



# **WEST MERCIA PROBATION AREA**

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## **CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

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## WEST MERCIA AREA

### POLICY STATEMENT ON CHILD PROTECTION

Section 10 of the Children's Act 2004, places a duty on the National Probation Service as a 'relevant partner' to co-operate with the Local Authority to improve children's well being in their area. Section 11 of the act places a duty on key bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to 'safeguard' and promote the welfare of children.

*"The support and protection of children cannot be achieved by a single agency.....Every Service has to play its part. All staff must have placed upon them the clear expectation that the primary responsibility is to the child and his and her family".* Lord Laming in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, para 17.92 and 17.93.

The West Mercia Probation Area Board recognises it's responsibility to ensure that staff are aware of the need for inter-agency co-operation to improve the well being of children and it's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

This will be achieved through: -

1. Commitment to provide senior management level representation, contribution and regular attendance at Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)
2. Ensuring staff and service representatives have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in respect of child protection by putting in place:-
  - i Appropriate training and regular refresher training for all operational staff to raise their awareness, understanding and confidence in child protection.
  - ii Promotion of diversity and equality to ensure that no child/family is discriminated against due to age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, disability or sexual orientation.
  - iii Access to supervision, advice and ongoing training for those working with child protection issues.
  - iv Clear policies, strategies and procedures to support staff responding to child protection issues to ensure the safeguarding of children.
3. Recognition of the importance of inter-agency working and compliance in line with the national guidance provided in:-
  - i Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999): a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2005;
  - ii Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000). The Common Assessment Framework 2005.
4. Review and amendment of local policy and procedures in response to national guidance, changes to local structures or other significant developments. In addition review will take place in the context of ensuring compliance with the West Mercia Probation Area policy on equality and the requirements placed upon us under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

# WEST MERCIA PROBATION AREA

## CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

### Introduction

These procedures are intended to put the West Mercia Probation Area Child Protection Policy, as endorsed by the West Mercia Probation Board, into practice by providing staff with easily understood guidelines that meet the requirements of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999) 2004; the 'Framework for the Assessment of Children and their Families (2000)' and the Common Assessment Framework 2005.

The Joint Chief Inspectors' Report 2002 into 'Safeguarding Children' highlighted many positive features and some areas for improvement in Probation Service practice. The recommendations have been incorporated into this document and include amendments as required by the Children's Act 2004.

**"The West Mercia Probation Area Board recognises its responsibility to ensure that staff are aware of and responsive to issues of child protection, and that this should be one of the underpinning elements of all aspects of service delivery for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area"**

It is recognised that Local Authority Children Services is the lead agency responsible for the protection and welfare of children, but the clear expectation is that this requires co-operation from all other relevant agencies and individuals.

Staff and managers are reminded of the need to secure interpreting, signing and translating services when the situation and circumstances require these.

## Principles

'Working Together' outlines some common principles that should underpin the practice of all agencies and professionals:

- **Working in Partnership with Children and Families** – this is about maximising the involvement of children and families in the processes and acknowledging the need for openness, fairness and trust.
- **Race, Ethnicity and Culture** – child abuse can occur in any culture and the child has a right to be protected from harm, professionals need to be sensitive to differing family models, lifestyles and to child rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. In addition staff need to be aware of the mechanisms of discrimination or prejudice and guard against myths and stereotypes. This should be considered in every aspect of assessment and action.
- **Sharing Information** – Whilst sharing of information between agencies is seen as key to judgements and decisions, care needs to be taken in ensuring that this is undertaken within the relevant legal framework including the Common Law Duty of Confidence, Data Protection Act 1998 and European Convention on Human Rights article 8. It is also important to be aware of any local inter-agency protocols.
- **Disclosure of Information about Sex Offenders** – As a service we are fully aware of the government emphasis on the sharing of information on those who pose a risk to vulnerable people including children. It has emphasised the setting up of multi-agency panels (multi agency public protection arrangements) to share information on offenders involved in sexual and violent offending. It advocates carefully worked out information sharing protocols and guidance and that the disclosure of information should take place within an established system and protocol between agencies and should be integrated into a risk assessment and management system. For further guidance please refer to West Mercia Probation Area Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA): Information Sharing Protocol 2004; MAPPA Guidance: Protection Through Partnership 2003.
- **Professional Guidance and Disclosure** – this relates particularly to the need to be aware of our own professional guidance on disclosure of information.
- **Record Keeping** – good record keeping is essential for sharing with others, accountability, evidence and monitoring work to ensure improvement and consistency. It should be relevant and accurate. Contact and plans should clearly record the sentence role and action of probation staff involved in supervising relevant cases. The case should also be clearly identifiable.
- **Supervision and Support** – it is important in this emotive and stressful work to have good supervision, support, training and skills development programmes provided both within the organisation and also from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) training arrangements.
- **Recruitment and Selection of Staff** – all organisations should have effective systems for deterring and barring those who are unsuitable to work with children.

It is important for all staff to realise that the Home Office is one of the major signatories to 'Working Together' it also links in with the national framework of NOMS as part of the Reducing Re-offending Action plan under section 10 of the Children's Act 2004 to improve children's well-being in relation to:

- Physical and mental health and emotional well-being;
- Protection from harm and neglect;
- Education training and recreation;
- Making a positive contribution to society; and
- Social and economic well being.

