



National Probation Service
Yorkshire and Humberside
Region

~~~~~

**Safeguarding**  
**Children Policy**

~~~~~

1. **Introduction**

This policy document sets out how the Board, Managers and staff will fulfil their responsibilities under the terms of **The Children Act 2004**. The Act arose in part from Lord Laming's report following the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié and the Multi-Agency Inspectorate Report into Arrangements to Safeguard Children and places a duty on key persons and 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 Probation Service is listed in the Act as one of the agencies to whom this duty falls. Guidance documentation supporting the Act sets out how that duty should be met:

1. Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
2. A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children is available for all staff.
3. A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
4. Staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with or in contact with children and families.
5. Safe recruitment.
6. Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
7. Information sharing.

This policy document outlines how NPS Y & H will address these obligations in line with guidance issued by NPS through Probation Circulars.

2.1 **Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare**

Chief Officers and Senior Management Teams are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Assistant Chief Officers holding lead responsibility for safeguarding children will be accountable to the Probation Board for reporting the Service's work in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and for providing leadership for good practice. The Assistant Chief Officers will ensure that all relevant area policies and practice guidelines incorporate the responsibility to safeguard and to promote the welfare of children. The lead Officer will ensure that local senior managers work collaboratively

as members of their Local Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trusts. They will agree what action should be taken to ensure that every child has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and to minimise the risks of poor outcomes for children and young people, in addition to protecting children from maltreatment.

2.2 A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children

In practice, NPS responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people will be met by:

- the effective management of adult offenders to reduce the risk of harm they may present to children through thorough assessment, quality risk management planning and review, and the delivery of well targeted and quality interventions;
- where offenders are parents, significant adults or carers, delivery of services that address poor thinking skills, drugs and alcohol dependency and awareness of the impact of their offending on the child(ren) or young person;
- ensuring staff are equipped to recognise factors which pose a risk to children's safety and welfare,
- implementation of service procedures to protect children from harm through appropriate information sharing and collaborative multi-agency risk management e.g. through Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Safeguarding Children Procedures and Domestic Violence forums;
- collaborative work with the Prison Service through sentence planning and review
- seconding staff to work in youth offending teams (YOTs);
- providing a service to child victims of serious sexual or violent offences by the management of these offenders and the victim contact service.
- providing a service to the women victims of male perpetrators of domestic abuse participating in accredited domestic violence programmes, including having regard to the needs of any dependent children of the family.

Practice in this area will be governed by NPS practice guidelines and the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in the Local Authority areas. NPS Y & H will play a full part in the LSCBs through appropriate representation, regular attendance and contribution of resources.

2.3 A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

It is the responsibility of the NPS Y & H to satisfy itself that the organisation is fulfilling its legal responsibilities under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004.

Section 10 requires the Probation Service:

- to co-operate and make arrangements with Local Authorities and other relevant partners to improve children's well being. Other relevant partners with a statutory duty to co-operate include the Police, YOTs, Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts.
- to ensure that local policies should be informed by the views of children
- to contribute towards a pooled budget and the provision of services e.g. training

Section 11 places a duty on key persons and bodies (including the Probation Service) to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

NPS will ensure that local area staff who have contact with offenders:

- are able to identify and respond to issues of concern;
- understand their responsibility to raise concerns with a manager;
- are aware of the Assessment Framework and know how to refer a child about whom they have concerns to the Local Authority children's services for their locality;
- recognise the role they play when working with offenders that can improve their skills as parents and carers as well as reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Chief Officer with lead responsibility for safeguarding children to ensure that relevant policy and practice requirements are compliant with legislation, statutory guidance and LSCB procedures. In addition, he/she will report to the Probation Board on the key statutory requirements (as set out above) and performance at least annually and more frequently as required.

It is the responsibility of all other senior managers to ensure that implementation of this policy and practice requirements is comprehensive and consistent throughout all operational units for which they hold responsibility.

It is the responsibility of unit managers to ensure, as part of induction

and supervision, that staff are aware of and clear about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is also the responsibility of the unit manager to ensure, through supervision and appraisal, that these responsibilities are carried out in an appropriate and effective manner.

It is the responsibility of every employee to ensure they carry out their responsibilities effectively in line with this policy and associated practice requirements.

The Probation Board will ensure that all complaints received about any part of the safeguarding responsibilities will be dealt with in line with the current complaints procedure. Any allegation of improper professional conduct will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

2.4 Training

NPS will provide training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff who come into contact with children through their work with offenders or victims.

The Area training plan will complement training delivered through LSCB arrangements and be available for all staff.

Probation staff will contribute to, and participate in, all relevant inter-agency training commissioned by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Local senior managers will ensure staff access training relevant to their role and training needs and review this annually as part of the appraisal process.

