

NEED TO KNOW PROCEDURE

**SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT NOTIFICATIONS FOR
SAFEGUARDING AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Corporate Director Adults, Children & Young People Services (the Director) 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 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 Head of Service or the Head of Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance.

The Director will ensure that the Chief Executive, other corporate colleagues and elected members are informed as necessary.

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.

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)

- 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

- 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 Incidents involving staff members

- 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

2.4. Significant incident reported by Youth Justice Service

Victim or perpetrator of

- a) Incidents involving a weapon that caused physical injury - knife/gun
- b) Physical sexually harmful offences eg Rape or Attempted Rape
- c) Attempted murder
- d) Manslaughter
- e) Murder
- f) GBH with intent Sec 18
- g) Kidnaping
- h) An offence which is likely to attract media attention

2.5. Controversies

- 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 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.

4. DISTRIBUTION OF NEED TO KNOW

The NTKs will be emailed as soon as possible (but no later than 24 hours) to the Assistant Director (AD) and the Head of Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance. The AD and Head of safeguarding will notify the Corporate Director and others as appropriate.

Upon receiving the NTK form this will be reviewed by the Head of Safeguarding to decide the need for a National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (National Panel). The summary of this decision will be recorded on Part B of the NTK notification.

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 or not abuse or neglect are suspected.

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

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.*

4.1. APPENDIX 1 – NEED TO KNOW PRO-FORMA (relating to sections 2.1 to 2.4 in procedure)

Name of the child (ren)			
LCS number(s)			
Address			
DoB			
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	

Part B: For Completion by Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance Service

Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:

- *abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and*
- *the child has died or been seriously harmed*

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.

Is the criteria met for a Serious Incident Notification?	
Rationale for decision	
Completed by:	
Date	

4.2. APPENDIX 2 – NEED TO KNOW PRO-FORMA (relating to section 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.	