

This leaflet is intended to help you as a parent or carer understand why social workers, health staff, the police or others are working with you and your family to help keep your child safe. It explains what is happening as well as giving you details about what may happen next and also some useful contact information.

The person who has given you this leaflet will already have spend some time speaking with you and providing most of this detail. If at any time you have any questions please contact them using the details that will have been provided.

The information in this leaflet can be made available in other formats, please contact Argyll & Bute Council Child Protection Committee [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) or call 01546 604281 for assistance.



This leaflet was given to you by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details \_\_\_\_\_

If this person is not available please ask to speak to the following manager:

This leaflet was given to you by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details \_\_\_\_\_

Out of office hours: If you need to speak to someone urgently, please call 0800 811 505

**Other useful local contact numbers**

Argyll & Bute Children and Families Social Work Services

**01546 605517**

Strathclyde Police, Family Protection Police Office

**01369 702222**

Scottish Children's Reporters Administration

**0300 200 2217**

This leaflet has been prepared by Argyll & Bute Child Protection Committee. The Child Protection Committee is made up of representatives from the main statutory and voluntary organisations working in Argyll & Bute. The purpose of the Child Protection Committee includes ensuring local agencies work well together and with the community to help protect children. Members of the Child protection Committee include: Argyll & Bute Council, NHS Highland, Strathclyde Police, Scottish Children's Reporters Administration, the Children's Panel and the Voluntary Sector.



**Information for Parents and Carers whose children are involved in child protection investigations**

**Working together to achieve the best for Children, Young People and Families**



### **Why people are concerned about your child?**

Everyone has a responsibility to make sure children are safe and well cared for and where there are concerns about a child's safety or care this should be shared with social work services.

### **Why have social work, the police, health and others become involved with you and your family?**

Concerns have been raised about your child's safety, care and protection. The person who gave you this leaflet will have indicated to you what these are.

The local authority and police jointly investigate concerns where it is believed a child may be at risk of significant harm and a crime may have been committed against the child. They work with health staff and others to help to make sure that your child is safe and protected.

### **What is likely to happen during the initial stages of an investigation?**

At all times the safety and welfare of your child comes first. Usually police or social work will want to:

- Speak to your child
- Speak to you
- Speak to any other relevant person (for example, other family members, teacher or health visitor/school nurse)
- Make further enquiries if necessary

We know this could be a stressful time for you and it is important that we keep you fully informed about what is happening. It's also important that you and your child's views are listened to and taken into consideration when decisions are made.

You will be given advice on the best way your child can be supported during this time.

### **Getting and giving consent**

Social Workers and police will seek your child's permission before any interview. A doctor will seek permission before any medical examination. In most cases, your permission is also sought however, sometimes this does not happen. In such situations the reason why your child was interviewed, or any other action taken without your knowledge of consent, will be fully explained to you.

### **What will happen after the investigation?**

An assessment of the risk to your child will always be completed and this will take into account your views and those of your child. This helps people to decide what needs to happen next. This could be:

- No need for further action
- Family support offered
- A meeting (called a child protection conference) is arranged to decide whether further action to protect your child is required. You will get more information about this prior to any meeting and can bring a representative to the meeting with you.
- Arrangements may be made, in partnership with you, for your child to live with a family member or a friend.
- The concerns about your child may be referred to the Children's Reporter and Procurator Fiscal.

- It may be necessary to take further legal action to protect your child.
- A solicitor (Legal Aid may be available) The Scottish Child Law Centre 0131 667 6333

You will be kept informed about what is happening by the social worker. If you are unclear or have any questions during this time you should discuss this with the social worker or any other professional who knows you or your child.

### **Where families can get help?**

If you need legal advice on what you and your children rights are in relation to this investigation you can contact:

Agencies working with families recognise that bringing up children can be demanding and stressful. However, children have a right to grow up in households where they feel safe, well cared for and protection.

If you would like further help or support on caring for your child, please speak to someone such as:

- Health staff (Community or school nurse, General practitioner)
- Nursery staff
- A Teacher
- A Social Worker

If you feel you, or your child, have not been treated fairly during this a child protection investigation you have the right to make a complaint. The social worker or another professional can advise you on how to do this or who to contact for further advice.