2.5 Safe recruitment

NPS will follow the procedures and protocols for the vetting of staff set out in Probation Circular 69/2003. The Probation Circular explicitly states that part of the purpose of vetting staff working within the National Probation Service is to “protect children and other vulnerable people to whom NPS staff are delivering services”.

All staff in established posts may be subject to enhanced CRB checks in line with service requirements and legislation.

2.6 Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Staff within the NPS Y & H will work with staff from other agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (2000),

UNCLASSIFIED

guidance in respect of the *Common Assessment Framework* and Local Safeguarding Children Board Guidance.

NPS Y & H staff will also work closely with other organisations in line with the Public Protection Framework which includes: Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA); Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC for DV cases); Prolific and Other Priority Offenders (PPOs); Mental Health cases; etc

Probation staff will ensure that where an adult offender is assessed as presenting a risk of harm to children through the Offender Assessment System (OASys), the risk management, sentence and review plans will contain specific objectives to outline the strategy and intervention planned to manage and reduce this risk of harm. All such cases will receive regular management oversight and review.

Probation staff, when preparing a sentence plan, will need to consider how planned interventions might impact on parental responsibilities and whether the planned interventions could contribute to improved outcomes for children known to be in an existing relationship with the offender.

Probation staff will work within agency protocols to safely and appropriately share information across key agencies that will promote the safety and welfare of the child. NPS Y & H will support the use of the Common Assessment Framework.

Probation staff will not be responsible for making an assessment of a child (under age 18), except where that member of staff is seconded to the Youth Offending Team.

While NPS Y & H is primarily responsible for working with adult offenders, it will give careful consideration to provision and services that may also impact on or involve children, such as:

- reception areas,
- staff making home visits,
- potential for working with child victims through the victim contact service
- planning and delivery of offender programmes that might demand specific attention to the safeguarding of children, such as working with domestic violence or sex offender perpetrators.

Where NPS Y & H works directly with 16-17 year olds in delivering unpaid work requirements, additional risk assessment procedures will apply.

Where statutory contact is made with children who have been victims of sexual or violent offences (where the offender is sentenced to 12 months or more in custody), victim workers will advise child victims and/or their families of local resources available to them.

2.7 Information sharing

Staff within NPS Y & H have a duty to share information in order to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. Staff will adhere to the MAPPA guidance issued in PC54/2004 which outlines both the duty to share information across agencies to improve public protection and the process by which this will be undertaken.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of a potential risk of harm to a child through their supervision of an adult offender, including where there is a change in circumstances, they will ensure that the child's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through the sharing of information with the relevant Children's Services Authority. The Assistant Chief Officer with lead responsibility for Safeguarding will ensure NPS Y & H has in place the necessary protocols to support the sharing of information with the LSCB members to support the safeguarding of children. Practice requirements will clearly explain who should be contacted and the required level of management oversight where a child has been assessed at risk of harm.

3. Serious Case Reviews

When a child dies, and abuse or neglect are known or suspected to be a factor in the death, the LSCB will conduct a Serious Case Review which will investigate the involvement of organisations and professionals with the child and family.

NPS Y & H will play its full part in Serious Case Reviews being completed. Where there has been Probation involvement, the Assistant Chief Officer (or his/her nominee) will be responsible for ensuring that LSCB requirements are met in the conduct of the Review. NPS Y & H will receive a copy of any review of cases where there has been Probation involvement and will implement any relevant LSCB recommendations from the resultant Action Plan.

Where a Serious Further Offence (SFO) has occurred and the screening/review document identifies issues of relevance to child protection, this will be shared by the relevant senior manager with the LSCB chair.

4. Resources

Safeguarding children is a core activity for NPS Y & H and services will be delivered within allocated resources. The Area will need to provide resources at a local level for:

- training programmes
- contributions to Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

Detailed consideration will be given as to how NPS Y & H can best contribute resources to LSCBs, taking into account the relative size of the Area in comparison with other partners. In-kind contributions will be considered wherever they can be demonstrated to support the work of LSCBs.

5. Equality Impact Issues

This policy (and associated practice guidelines) are subject to assessment and consultation under the terms of the Equality Impact Scheme. In addition, training and practice will be informed by research evidence on the impact of abuse and neglect on children, including for those from different racial and ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities.

6. Review and Amendment

This policy document will be subject to review no later than 3 years from the date of approval, i.e. May 2009. The review timetable will be subject to any legislative changes and Home Office guidance.

Probation Area

West Yorkshire
South Yorkshire
North Yorkshire

Humberside

ACO Policy Lead

Diana Johnson
Shelley Scott
Lynda Marginson (delegated to John Bourton SPO)
Angela Montgomery

Agreed by:

**Sue Hall
CPO**

West Yorkshire

**Heather Harker
CPO**

South Yorkshire

**Roz Brown
CPO**

North Yorkshire

**Steve Hemming
CPO**

Humberside