



Police Protection Guidance/Process

Title	PP Guidance/process
Purpose/scope	To enable consistent recording of an episode of police protection on the LCS system and ensuring social worker's are compliant with the legislative framework
Subject key words	Police protection
Council Priority	Behaviours: be consistent
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Service Improvement & Efficiency Validation	
Legal Sign Off	n/a
Finance Sign Off	n/a
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What is Police Protection?

Police Protection is an emergency power under Section 46 Children Act 1989 which allows any police officer to protect a child who is reasonably believed to be at risk of significant harm.

Section 46 states: 'where a constable has reasonable cause to believe a child would otherwise be likely to suffer significant harm he/she may: –

- 1.remove the child to suitable accommodation and keep him/her there; or
- 2.take such steps as are reasonable to ensure that the child's removal from any hospital, or other place, in which he/she is then being accommodated is prevented.

Where a constable exercises the above power, the child is deemed to be under police protection.

The overriding principle is that wherever possible the decision to remove a child from a parent or carer should be made by a court. Police Protection should therefore only be used in emergency situations and where it is necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the child.

Suitable accommodation can be local authority accommodation such as children's home, 'other provision' or foster care. It can also mean placing the child with a suitable relative or other appropriate carer. Where considering whether a relative can provide suitable accommodation a thorough risk assessment should be conducted jointly by police (the Designated Officer) and social care, as to the individual's suitability to accommodate the child. Where relevant, suitable accommodation can also mean ensuring that the child remains in hospital. A police station is not classed as suitable accommodation.

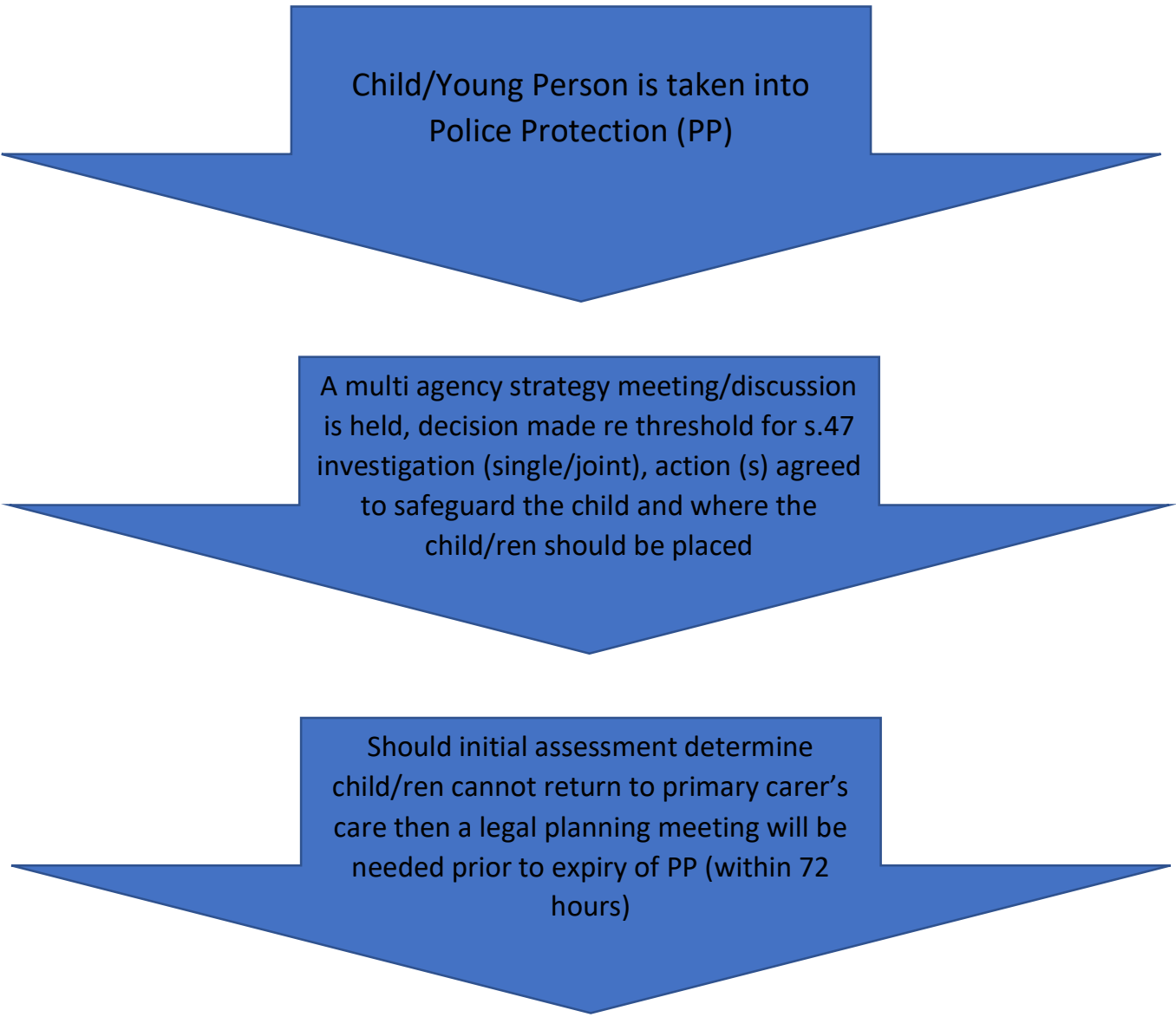
No child can be kept in Police Protection for more than 72 hours.

It is important to know that Police Protection does not end when a child is handed over to Children Social Care. It can only cease when:

- 72 hours has passed
- an Emergency Protection Order (EPO) or Interim Care Order (ICO) has been obtained by either the Local Authority or police;
- the child has been provided with accommodation by the local authority under Section 20 and the child is no longer considered to be at risk of significant harm
- the DO and local authority agree that the child is no longer at risk and can return home.

The decision to release a child from police protection should only be made following a strategy discussion between police and Children's Social Care and it must be agreed that the child is no longer at risk of significant harm. This agreement must be documented.

Process for Social Worker



Child/Young Person is taken into
Police Protection (PP)

A multi agency strategy meeting/discussion
is held, decision made re threshold for s.47
investigation (single/joint), action (s) agreed
to safeguard the child and where the
child/ren should be placed

Should initial assessment determine
child/ren cannot return to primary carer's
care then a legal planning meeting will be
needed prior to expiry of PP (within 72
hours)

IMPORTANT

Social Worker to inform ISO of the PP so that the child's legal status can be added to LCS (Additional tab – legal status) start and end date.

Should the child/ren become LAC / ICO the PP will end and the CLA period will start and should be added to the CLA episode

Should the child/ren return to the care of their parent / carer the PP will end