We therefore have a duty to follow these principles and incorporate them into policy and procedures.

These procedures link these principles and responsibilities to all aspects of service delivery and identifies role responsibilities. **The procedures should be applied in conjunction with**

- **West Mercia Probation Area's Risk of Serious Harm and Public Protection Procedures (2006)**
- **Local Authority Area Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy & Procedures**
- **Domestic Violence Policy & Procedures**

It is important that local unit managers ensure staff are aware of arrangements developed by their LSCB under the inter-agency guidelines and that these are used as appropriate, in conjunction with our own Child Protection procedures, e.g. – local referral mechanisms to children's services are understood and correctly followed by staff.

Staff seconded to Prisons and the Youth Offending Services should work within the policy and procedures for those establishments.

## 1. Identification and Assessment

1.1 – Staff, particularly those responsible for assessments and those in direct contact with offenders and their families, should be aware of the distinction between a child in need and a child at risk of significant harm as laid down in ‘working together’ and local LSCB Inter-Agency Guidelines.

All staff

Training Unit

### Information Sources

1.2 – At the earliest possible opportunity staff should collect appropriate information that enables a clear assessment to be made about the risk or potential risk to any children living with or known to an offender.

All staff

### 1.3 – **Court Stage**

- Enter on Court Notification Form (CNF1) Appx
- In urgent cases after verbal notification, pass directly in writing to line/duty Manager

Court Staff

### 1.4 – **Reception Areas**

- Concern arises
- Notify the relevant line/duty manager in written form, (email – hard copy for offender file) noting concerns and observations.

Reception staff  
Offender  
Manager  
DTM

### 1.5 – **Interviews and OASys completion**

- Follow carefully the guidance in respect of Risk of harm to Children as indicated by R2.
- Some of the evidence for this should arise from the completion of OASys Two.
- Staff will be kept informed of the significant behaviours associated with abuse of various kinds – e.g. common associated behaviours are domestic violence and drug and alcohol misuse.
- Staff should be alert to child protection links at all stages of the assessment.

Staff completing  
OASys forms

Training  
Unit/Managers

OASys  
assessors

OASys  
assessors

1.6 – Those completing OASys should be particularly aware of the need to distinguish between information that is open and that which needs to be entered into the ‘Confidential Section’ (Appendix 5 of the OASys Manual)

### Children’s Services Checks

1.7 – In all cases where OASys is being completed an initial child protection check should be made with the local Children Services office, (Request for Information form Appendix 7). In addition, if there is a change of relevant circumstance during the course of supervision or if the staff member has assessed that the offender is “now or on release, likely to live with, or have frequent contact with any child who is on the child protection register or is looked after by the local authority” or if there “are any concerns in relation to children”, liaison should be initiated with children services. **It is expected practice that, where there is a child in the home, children services checks should be made to**

OASys  
assessors

Offender  
Managers

**determine the nature of any involvement by them.**

1.8 – Arrangements are in place on a local basis in order to carry out children services checks and all relevant staff must be familiar with these arrangements.

**DTMs**

**All staff**

1.9 – Staff should be particularly attentive to issues of race, ethnicity and culture and in particular their own myths and stereotypes. Staff will be assisted to improve their awareness in this regard.

**Training Unit**

1.10 – **Ensure that recording at all stages of the assessment process is accurate, relevant and full.**

**All staff**

## 2. Supervision and Sentence Planning

2.1 – Child protection concerns may arise during the course of any Community Sentence or during and after custodial sentences as a result of disclosure or change of circumstances. Staff need to be attentive to this throughout the course of contact with offenders and to record and pass on the information appropriately. Where child protection concerns exist they should be addressed in sentence plans.

**All Staff**

### 2.2 – Plans and Objectives

- Where child protection concerns have been recorded on the OASys R2, supervisors need to include an objective addressing the issues in their sentence plans.

**All those completing OASys Offender Managers**

### 2.3 – New Information – all cases

- Record on case file
- Amend R7on OASys and register (1.5 and 5.1) if appropriate
- Send to risk manager for countersigning
- Refer to children services if appropriate

**Offender Managers  
Line Managers**

**Risk Manager**

### 2.4 – Imprisonment

- Make contact with the relevant Child Protection Co-ordinator in any prison where an offender is placed.
- Inform them of their involvement and request arrangements for information sharing.

**Offender Managers**

### 2.5 – File identification and recording of key information

- Files with child protection issues should be clearly marked using a yellow dot marker system and any hand writing must be legible.
- A list of those organisations and contacts relevant to the case should be kept and easily accessible on the file, using R7.5 of OASys

**Team Admin**

**Offender Managers**

### 2.6 – Victim Information

- Staff must ensure that where there is victim information this should be separately recorded and filed in a separate section of the record.

**Offender Managers**

2.7 – **Further guidance to staff on actions to be taken during the supervision and sentence planning processes are included in section 3.**

### 3. Referrals

#### 3.1 – Initial Referral of Concerns

- Referrals to Childrens Services can and should be made at any time where concern arises, using the local procedures and documentation under the local children services assessment framework.
- Form R6 and R7 of OASys should be completed in order to clarify and record concerns in addition to an entry in the contact sheet.
- Initially concerns should be discussed with the supervising officer or their line manager, but in their absence or where the concern is grave, Children Services or the police should be informed immediately.
- Telephone referrals should be followed up in writing. Local guidelines and forms will differ but they will be available to staff.
- A referral should be replied to in writing by Childrens Services within 10 days giving an outline of what action will be taken and if no response is received, steps should be taken to obtain one.
- Local Childrens Services department referral procedures should be known to staff and applied as appropriate.

