

Safeguarding children during the Coronavirus

During this period of social distancing, Camden Council's Children's Safeguarding and Social Work service is dedicated to providing ongoing support to the children, young people and families it works with. This document outlines how we have changed the way we usually do things so that we can continue to safeguard children and young people in the borough.

Camden has robust plans in place across the partnership to keep vital services running during this period. Alongside our partners in Health, Police, Schools and voluntary/ community services, we have reorganised our workforce in accordance to national guidance to ensure we remain resilient and flexible to safeguard and support children and their families.

Keeping in touch by phone and /or video conversations

We know that face to face interaction is the best way to communicate with each other however, while we are unable to do this, Camden Children's Safeguarding and Social Work are keeping in touch with children and their families by text, email and phone and video conversations. Online meetings enable us to continue to communicate with families and the agencies that are working with them. The frequency of contact with each child, parent and/or carer will vary depending on the level of support needed.

We are working hard to make sure that the children's social work service is progressing plans for families by regularly reviewing each child's case. We do this by reflecting on the lived experience of the child and their family's personal circumstances. If further support is needed, a multi-agency bespoke safety plan is developed for the child and the family.

Visits to families/ carers

In most cases, social work visits to children and families are taking place virtually. If deemed necessary due to concerns, a face to face visit is carried out to meet with the family and address the risk and offer support.

Virtual visits are taking place via phone or video conversations with all members of the family at the following frequency:

- **Child In Need** - every month
- **Child Protection** - every 10 – 15 working days
- **Looked After Children** – every 4-6 weeks

Child Protection Case Conferences

Child Protection Case Conferences are currently being held virtually. The Child Protection Officer who chairs the case conference, speaks with the family and all agencies involved. Based on each case, this sometimes takes place over phone individually and/or by conference calls with everyone involved in the Child Protection Plan. The Case Conference usually takes place over the course of 1-2 days and the Child Protection Officer keeps the family updated on the outcome of the decisions and progression of the Child Protection Plan.

Core Groups meetings are held virtually but continue to be held at the same regular frequency. They are chaired by the child's allocated social worker. The meetings are attended by the family and the Core Group of agencies that are supporting them.

Child in Need Meetings

Child in Need Meetings are held virtually and chaired either by a Senior Practitioner from the Social Work Service or by a Child Protection Officer. They are organised through a series of phone discussions with professionals and the family over the course of 1-2 days, or through a Conference call where professionals and families can be involved in the discussion to review the plan.

Looked After Children Reviews

Looked After Children Reviews continue to be held within statutory timescales through a series of phone and/or conference calls, and chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer. This includes discussions with the child who is being Looked After. As always, the Independent Reviewing Officer shares decisions with the young person, family members, carers, professional network, professional network.

Who to contact?

If you're worried about a child or young person, please find contact details below.

9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday:

- **Children and Families Contact Service Telephone:** 0207 974 3317
- **Children and Families Contact Service email:** LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk

- For specific enquiries to **Brief Intervention Team** please contact:
BIT Duty: 020 7974 2703

- For specific enquiries to **Family Intervention Team** please contact
FIT Duty: 0207 974 4093 / 2826

- For specific enquiries to **Looked After Children** please contact:
LAC Duty: 020 7974 7217 / 7218

- For **Children and Young People Disability Service** please contact:
CYPDS - 020 7974 4867

- For the Camden Children's **LADO / Principal Social Worker** please contact:
0207 974 3369

Out of hours:

Contact Camden number for Camden Council Services:
0207 974 4444.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm call the police on 999.