



Hillingdon Council

NEED TO KNOW PROCEDURE SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT NOTIFICATIONS

August 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

The Corporate Director Children's Services holds overall accountability for the Directorate's performance and must be informed of all major incidents, situations or controversies involving services, staff, service users and buildings.

These guidelines set out what the Corporate Director needs to be informed about and the format for the 'Need to Know' (NTK) briefing. However, these do not exclude applying professional judgement on case by case basis. If unsure, please consult with your Service Manager, Head of Service, Assistant Director and/or Head of Safeguarding Arrangements (*See Section 4 for more details*)

These guidelines are in respect of the NTK briefing only. Ongoing support to colleagues involved in, or impacted by major incidents, situations or controversies will be provided in line with Council Health and Wellbeing and supervision policies.

Members of the Children Services' SMT are (*August 2023*):

- Assistant Director for Education & Vulnerable Children
- Assistant Director Prevention and Youth Justice
- Director of Education & SEND
- Director of Service Delivery - Children's Social Care
- Director for Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance

2. CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING A 'NEED TO KNOW' BRIEFING

A Need-to-Know notification needs to be completed regarding the following circumstances:

2.1. Significant Incidents involving children and families (service users) – *complete appendix 1*

- a) Death, serious accidents or injuries on the local authority's premises or where a member of staff is present
- b) Death or serious injury of a child who is currently receiving services from LBH, including children Looked After, children subject to child protection and child in need plans.
- c) Death or serious injury of a child attending a school (whilst in school) in London Borough of Hillingdon
- d) Child/family member arrested for serious/high profile crime (murder/rape etc)

2.2. Significant legal proceedings - *complete appendix 1*

- a) Care Proceedings likely to attract public or media interest.
- b) Criminal trials resulting from child protection proceedings.
- c) Trials relating to fraud or other offences committed by staff
- d) Proceedings with potentially high financial or policy implications; for example threat of judicial review, civil litigation for damages, employment tribunal claims etc.
- e) Inquests

2.3. Significant incident reported by Youth Justice Service - *complete appendix 1*

Victim or perpetrator of:

- a) Incidents involving a weapon that cause physical injury - knife/gun

- b) Serious sexual offences e.g. Rape or Attempted Rape
- c) Attempted murder
- d) Manslaughter
- e) Murder
- f) GBH with intent Sec 18
- g) Kidnapping
- h) An offence which is likely to attract media attention

2.4. Significant Incidents involving staff members - *complete appendix 3*

- a) Unexpected death or serious injury
- b) Significant accidents or injuries at work. (This is in addition to the corporate Health and Safety procedures which should be followed in all cases of accidents at work)
- c) Involvement in violent incidents
- d) Allegations, arrests or convictions for serious criminal offences
- e) Media coverage relating to members of staff where the publicity may impact on the council
- f) Referral to regulatory body (eg: Social Work England)
- g) High profile LADO referrals

2.5. Controversies - *complete appendix 3*

- a) Major complaints implicating Children's Services
- b) Matters likely to attract local or national interest
- c) Any matter which has or is likely to attract the attention of the media, elected members or Members of Parliament

3. FORMAT OF THE BRIEFING

In the above circumstances, the Team Manager and the relevant Head of Service/Assistant Director should, wherever possible, complete the 'Need to Know' pro-forma. The detail will be confined to a level which will inform the Director of the seriousness of the incident, actual or potential risk to the Directorate and Council, and of actions being taken to proactively manage the situation.

Please always consider the audience when writing and signing off the Need to Know.

4. DISTRIBUTION OF NEED TO KNOW

When completing the NTK please agree it and check it with your line manager and your HoS or AD. Once you are happy with the content, please send the signed off form to your Children SMT member as soon as possible (but no later than 24 hours).

Always include in the email the Head of Safeguarding Arrangements and the Director for Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance.

Relevant Children Services SMT member will notify the Corporate Director and other corporate colleagues as necessary.

It is the Corporate Directors decision to inform the Chief Executive, and elected members as necessary.

Upon receiving the NTK form this will be reviewed by the Head of Safeguarding Arrangements to decide the need for a notification to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (National Panel).

The summary of this decision will be recorded on Part B of the NTK notification by the Safeguarding Team.

The National Panel will be notified when it's known or suspected that a child has been abused or neglected:

- child dies or is seriously harmed* in LBH area
- child dies or is seriously harmed* outside England, who is normally resident in LBH area
- For looked-after children, National Panel will be notified of a death whether abuse or neglect are suspected or not.

The National Panel notification must be completed by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service within 5 working days of becoming aware of the incident.

The National Panel will share all notifications with:

- the Department for Education
- Ofsted

** Serious harm includes (but is not limited to) serious and/or long-term impairment of a child's mental health or intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. It should also cover impairment of physical health. This is not an exhaustive list. When making decisions, judgment should be exercised in cases where impairment is likely to be long-term, even if this is not immediately certain. Even if a child recovers, including from a one-off incident, serious harm may still have occurred.*

APPENDIX 1 – NEED TO KNOW PRO-FORMA (relating to sections 2.1 to 2.3 in procedure)

Name of the child (ren)			
LCS number(s)			
Address			
DoB and Age:			
Ethnicity			
Religion			
Other children in the family	Name	Relationship	DoB
Name of mother			
Name of father			
Other significant family members	Name	Relationship	
Intervention status (CIN, CP, LAC, etc)			
Are there any Legal Orders in place?			
Allocated Social Worker (or another Lead Professional) – include Team and TM			
Any other professionals involved with the child/family	Name	Agency	
Date of the incident being reported			
Details of the incident			
What is the harm/risk to the child			
What actions have been taken as a result of the incident			
Is there any media interest relating to the incident? If so please specify			

APPENDIX 2 – For Safeguarding service only - Notification to National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

Part B: For Completion by Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance Service	
<p><i>Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and</i> • <i>the child has died or been seriously harmed</i> <p><i>Serious harm includes (but is not limited to) serious and/or long-term impairment of a child's mental health or intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. It should also cover impairment of physical health. This is not an exhaustive list. When making decisions, judgment should be exercised in cases where impairment is likely to be long-term, even if this is not immediately certain. Even if a child recovers, including from a one-off incident, serious harm may still have occurred.</i></p>	
Is the criteria met for a Serious Incident Notification?	
Rationale for decision	
Completed by:	
Date	

APPENDIX 3 – NEED TO KNOW PRO-FORMA (relating to section 2.4 and 2.5 in procedure)

Name & role of the staff member	
Name of line manager	
Date of the incident being reported	
Details of the incident	
What is the harm/risk to staff member	
What is the harm/risk to others, including colleagues and service users	
What actions have already been taken as a result of the incident	
Is there any media interest relating to the incident? If so please specify.	

