



# Child Abuse Policy

## Policy Title

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## Section 1 – Policy Intentions

It is the policy of Gloucestershire Constabulary to work together with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board and other partner agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Gloucestershire Constabulary also recognises that the police are responsible for carrying out completely and exclusively any criminal investigation in a case of suspected injury or harm to a child or other vulnerable person.

We recognise that the investigation of crimes against children is as important as any other serious investigation. We shall treat it as such and deploy a dedicated team of officers committed to the investigation of child abuse.

## Section 1 – Policy wording -

### Duty to Safeguard Children

Gloucestershire Constabulary has a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that our functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

It is therefore the responsibility of all staff in Gloucestershire Constabulary irrespective of role, to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This will include dealing with or reporting any concerns identified or suspected in respect of a child's welfare.

The responsibility to investigate suspected Child Abuse is shared between the Protective Services Child Abuse Investigators within the Public Protection Bureau Investigations Team and CID investigators.

A child is defined by sec 105 of the Children's Act 1989 as; 'anyone who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989'. Under some legislation the age is lower, but unless relevant legislation indicates otherwise, a child is anyone under the age of 18.

'Child abuse' is a generic term encompassing all situations of ill treatment of children including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.



# Child Abuse Policy

The Constabulary has a local Procedure document and an Information & Guidance document to assist all staff in identifying and dealing with allegations of abuse. The document/s are available in Section 2. The Authorised Professional Practice (APP) from the College of Policing is also available [here](#).

We shall ensure that officers investigating child abuse are sufficiently trained to do so and thereby make good decisions to keep children safe from harm.

Paramount to all interaction with children is the need to **listen to them**.

Too often their views and opinions are overlooked even though the decisions we take can immediately turn their lives upside down and have a lasting effect on their childhood and subsequent adulthood.

Child Abuse can be a singular act, but it is often a pattern of abusive behaviour linked to the child's familial circumstances, living environment and up-bringing. It takes all forms and has a devastating impact on the child, whose life will be shaped by these events. Family members and communities are also affected and it is our policy to work in partnership with other agencies to;

- Prevent harm to children and protect them from the likelihood of harm.
- Adopt a pro-active and preventative multi-agency approach by identifying early signs that may be predictive of a child being at risk of harm.
- Fully investigate criminal offences and hold offenders to account through the criminal justice system.
- Share information, participate in multi-agency decision making regarding children to provide the best outcome for them.

## Section 2 – Procedural guides

<http://insight.glospolice.gov.uk/Police/Pages/PPB/Child-Protection/Default.aspx>

## Section 3 - Relevant Legislation: (*Human rights/diversity/Health & Safety/any other specifics*)

Children Protection Act 1989 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

GSCB (Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board) - <http://www.gscb.org.uk/article/111301/Home-Page>

Human Rights Act - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

## Section 4 - Related References:

<http://insight.glospolice.gov.uk/Police/Pages/PPB/Child-Protection/Default.aspx>



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## Section 5 – Identification, Monitoring and Review:

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| Document Title: POLICY / PROCEDURAL                                                                      |                            |                                                                       |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Child Abuse Policy                                                                                       |                            |                                                                       |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Type                                                                                                     |                            | URN                                                                   | Strategic Board                  | Author/Reviewer                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Policy                                                                                                   |                            | TBC                                                                   | PPB Service delivery Board - ACC | Mark Chicken                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Version                                                                                                  | Date/Name                  | Changes (ensure public copy amended and uploaded to external website) |                                  | Complied with Policy Guidance<br>✓                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1.0                                                                                                      | 11/6/2015                  | New policy written                                                    |                                  | ✓                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1.1                                                                                                      | 30/9/2015<br>Tracy Summers | EIA hyper link added                                                  |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| EIA                                                                                                      |                            | EIA Sign Off                                                          |                                  | EIA Review                                                                                                                                                                          |
| HIGH                                                                                                     |                            |                                                                       |                                  | <a href="K:\Waterwells\Equality Impact Assessment\Child Abuse Investigation EIA- Jul 12.doc">K:\Waterwells\Equality Impact Assessment\Child Abuse Investigation EIA- Jul 12.doc</a> |
| SIA                                                                                                      |                            | SIA Sign Off                                                          |                                  | SIA Review                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                                                                                          |                            | TBC                                                                   |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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Previous policies can be found with the Continuous Improvement Team.