate danger to the child and they cannot be protected within their own family.

## Medical examinations

In some cases, your child may need a medical examination. The main reasons for this are to:

- check the good health and welfare of your child;
- confirm whether your child has been injured; and
- find out how any injuries that may have been found have been caused.

The results of any medical examination may be used by the social worker later as evidence at any