



One minute guide

Duty and Advice Team

No. 24, January 2025

What is the Duty and Advice Team?

The Duty and Advice Team is based in Children's Social Work Service and is part of the Leeds Front Door. The team is made up of social workers and social work team managers and includes the [Children's Emergency Duty Team](#).

Social Workers take calls from practitioners about safeguarding concerns and discuss with them whether a contact should be taken and if **a referral to Children's Social Work Service is appropriate**.

Where practitioners are in need of general safeguarding advice, they are advised to speak to safeguarding leads or line managers in their own agencies. Schools may also consider seeking advice from the [Education Safeguarding Team](#).

How does the team work?

The Duty and Advice social workers are trained and skilled in analysing information to decide the best way forward to support the child and family. They use the principles of [Rethink Formulation](#) as part of [Leeds Practice Model](#) to analyse information and inform decision making. This means that the social worker will ask the referrer a number of questions to understand the child and family's current circumstances, needs and risks.

It is the basis of effective partnership working with families that practitioners seek consent from parents/ carers before ringing Duty and Advice unless in exceptional circumstances, where doing so would place a child at risk of significant harm.

After the telephone conversation, practitioners will need to follow up in writing within 24 hours. In exceptional circumstances, certain agencies who work outside standard working hours, can make contact via email, however if an urgent response is needed then either the Emergency Duty team or the Police should be contacted.

What happens when a contact is taken?

Following a conversation with practitioners, the social worker will take a contact and may make further enquires to establish which service is most appropriate for the child. The contact may be sent as a referral to a social work cluster team if there is information to suggest that the child is at risk of significant harm ([Children Act 1989, section 47](#)), or whose health and development is at risk of impairment ([section 17](#)).

Where the social worker decides that social work involvement is not needed at this time, they may recommend that early help support is more appropriate. If this is the case they will forward the contact to a suitable practitioner or agency for early help work to be carried out.

The social worker will notify the referrer of the outcome of the contact.

What should members of the public do when they have safeguarding concerns?

Where members of the public have safeguarding concerns they should contact the Council's Contact Centre, where Customer Service Officers are trained in receiving contacts in relation to children. They will take calls and pass on relevant information to team managers in the Duty and Advice Team. This ensures management oversight of all children's contacts taken from the public.

If appropriate, the manager will pass the child's contact onto a social worker within the team to make enquiries. The decision making pathway is the same as for contacts received from practitioners.

Key contacts

Practitioners can contact Duty and Advice on tel: 0113 37 60336, Option 4.

Out of hours, practitioners can contact the out of hours [Children's Emergency Duty Team](#), tel: 0113 53 50600.

Members of the public should ring the Contact Centre on tel: 0113 2224403 and out of hours.

Where a practitioner or member of the public believes that a child or young person is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm, they should ring 999 and ask for the Police.