All staff

All staff  
Line Managers

All staff

Offender  
Manager in  
consultation  
with Line  
Manager.  
Line Manager,  
Case  
Supervisor.

#### 3.2 – Liaison with Children Services

- Once a member of staff assumes responsibility for a case where a child is on the children Services Child Protection Register he/she should inform the key worker or the relevant children services manager of the nature of her/his involvement with the offender. Complete form CPI in the 1<sup>st</sup> instance (see Appendix 1).
- This also applies to changes in circumstances referred to in 3.4.
- All telephone communications should be followed up with written communication.
- It is particularly important to inform the key worker of loss of contact with the offender.

Offender  
Manager

#### 3.3 – Liaison with Other Probation Units

- In cases where the offender is in contact with more than one unit or team, that team or unit should be informed of the nature and content of any concerns, any changes that occur and be asked to notify any information that appears relevant to the management of those concerns.
- Interventions staff, ie programme tutors/facilitators and unpaid work supervisions and case managers have significant contact with offenders and may have information very relevant to child protections concerns. Such information must be communicated in a timely way to the Offender Manager.

Offender  
Manager

#### 3.4 – Investigation of Concerns

- **Staff may be asked to contribute to but should not assume responsibility for investigation which will be planned by Children Services and the Police, in order to avoid prejudicing**

All Staff

any future enquiries.

- **Direct contact with the child/ren should never be initiated by Probation staff, unless in order to obtain very basic information to assist in the decision to refer.**
- **All actions should be recorded accurately, signed and dated.**

#### **4. Child Protection Cases – Management and Responsibilities**

##### **4.1 – Introduction**

- The Probation Service is one of the agencies expected to participate in the child protection assessment and decision making processes.
- The key worker is never a probation employee .
- The supervising officer will be involved in any Child Protection Conferences (CPC), Child Protection Plans, Core Groups and reviews. Programme facilitators, particularly those delivering the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) may be usefully contribute to CPCs and should be encouraged to attend whether they have a contribution to make.
- They are likely to be involved in Strategy meetings that can give rise to CPCs.
- They may be involved in Core Assessments and/or Section 47 enquiries prior to Child Protection Conferences.
- They may also be involved in Family Group Conferences and Children in Need assessments.
- Involvement in Chapter 8 reviews after child deaths is covered separately in Section 8.
- A Children Services employee and/or the key worker retain the responsibility for convening, co-ordinating and managing the processes. They should always be the reference point.
- In effect, however, all decisions are made on an inter-agency basis.

**Offender  
Manager/Programm  
e Facilitators**

##### **4.2 – Strategy Meetings**

- Once the referral has been made and it is deemed to be serious enough to convene a multi-agency strategy meeting, this will be called by Childrens Services. Offender Managers and other relevant staff should give attendance at such meetings high priority
- The expectation is that all agencies will share information about the concern with a view to taking decisions as to how to proceed.

**Offender  
Manager**

##### **4.3– Core Assessments and Section 47 Enquiries**

- The situation may require an assessment of the needs of the child (Core Assessment which is completed according to the 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families'). It may be an investigation is required, because a child is deemed to be at risk of significant harm (Section 47 investigation by Police and Children Services).
- A Core Assessment will be requested and an initial Child

Protection Plan may be drawn up before the Child Protection Conference takes place.

**Staff should**

- register their involvement with the appointed social worker.
- keep secure and accurate written accounts of all contacts.
- mark all child protection documentation as 'restricted' If they are not to be disclosed to the offender, this should be removed prior to any disclosure of the file.

Information should be easily identified and accessible within the file. This will include minutes, reports, assessments and correspondence. The record keeping expectations are rigorous and subject to monitoring, audit and regular inspection.

Offender  
Manager

Offender Manager  
Line Manager  
Area Manager

**4.4-Child Protection Conferences**

- These are chaired by children services and involve the participation of all the agencies involved with the child. The Offender Manager must always respond to any invitation to a conference and attend as appropriate. Where it is agreed with the Line Manager that attendance is not possible, a written report must be submitted .

Offender  
Manager  
Line Manager

Remember that parent/s and their representative are likely to attend. Any information should be shared with parents so that they are prepared for the meeting. If it is thought that sharing of information could contribute to the risk, it should be agreed in advance with the conference chair that this will only be disclosed in a closed session.

Offender  
Manager

- A written report should be prepared and a format for that report is contained in Appendix 2.
- The detailed tasks of the conferences are contained in Appendix 3.
- The important decision taken by all those present is whether the child should be registered on the Children Services Child Protection Register (the Integrated Children Systems Register will replace this with effect from 1 January 2007).
- If that occurs then it is important to initiate registration processes as described in Section 5.
- **Staff should check minutes carefully for accuracy.**
- **If action points do not seem accurate, steps should be taken immediately to address any error.**
- **Once this has been done actions agreed must be carried out as requested or reasons given in writing why they have not been carried out.**
- **All actions must be carried out in consultation with the key worker – this could include visiting the family, contents of discussions with parents and enforcement decisions.**

Offender  
Manager

Offender  
Manager

**4.5 – Core Groups**

- The Child Protection Conference will usually have been presented with a provisional Child Protection Plan.
- Once a child is registered, a Core Group will be set up to develop a detailed Child Protection Plan which is the working tool in managing the safeguarding of the child.

