

What will happen next?

- + The enquiry will be assessed by a multi-agency team of professionals called the MASH. They will check whether the child is known to services.
- + If the MASH believe the family is in need of support, or the child is in need of protection, they will refer the case to a Locality Team or initiate child protection procedures.
- + MASH seek to work transparently and in partnership with parents and carers.
- + The only exception to this is when there is a concern that informing the parents could increase the risk to the child.
- + All child protection concerns will be investigated by a qualified social worker, who will liaise with other agencies and if necessary the Police Public Protection Unit. If there is a significant level of concern about a child, formal child protection procedures will begin.

What should I be looking for?

Physical abuse

When children are hurt or injured by others, for example by hitting, shaking or squeezing.

- ✓ Unexplained injuries
- ✓ Fear, watchfulness, over-anxiety
- ✓ Frequent absence from school

Emotional abuse

When children are persistently denied love and affection, for example - being shouted at, made to feel stupid, rejected, used as a scapegoat or living in a violent environment.

- ✓ Withdrawn, anxious, lack of confidence
- ✓ Self harm, eating disorder
- ✓ Demanding, needing attention

Neglect

Where children's basic needs for food, warmth, protection, education and care, including health care are not met.

- ✓ Dirty, scruffy, unsuitable clothing
- ✓ Poor hygiene or lack of energy
- ✓ Frequently missing appointments

Sexual abuse

When children are used by others to meet their own sexual needs. This might include sexual activities with the child or showing them pornographic material.

- ✓ Comments about sexual activities
- ✓ Inappropriate sexual knowledge
- ✓ Sexualised knowledge or play

Contact numbers

MASH - 01481 723182

Emergency Duty Team - 01481 725241
(outside office hours)

Police Public Protection Unit - 01481 725111

CHILD PROTECTION

What should I do when I am concerned about a child?



Information for people working with children and families

Who is this leaflet for?

This is a leaflet for all people in Guernsey and Alderney who come into contact with children, parents or carers through their work, whether they are paid or unpaid. All people working with children should have access to child protection training .

www.iscp.gg/article/152850/Training.

What is child abuse?

Abuse is often not intentional and can happen when parents are struggling to cope with other pressures (financial, substance misuse, mental/physical health, domestic abuse). Children with disabilities are especially vulnerable to abuse. Children can be abused by anyone (family members, professionals, other children and young people).

Organisations working with children and young people should have a child protection policy. This policy will explain what you have to do if you have concerns about a child. If you are not sure whether there is a policy in your organisation you should speak to your line manager. For more information on what to do if you are worried about a child visit the Islands Safeguarding Children Partnership website - www.iscp.gg or www.iscp.gg/worried-about-a-child.

What is my role in child protection?

If you are working with children, parents or carers you have an important part to play in safeguarding and protecting children. As you see them regularly you may notice suspicious injuries or changes in behaviour that cause concern.

Social workers in Children and Family Community Services have the responsibility for investigating child protection concerns. It is not your role to decide if a child has been abused.

It is your role to record and report all concerns you have and any disclosures made to you.

Even if in doubt it is better to report concerns than to remain silent.



What steps do I have to take? In an emergency call the police on 999

- ✓ **Record your observations**
Including a description of any marks or bruising - what the child said - how the child behaved
- ✓ **Speak to the parent or carer to share your concern and seek an explanation (unless this would place the child, or another, at further risk)**
- ✓ **Inform the parents or carers that your concern will, or has been, passed on (unless this would place the child, or another, at further risk)**
- ✓ **Discuss your concerns with your manager or the designated person for child protection in your organisation. If you are still concerned you should...**
- ✓ **Contact the Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH)**
If you believe a child is at risk of serious harm, phone the MASH and ask to speak to a social worker (contact number overleaf).

Even if you are worried that your referral will affect your relationship with parents, or that the child will no longer use your service, you need to prioritise the needs of the child.