



What to expect: Child Protection Enquiries



A Child Protection Enquiry (sometimes called a Section 47 Enquiry) happens when professionals are worried that a child's health, safety, or development may be seriously affected. The purpose is to understand concerns, make sure children are safe, and identify any support a family may need.

In Tameside, we approach this work with compassion, curiosity, collaboration, courage and conversation.



The Process

The process usually begins when information is shared with Children's Services, through a referral. Wherever possible, we will contact you early so your views can be heard.

If professionals are concerned, a strategy discussion will take place. This is a meeting between professionals (such as social workers, police, health and education) to discuss concerns and decide whether a Child Protection Enquiry is needed.

The Child Protection Enquiry is carried out by a team of professionals. A social worker will speak with you and your child, and may talk to other people who know your family to build a full picture. Children are usually spoken to on their own so they can share their thoughts and feelings openly.

After the enquiry, we will explain what has been decided. This may include:

- No further action if concerns are not confirmed
- Extra support through a Family Help Plan
- An Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)

An Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) brings together professionals who know your child and family in a meeting to share information and build a full picture of your child's situation. As a parent or carer, you will usually be invited and encouraged to attend.

The meeting will decide:

- whether your child is at risk of significant harm ('Significant harm' is a term professionals use when they are concerned that a child's health, safety, or development could be seriously affected. When professionals use this term, they consider how a child is doing compared to what would usually be expected for a child of a similar age.)
- whether a Child Protection Plan is needed to help keep them safe. This will outline what needs to change, what support will be provided, and what actions professionals and family members will take to improve your child's safety and wellbeing.

The aim is to work with you, focusing on your child's needs, strengths within your family, and the support that will help your child to be safe and thrive

Support for You and Your Family

We understand this can be a stressful time. We will work with you to identify support that may help, including services from Family Help, health, education, or community organisations.

We want to work alongside you, build on your family's strengths, and ensure children are safe, supported and able to thrive.