- At the same time a Core Assessment will be completed by children services if not already started.
- The first meeting of the Core Group should take place within 10 working days of the Child Protection Conference.
- The Core Assessment should be ready within 35 days of the Strategy discussion/commencement of Child Protection enquiries.
- It is often the case that the plan and the assessment run alongside each other.

#### 4.6 – **Child Protection Review Conference**

These take place within 3 months of the initial Child Protection Conference and at least 6 monthly thereafter until de-registration is agreed.

#### 4.7 – **Differences of Opinion**

- It is inevitable in this field of work that disagreements will arise between agencies.
- Staff should always consult with their line manager and any significant issue requiring negotiation should be raised at Area Manager level or above for discussion with children services colleagues.

**Offender Manager/  
Line Manager/  
Risk Manager/  
Area Manager**

#### 4.8 – **Family Group Conferences**

- These will arise from assessments undertaken where a child is deemed to be in need and not at risk of significant harm.
- The guidance to staff should follow the same principles as with child protection involvement.

## 5. Registration & Monitoring

### 5.1 – Registration

- If at 1.5 or 1.7 above, child protection concerns have been notified and/or the offender is in contact with a child on the children services register or in the care of the local authority, section R7, should be brought to the attention of the Information Officer electronically so that OASys is accessed and registration taken place, on the WMPA Child Protection Register.
- The information officer will update the register and keep a hard copy of R7 on file and monitor review dates. A missed review date must be brought to the attention of the Unit Team Admin to follow up.

5.2 – Child Protection status should be reviewed at least 4 monthly and any change recorded using OASys form P – Section 6, with a copy to the Information Officer for up dating the register.

Change of circumstances may include:-

- Completion of supervision
- Child removed from CSCP register
- Change of address of offender
- Change of address of children
- Other children joined household
- Change of supervising officer
- Risk status changed.

### 5.3 – De-Registration

In the event of either the termination of supervision of the offender or the removal of a child from the local authority register, the information officer at Head Office must be notified to de-register the case.

**Failure to comply with 5.3 above represents a breach of the Data Protection Act.**

### Monitoring

5.4 – A monthly report of all cases linked to a child on the At Risk Register and due date for review will be issued by the Information Officer to Area Managers, Risk Managers and DTMs.

5.5 – It is the responsibility of Risk Managers to ensure that the list is accurate, reviews have taken place and when cases have been de-registered, that the Information Officer has been notified.

5.6 – It is the responsibility of Line Managers and Area Managers to ensure that cases involving child protection issues are regularly discussed in the course of supervision with the Offender Manager and the team manager to provide support and guidance and to make sure procedures are being followed.

**OASys  
Assessor**

**Information  
Officer**

**Information  
Officer  
Team Admin**

**Case  
Manager  
Information  
Officer**

**Case  
Manager  
Risk Manager  
Information  
Officer**

**Information  
Officer**

**Risk  
Manager**

**Line Managers  
Area  
Managers**

### 5.7 – Links to Other Registers

- The information will be linked to the Risk of Harm register.
- Copies will be retained for the case record where the registration will be noted and dated on the client record.
- Descriptions of these registers are attached in Appendix 4.

**Offender  
Managers**

## 6. Allocation

### 6.1 – Significant concerns and role of Risk Managers

Where there are significant child protection concerns and the offender is registered as high risk, the Risk Manager must be consulted by the Offender Manager.

**Risk Manager**

**Offender  
Manager  
Unit Manager**

### 6.2 – Trainees

Trainees should be involved in child protection cases but must not hold responsibility for the case. They must receive clear guidance from the DTM/Risk Manager and regular supervision from the local PDA.

**Trainees  
PDA  
DTM  
Risk Manager**

### 6.3 – Probation Service Officers

Probation Service Officers should only be involved in cases with the approval of the line manager and the nature of her/his contact should be clearly noted on the case record. The Offender Manager will retain full responsibility for the work with the offender and her/his family.

**PSO**

**Line Manager**

**Offender  
Manager**

### 6.4 Unpaid Work

A community order with a single unpaid work requirement will be managed by the PSO as the offender manager. Multi requirement orders remain the responsibility of the offender manager. Any child protection issues will therefore, be brought to the attention of the offender manager.

**CPO  
Offender  
Manager**

### 6.5 - Approved Premises

The responsibility of Braley House is to ensure that child protection concerns are raised immediately with the offender manager. The manager and deputy will act to inform the offender manager of these and will follow up any verbal communication in writing.

In the case of bailees who are not otherwise subject to supervision by the Probation Service, the deputy manager will act as the offender manager.

**All Staff**

### 6.6 – Volunteers and Partner Agencies

Where a voluntary associate, mentor or partner agency is working with an offender where there are circumstances which give rise to concern about the welfare of a child, the volunteer, mentor or employee of the partner agency must report their concerns to the supervising officer, or in their absence, their line manager.

**Volunteers,  
mentors, partner  
agencies.**

A standard requirement to refer all such issues will be included in all contracts and inter-agency agreements which include joint working of this kind.

