Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Group - Briefing for staff

The Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Group met on 12 October 2026.

This briefing provides an update on changes made to the Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures Resource

Pan-Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy & Procedures website survey 2026!



Thank you to everyone who completed the Pan Sussex Policies and Procedures Website Survey. The 47 responses show that the website remains a valued and widely used safeguarding resource across agencies, particularly for accessing procedures, policy updates, learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews and referral pathways. Encouragingly, 77% of respondents felt the policies and procedures mostly or completely meet their professional needs, with many highlighting the website's comprehensive content, reliable guidance and helpful briefings. Feedback also identified priorities for improvement, including increasing the use of visual and accessible resources. Overall satisfaction and recommendation scores were positive, confirming the website's important role in supporting safeguarding practice.

Child Victims of Modern Slavery and Trafficking

This policy provides frontline practitioners with guidance on recognising, responding to and supporting children who may be victims of modern slavery and trafficking, including children trafficked into, out of, or within the UK for purposes such as criminal, sexual or labour exploitation. It explains the indicators of trafficking, referral pathways, multi-agency safeguarding responsibilities and the protections available to children. Section 8 has been included to focus on planning for transitions into adulthood for young people involved in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Sharing Information About Others Connected to a Child

This policy has been updated to reflect Sarah's Law (the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme), which enables parents, carers and guardians to ask the police whether someone with access to a child has a record of child sexual offences, and

Clare's Law (the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme), which allows individuals or third parties to request information about a person's history of domestic abuse where there is a risk of harm. The inclusion of these schemes is intended to help frontline practitioners understand when disclosures may be appropriate, how they support the prevention of abuse, and the role agencies play in assessing risk and sharing information to safeguard children and families.

Information Sharing: Introduction & - Information Sharing Duty

These policies have been updated to reflect the statutory Information Sharing Duty introduced by the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026. The duty requires relevant agencies and practitioners to share information that they consider relevant to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of a child where doing so may assist another organisation in fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities, unless sharing the information would be more detrimental to the child than not sharing it. Amendments to the policies include strengthened expectations regarding proactive and timely information sharing, clarification of circumstances in which information must be shared without consent, guidance on sharing information about individuals connected to a child where relevant to their welfare, recognition of the new detriment exception, and updated arrangements for inter-agency and cross-boundary information sharing.

Allegations against People who Work with, Care for or Volunteer with Children

A new section on Personal Assistants and direct-payment arrangements has been added to address a gap in existing guidance and reflect the increasing use of direct payments and personal budgets to support children and young people.

The new section clarifies the responsibilities of Local Authorities to provide safer recruitment advice, ensure appropriate DBS checks are obtained where roles are eligible, and establish clear arrangements for responding to safeguarding concerns. It also makes clear that the absence of a conventional employer does not remove safeguarding responsibilities. Allegations or concerns about Personal Assistants, self-employed workers and other individuals who work directly with children must still be referred to the LADO where threshold criteria are met, helping to ensure that children are afforded the same level of protection regardless of how support is commissioned or delivered.

Children not Brought to Appointments or Meetings that Relate to their Welfare, Care or Health

The update to the procedure emphasises the importance of considering a child's missed appointments alongside a parent or carer's own pattern of non-attendance or disengagement from health, social care or support services. Practitioners should take a whole-family approach, looking at cumulative risk and whether parental self-neglect, unmet needs, poor health or disguised compliance may be affecting their ability to meet the child's welfare, health and care needs. This has been added to strengthen early identification of neglect and ensure that wider patterns of family non-engagement are recognised and responded to before risks to children escalate. Signposting to the **Sussex multi-agency procedures to support adults who self-neglect h**as also been added.

Disagreement by Children, Young People and their Families / Carers / Advocates

Section 4. Stage 3 – The Complaint and Appeal Panel, has been updated to specify that the time period for the Panel to be convened is now 25 working days (previously within 20 working days) of the receipt of the complainant's letter.

Working with Children and Families who Move Across Safeguarding Children Partnership Boundaries

Children who move between areas can become more vulnerable if information is not shared effectively or there is uncertainty about professional responsibilities. This procedure helps ensure that safeguarding concerns, assessments, plans, and services continue without delay, that agencies work together effectively, and that the child's welfare remains the paramount consideration at all times. This procedure was reviewed in October 2026 to ensure it remains up to date with legislation, statutory guidance, and current safeguarding practice.

Please contact mia.bryden@brighton-hove.gov.uk about any aspect of this briefing.