

If the child has not been harmed in any way and it has been decided that the child is not at risk, the enquiry will end. The social worker will have to talk to their managers first before letting families know this. Families will always be told as soon as possible and it will also be confirmed in writing. At every stage during the enquiry, consideration will be given to providing support to the family. If appropriate and if requested by the family, additional services may also be offered.

If it is found that the child has been harmed or may be at risk of being harmed and there are still concerns about this, a Child Protection Conference will be arranged to discuss what has been found out. (See leaflet – A Guide to Child Protection Conference)

Child Protection Agencies will do their best to work with families to make sure that the child stays in their care.

## Further Advice

Family members need to be clear about the involvement of all agencies and how any involvement or decisions affect them. So it is important that if you are not sure about the process, or why any particular agency or individual is involved you should ask questions.

If for any reason family members have a complaint about the service provided, they should contact the;

Information Governance and complaints  
Municipal Offices  
Town hall Square  
DN31 1HU

Tel 01472/ 326427  
Res-customerservices@nelincs.gov.uk

If you would like to receive this information in another language or in another format such as large print, Braille or on audio tape please contact Children's Complaints and Information Access Services.

This leaflet is available from the Local Safeguarding Children Board at [www.nelincs.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/lscb)

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# Child Protection Enquiry



## A Guide to Child Protection Enquiry

### Introduction

This leaflet should help you understand why Child Protection Enquiries take place and what happens during and after the enquiry.

This leaflet is published at the North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The board is made up of senior officers' from all the agencies concerned with Safeguarding Children. The LSCB is an organisation which meets regularly to make sure that all agencies work together effectively for the welfare of children.

### What is a Child Protection Enquiry?

When an agency receives information that a child may be at risk of harm or is known to have suffered harm, a social worker and/or a police officer must look into this. This is called a child protection enquiry.

The Law (Children Act 1989 S47) states that enquiries must be made by the Local Authority. Sometimes the information may be wrong or even malicious, but enquiries must be made to be sure that the child is safe and well.

To begin with this means speaking to other agencies who may know the family e.g. health visitor, the head teacher, the child's school or the family doctor.

If the Child Protection workers can be satisfied at this stage that the child is not at risk of any harm then no further action will be taken. Families are usually told about the information that has been given. It is not always possible however to tell families who gave the information. Sometimes people refuse to say who they are or ask for their names not to be given.

### What happens in an Enquiry?

If further enquiries need to be made, a social worker and/or police officer will contact the family. Their job is to find out what has happened and to decide whether the child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed. This will involve asking family members a lot of questions.

Child Protection workers will always want to see the child and if the child is old enough, they will sometimes want to speak to her or him alone. Unless there are exceptional circumstances they will ask for permission to do this from relevant family members and they will always ask permission from the child. Depending on what has happened they may also ask permission to record the interview with the child on video.

Sometimes they may need to ask relevant family members involved in the Child Protection Enquiry work together so that the best results are achieved for the child. If at any stage social workers and/or police officers are prevented from carrying out their enquiries and if there are efficient concerns regarding the child's welfare, a decision would be made as to whether any legal action should be taken.