**Commissioning  
Manager**

## 7. Disclosure, Human Rights and Data Protection

7.1 – Staff need to be familiar with any information in these areas. Specific advice can be sought from the Information Manager. The LSCB Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines contains more detailed guidance as does the MAPPA: Information Sharing Protocol. This is an ever-changing area and staff will be attentive to any policies, procedures and information.

**Head Office**

**Information  
Manager**

**8. Child Deaths – Serious Case Review and other Serious Incidents**

**8.1 – Introduction**

- Chapter 8 reviews are conducted when a child dies, and abuse or neglect are known or suspected to be a factor in the death. These reviews may be conducted in parallel with a Serious Further Offence Report. They may also be instigated by the LSCBs where there are other serious concerns relating to the management of a case .

**8.2 – Purpose**

- The purpose of a Chapter 8 Case Review is to respond quickly to the death of a child and other serious incidents in order to learn lessons about future inter-agency arrangements, improve practice, address public concern and attend to the impact on members of staff.

**8.3 – Instigating a Review**

When there is a death of a child and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor, the senior manager must refer the matter immediately to the Senior Manager of the Local Safeguarding Board.

**ACO**

The senior manager in West Mercia must also refer cases where a child has sustained a potentially life-threatening injury through abuse or neglect or serious sexual abuse and the case gives rise to concerns about the way in which professionals and services work together to safeguard children.

**8.4 – Immediate Action**

- In response to a telephone request from the Chair of the LSCB, the senior manager with responsibility for public protection or equivalent will secure the records relating to the case to guard against loss or interference. A duplicate set of records will need producing for work on the case to continue.

**ACO**

**8.5 – Investigation**

- The Serious Cases Sub-Committee of the LSCB will determine the remit and membership of the **Case Review Panel**. Due regard must be given to the membership of the panel to ensure that attention is paid to issues of diversity. The process should then be completed within four months. Probation representatives can be co-opted taking into account the circumstances of the case. That person should have no immediate line management responsibility for the case.

**Chief Officer  
ACO**

**8.6 – Management Reviews**

- The Chief Officer will receive a request to undertake a management review of probation involvement with the child and her/his family.

**Chief Officer**

The Chief Officer will:-

- confirm that the case records have been secured.
- nominate an officer of sufficient authority to carry out the management review`
- sign the Management review before it is forwarded to the Serious Cases Review Panel
- action any recommendations that merit an immediate response
- action any recommendations forthcoming from the subsequent LSCB overview report

#### 8.7 – **Guidance of Management Reviews**

- Those undertaking the Management Reviews should read Appendix 5 for guidance on the content and structure of reviews. Completed management reviews should be endorsed by the Chief Officer and forwarded to the Chair of the LSCB within the timescale laid down by the Serious Cases Review Panel.

**Area Managers  
ACO**

#### 8.8 – **Case Review Panel**

- Staff on the Case Review Panel will participate in the preparation of an LSCB Overview Report (guidance in 'Working Together' pp93) and an executive summary intended for the public but presented first at a special LSCB (guidance in 'Working Together' section 8.3). Members of the Case Review Panel will attend the special LSCB to present the report and respond to requests for clarification etc.

**Area Managers  
ACO**

#### 8.9 – **Action Plan**

- The Chief Officer will be responsible for producing an action plan in response to the Chapter 8 Review report.
- All review reports will be held centrally at HO.

**Chief Officer  
And ACOs**

**Head Office**

**9. Supervision, Support and Training**

9.1 Child Protection cases should receive a level of attention proportionate to the management of other high risk cases. Supervising officers should receive regular supervision and review of the case file should form part of supervision. Line managers should record that the file has been reviewed. Records should note guidance given. Case discussion to learn from other good practice should be encouraged. Entries on files should be signed and dated. Training and support issues for staff should be discussed in supervision and noted on appraisals and individual training and development plans.

**All**

**9.2 – Appraisals**

Always ensure that child protection is given consideration when setting objectives and development plans for staff, particularly for those who are currently holding such cases.

**Appraisers**

**9.3 – LSCB Membership**

West Mercia Probation Area makes a financial contribution to the LSCBs in it’s area in order to support their work and to access and influence the training and staff development provided by their training sub-groups. The Probation Service must be represented on these Boards at an appropriate level. In respect of the 4 local LSCB meetings, this should be by the Area Manager with the ACO covering the West Mercia wide meeting. Risk managers should attend as the representative on behalf of Area Managers at the training sub-groups. The Training Manager will co-ordinate the input to the training sub-groups in order to ensure consistency across the area and to identify the required training inputs, some of which need to be in-house and practice focussed. The most effective support is through regular practice briefings and workshops which build on the foundation training which is provided on a multi-agency basis. The Training Unit will include child protection training in it’s annual service training plan. It is of particular importance to ensure that effective channels of information on child protection developments are available to staff. Risk Managers should co-ordinate this communication.

**Area Managers**

**Risk Managers**

**Training Manager**

**Training Unit**

9.4 – The Training Unit will report annually to the ACO with responsibility for risk to children.

**Training Unit  
ACO**

## 10. Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Networks

10.1 – The networks set up in areas will differ. In some areas there is a District Child Protection Committee (DCPC) as well as a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), in others, these are called Child Protection Networks (CPN).

