

## **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) Kidnapping
- h) An offence which is likely to attract media attention

The Youth Justice Service will notify the YJB of a serious incident within one working day if a child:

Is charged with committing one of the following notifiable incidents outlined below, (a full list of reportable incidents is included at Annex A)

- Attempted Murder/Murder/Manslaughter
  - Rape
  - Grievous Bodily Harm or Wounding with or without intent – section 18/20
  - A Terrorism related offence
- Or
- Dies while on the YOT caseload or up to 20 calendar days following the end of YOT supervision

The link to complete the notification is found here: [Serious Incidents Notification - Standard Operating Procedure for Youth Offending Teams – YJB \(August 2021\) - Youth Justice Resource Hub \(yjresourcehub.uk\)](#)

## **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 Director of Service Delivery and the Director of Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance. The Director of Service Delivery and the Director of Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance will notify the Corporate Director and others as appropriate.
- Upon receiving the NTK form this will be reviewed by the Director of Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance 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 Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (National Panel) will be notified when it's known or suspected that a child has been abused or neglected:
  - o child dies or is seriously harmed\* in LBH area
  - o 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:
  - o the Department for Education
  - o Ofsted
- An analysis of NTK, serious incident notifications and outcomes is undertaken on a quarterly basis.

*\* 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 - Significant Incidents involving children and families (service users) and/or significant legal proceedings**

**Notification of Significant Incident - Children**

Name of the child (ren)			
LCS number(s) (for Local Authority Staff only)			
Address			
DoB		Ethnicity	
Gender		Religion	
Other children in the family	Name		Relationship
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 - Significant Incidents regarding staff members and/or Controversies**

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.	