



Centre for Professional Practice

Significant Harm Checklist

Step 1 – Can the concerns be evidenced to have an impact on the child?

Consider impact individually for each child. Concern about parental behaviours alone is not sufficient to evidence significant harm to the child, because parental behaviours will affect capacity to varying degrees, and children's resilience, their individual experience of parenting will vary from child to child.

Step 2 – Does this impact amount to significant harm?

Compare impact against what you would reasonably expect from a similar child of a similar age/level of development.

Step 3a – Are the concerns attributable to parental care?

What is the level of care afforded to the child (ren) by each parent and their abilities or capacities.

Or

Step 3b – Is the child beyond parental control?

This may include children/young people whose behaviour is sufficiently extreme to place them at risk of removal from home, eg control issues, risk taking, dangerous behaviour, and sexual exploitation.

Step 4 – Can it be evidenced that significant harm is likely to continue?

The level of parental engagement and understanding of concerns should be taken into account.

Likelihood means that there is a "real, substantial risk".

Protective factors should be taken into account.

If YES to ALL steps 1- 4

Significant harm threshold is met

If NO to ANY of the steps 1-4:

Significant harm threshold is not met.