10.2 – The LSCBs have a very important strategic and decision-making function and they are expected to be staffed by those “who’s roles and seniority enable them to contribute to developing and maintaining strong and effective inter-agency child protection procedures and protocols, and ensure that local child protection services are adequately resourced”. This means that Area Managers or above should represent the West Mercia Probation Board.

**ACO/Area  
Manager**

10.3 – Tasks of the LSCB and a Job Description for those representing the Board on the LSCBs is attached in Appendix 6.

10.4 – Other networks that are generally practice based such as training sub-committees should be attended by the Risk Managers. The representative on these networks should ensure that those staff who would benefit from the material discussed should attend. They are also responsible for the dissemination of information.

**Area Manager/  
Risk Manager  
Training Unit**

**11. Health & Safety**

**11.1 – Children on Premises**

- We should discourage parents/carers from bringing children onto Probation Service premises as it is not possible within waiting areas to realistically manage separation between children and offenders who may prove a risk to them or to provide any form of supervision if the adult is required for interview.
- It is important for staff working in any building within the service to be particularly attentive to ensure that children are not left unattended, especially in hostels, waiting areas or any other place where they could be approached by dangerous offenders. **It is prohibited to leave children unattended and reception staff and their line managers must be alert to this.**

**Reception staff**

**Area Managers**

**DTMs**

**11.2 – Personal Safety**

- Staff will be required to be particularly attentive to procedures relating to personal safety, particularly in relation to lone interviewing and visiting.

**Line Managers/  
Human  
Resources/  
Training Unit**

**11.3 – Counselling and Support**

- All staff should be made aware of support processes and counselling services.

**Line Managers/  
Human  
Resources**

## APPENDIX 1.

### West Mercia Probation Area Child Protection and/or Risk to Children Notification

Notification of involvement by West Mercia Probation area with a case involving:-

Tick	Description
	Child(ren) on the 'At Risk Register'
	Supervision of a Risk to Child(ren) Offender(s)

Notified to Children Services, Location

#### Details of Child(ren)

Surname	Forename	Address	M/F	DOB

#### Details of Offender(s)

Surname	Forename	Address	M/F	DOB	RtoC (Y/N)

#### Relationship/Nature of contact between Offender and Child(ren)

--

Supervision commenced	
Supervision Expires	
Supervising Offender Manager	
Location	
Telephone No.	

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE ABOVE SUPERVISING OFFENDER MANAGER IS NOTIFIED OF ANY FUTURE CASE CONFERENCES RELEVANT TO THE ABOVE CHILD(REN) AND PROVIDED WITH COPIES OF CONFERENCE NOTES.**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Suggested Structure for a Report to a Child Protection Conference**

- Name of the Child
- Address
- Family Composition
- Nature of the Involvement – significant adult – order etc
- Information concerning their knowledge of the child's health and development
- Information concerning the capacity of the parents to safeguard the child
- Information concerning the capacity of the parents to promote the child's health and development.

**The contents of this report should be shared with the family. Family members should be actively encouraged to think about how they will present what they wish to say to the conference. It is inappropriate to withhold information because of the presence of parents or children. If staff have any concerns about sharing any sensitive or confidential information, they should discuss this with a Risk Manager. If the matter cannot be resolved, contact should be made with the chairperson well in advance of the conference to consider whether information can be shared in closed session in the absence of parents.**

**All those attending should take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.**

## APPENDIX 3

### Tasks of a Child Protection Conference

- Share information and concerns about the alleged abuse or neglect of a child(ren)
- Decide whether the child(ren) is/are at continuing risk of significant harm
- Evaluate, on the basis of the available information, the risks of future significant harm to each individual child in the household
- Decide upon registration using the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 1999 categories and criteria
- To recommend to agencies with statutory powers whether statutory action needs to be taken
- Appoint a key worker
- Identify the membership of a Core Group of professionals and family members who will develop and implement the child protection plan as a detailed working tool
- Establish how children, parents (including those with parental responsibility) and wider family members should be involved in the planning and implementation process, and the support, advice and advocacy available to them
- Establishing timescales for the meetings of the core group, production of a written child protection plan, and for the child protection review meetings.
- Identify in outline what further core and specialist assessments of the child and family are required to make sound judgements on how to safeguard the child and promote his or her welfare
- Outlining the child protection plan, especially identifying what needs to change in order to safeguard the child
- Considering the need for a contingency plan if circumstances change quickly
- Clarifying the different purpose and remit of the initial conference, the core group and the child protection review conference
- To establish a date for the first child protection review conference within three months of the initial conference
- To agree who will inform the parents, and if appropriate the child, of decisions and recommendations if they were not present at the conference

## APPENDIX 4

### Guidance in relation to looking up Child Protection Information recorded on IOSS

There will be two types of information available:

- **IOSS registered data on current offenders that contain child protection information**
- **Register of children on local authority child protection register linked to current IOSS registered offenders.**

#### Offender details

If an Offender on supervision is **in contact with or living with children** who are registered on the Children Services 'Child at Risk' Register, a warning flag is recorded against the offender indicating this. When searching an offender's details if the initials **RH** are displayed (*see example below*) this flag indicates that the offender is living with or in contact with a Child(ren) who is on the Children Services 'Child at Risk' Register. This warning flag does not necessarily mean that the offender is the person that poses the risk to the child(ren) but merely a warning to indicate that there are child(ren) involved who are 'At Risk' and further enquiries should be made.

Staff will be able to utilise the instructions below to read information on the IOSS screens. The information is inputted by the Information Officer at Head Office.

The Information Officer will be responsible for maintaining the Probation Child At Risk Register that will retain information provided by staff using the OASys R7 *and form P*.

### EXAMPLE 1

MODE:F ACTION:

PROBATION SERVICES  
INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM - CLIENT SEARCH

Scan Surname JONES  
Scan Forenames TINA@

	Client ID	Surname	Forenames	Date of Birth	Warnings:
01	0710890	JONES	TINA	01/08/1969	RA-N,
02	9804805	JONES	TINA JANE	31/10/1975	RA-H,RH,
03					
04					

In order to obtain further information type **DT**-(field no. of offender) at ACTION which will take you into the client details screen. (See example below).

### EXAMPLE 2

MODE:F ACTION:

PROBATION SERVICES  
INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM - CLIENT DETAILS

01	Client ID.	9804805	<b>WARNINGS</b>	<b>NOTES</b>			
02	Surname	JONES	Risk Assessment	HIGH			
03	Forenames	TINA JANE					
04	Title	MS					
05	Date Of Birth	31/10/1975	Current Age	23			
06	Gender	F	07 PNC Number				
08	File Location	L:KID Frm 28/09/1998	DFR. No.(1)	/ /			
			DFR. No.(2)				
09	Race W	Origin EN	10 First Language	ENG			
11	Addresses		<b>12 History/Warnings etc.</b>				
13	Alias(s)	N	14 Previous Name(s)	N			
15	Solicitor Name						
16	Solicitors Tel.						
17	Current Assignment(s)						
	Availability						
18	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun

This screen shows two fields **WARNINGS** and **NOTES** which are only consistent in cases where there are Child Protection issues. By typing the field number **12** - *History/Warnings etc.* IOSS will display a screen with additional information about the offender where the warning flag field number **20 C.A.R. in household** will be displayed along with the date when the offender was flagged (see example below).

### EXAMPLE 3

MODE:F ACTION: PROBATION SERVICES INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM - <u>CLIENT DETAILS</u>						
HISTORY						
01	Custody	N		02	Supervisory Ords	Y
03	Cso		N	04	Fine	N
05	Other	N		06	Suspended Sent.	N
07	Attendance Ctr.	N		08	Cond Discharge	N
09	Combination Order		N	10	Curfew Order	N
11	Care Order	N				
WARNINGS						
12	Violent	N		13	Problem Drinker	N
14	Drug User	N		15	Sex Offences	N
16	Mentally Unfit	N		17	Physically Unfit	N
18	Risk to Children	N		19	Child At Risk	N
20	C.A.R. in Hsehd		Y 25/11/1998	21	Risk to Children Offdr	N

The notebook entry will contain further information about the child or children that are at risk who are also recorded on IOSS and cross referenced against the offender, other children and any others whom the Service is involved with who are also in contact with the child(ren). To access the notebook entry by referring back to the header details, at ACTION: type NB which will display a screen with the content of the notebook (see example below)

### EXAMPLE 4

MODE:F ACTION: PROBATION SERVICES INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM - <u>CLIENT NOTES</u>						
	Surname	JONES				
	Forenames	TINA JANE				
01	CHILDREN ON CP REGISTER:	LIAM JONES	9805285		04/12/1998	
02		KIERAN JONES	9805286		04/12/1998	
03	FATHER: JEFFREY PAYNE	0713590			26/03/1999	

### Children's Details

As indicated earlier all children who are on the Children Services 'Child At Risk' register where the Service is in contact with the offender are recorded on IOSS and remain so until such time we are otherwise notified. Children recorded on IOSS also have a warning flag recorded against them to identify them as 'Children at Risk'. When searching for a child's details who are on the 'At Risk' register the initials CR will be displayed (see example below)

### EXAMPLE 5

```
MODE:F ACTION:
PROBATION SERVICES
INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM - CLIENT SEARCH

Scan Surname JONES
Scan Forenames LIAM@

Client ID      Surname      Forenames      Date of Birth  Warnings
01  9805285     JONES         LIAM           14/01/1995    CR,
02
```

Again in order to obtain further information it is important at **ACTION:** to type DT-(*field no. of child*) which will take you into the header details screen (see example 2 above). This screen also shows two fields WARNINGS and NOTES which again are only consistent in cases where there are Child Protection issues. By typing the field number 12 - *History/Warnings* etc. IOSS will display a screen with additional information about the child where the warning flag field number 19 Child at Risk will be displayed along with the date when the child was flagged (see example below)

### EXAMPLE 6

```
MODE:F ACTION:
PROBATION SERVICES
INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM - CLIENT DETAILS
HISTORY
01 Custody                N          02 Supervisory Ords      N
03 Cso                    N          04 Fine                   N
05 Other                  N          06 Suspended Sent.       N
07 Attendance Ctr.       N          08 Cond Discharge        N
09 Combination Order     N          10 Curfew Order          N
11 Care Order            N

WARNINGS
12 Violent                N          13 Problem Drinker      N
14 Drug User              N          15 Sex Offences         N
16 Mentally Unfit        N          17 Physically Unfit     N
18 Risk to Children      N          19 Child At Risk        Y 25/11/1998
20 C.A.R. in Hsehd       N          21 Risk to Children Offdr N
```

The notebook entry again will contain further information about any other children that are at risk and who the offender is and the relationship with

the child(ren). All persons recorded in the notebook are also recorded on IOSS and cross referenced. To access the notebook entry by referring back the header details, at **ACTION:** type **NB** which will display a screen with the content of the notebook (see example 4 above).

## **De-registration**

In order to comply with requirements of the Data Protection Act when children are removed from the local authority CP register or contact with the offender ceases, there is no reason why their details should be retained on IOSS. The following actions will therefore have been taken:

1. The register entries for all registered children will have been deleted.
2. The client details of the de-registered children will have been deleted.
3. The Warning flag will be removed from the Offenders History/Warning screen.
4. The Notebook entry of the relevant adult offender(s) will have the following entry:

***Children removed from LA CP register. Children's details removed from IOSS on dd/mm/yy and the case transferred to the history file or***

***Case terminated whilst Children subject to LA CP register. Children's details removed from IOSS on dd/mm/yy and the case transferred to the history file.***

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Framework for Management Reviews**

#### **What Was Our Involvement with This Child and Family?**

Construct a comprehensive chronology of involvement in contact with the child and the family over the period of time set out in the review's terms of reference. Briefly summarise decisions reached, the services offered and/or provided to the child(ren) and family, and other actions taken.

#### **Analysis of Involvement**

Consider the events that occurred, decisions made, and the actions taken or not. Where judgements were made or actions taken, which indicate that practice or management could be improved, try to get an understanding, not only of what happened, but why. Consider specifically:

- Were practitioners sensitive to the needs of children in their work, knowledgeable about potential indicators of abuse or neglect, and about what to do if they had concerns about a child?
  - Did the agency have in place policies and procedures for safeguarding children and acting on concerns about their welfare?
  - What were the key relevant points/opportunities for assessment and decision making in this case in relation to the child and the family? Do assessments and decisions appear to have been reached in an informed and professional way?
  - Did actions accord with assessments and decisions made? Were appropriate services offered/provided, or relevant enquiries made, in the light of circumstances?
  - Where relevant, were appropriate child protection or care plans in place, and the child protection and/or looked after reviewing processes complied with?
  - When, and in what way, were the child(ren)'s wishes and feelings ascertained and considered? Was this information recorded?
  - Was practice sensitive to the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the child and family?
  - Were senior managers, or other agencies and professionals, involved at points where they should have been?
- 
- Was the work in this case consistent with agency and LSCB policy and procedures for safeguarding children and wider professionals?

#### **What Do We Learn From This Case?**

Are there lessons from this case for the way in which this agency works to safeguard children and promote their welfare? Is there good practice to highlight, as well as ways in which practice can be improved?

Are there implications for ways of working; training (single and inter-agency); management and supervision; working in partnership with other agencies; resources?

#### **Recommendations for Action**

What action should be taken by whom and by when? What outcomes should these actions bring about, and how will the agency review whether they have been achieved?

## APPENDIX 6

### **Job Description for LSCB Member/Probation Representative (Area Manager Level)**

To be accountable to the Chief Officer:

- To work within the scope of the LSCB terms of reference as a member of the meeting, with shared responsibility with all other members for the fulfilment of the roles and responsibilities of the LSCB to ensure multi agency co-operation for the safe guarding of children.
- To ensure that the LSCB endorses the West Mercia Probation Board policies and procedures in relation to child protection and any future additions or alterations to those procedures.
- To promote the work of the probation service with respect to child protection
- To participate in the overview of all other agency policy and procedures in relation to child protection
- To take a lead role in ensuring that the links between LSCB and MAPPA are effective, have robust protocols and are understood and monitored effectively by the LSCB
- To ensure that the LSCB Training Sub-Committee provides relevant and quality training to probation staff
- To ensure that the LSCB work takes sufficient account of race, culture, ethnicity and language in its work and the promotion of child protection issues. Be active in the area of discrimination generally.
- To provide the LSCB with regular information and reports about the work of the probation service in child protection
- To be responsible for disseminating information from the LSCB to probation staff to ensure that any new information has an impact on practice or prompts a review of policy and/or procedures
- To ensure that lessons learnt from all Chapter 8 reviews are disseminated throughout the organisation.
- To provide a report of their work annually

## APPENDIX 7

This fax contains confidential information and is meant for the recipient only. If you have received it by mistake please telephone the Team Administrator on 01562 820071 and let us know. Thank you for your help



WEST MERCIA

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

To: **Child Protection Enquiries**  
**Social Services, Kidderminster**

Fax: **01905-768056**

From: **National Probation Service, Kidderminster**

Fax: **01562-862425**

Date:

Surname:

First Name (s):

Alias:

dob:

Address:

Names of children with whom above named has regular contact:

The above named is due to appear in Court shortly and the Probation service have been asked to prepare a pre sentence report

The above named is currently subject to supervision by the Probation Service and is due for review shortly

*Please could you answer the following questions and fax back this form as soon as possible. Thank you for your help.*

Is the above named now or on release likely to live with or have frequent contact with any child who is on the child protection register or is being looked after by the Local Authority?

Yes  No

Details

Are there any concerns in relation to children or the children named above

Yes  No

Details

