

## S47 Enquiries:

### Key Considerations

S47 Enquiries commence once a strategy discussion/meeting decides that the evidence indicates such enquiries are necessary.

### Task

The purpose of S47 enquiries is to establish whether a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and requires intervention to safeguard and promote their wellbeing.

S47 enquiries are intended to:

Gather information.

Determine the best interests of the child and how to protect them from actual or likely significant harm.

Inform any subsequent care and support plan.

Consider the potential needs of any siblings, children or adults at risk within the household of the child in question or in contact with an alleged abuser.

Inform decisions taken by both the police and social services about legal proceedings, whether criminal, civil or both.

# Child Care Assessment Team

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## Significant Harm

Harm is defined as:

Ill-treatment this includes sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and psychological abuse. The impairment of physical or mental health. Intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development



## Responding to a report raising concerns

The local authority has a duty to respond to a report about a child at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. The relevant social services team must decide and record the next actions within one working day. In some circumstances, immediate action may be required. If the local authority has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of harm they should convene a strategy discussion/meeting to determine whether S47 enquiries should be initiated. The discussion/meeting should take place within one working day. In some cases, a single strategy discussion/meeting may be all that is required. However, families and their situations are complex; therefore, further strategy discussions/meetings can be useful. If concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continued risk of significant harm a child protection conference should be convened by social services within 15 working days.

## The role of the Social Worker

Social services have lead responsibility for the enquiries. The social worker who leads the enquiries must be qualified and have completed the relevant training.

Other practitioners such as the police, health, education and other relevant partners have a duty to co-operate and help social services undertake their enquiries.

The overall remit for the social worker is to focus on the well-being and safety of the child and to identify actual and potential risk of significant harm.



# “Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”

## Information gathering from parents

S47 enquiries require practitioners to establish whether the child/ren are at risk of significant harm because of the parenting capacity of their parent/s or carer/s and why this might be the case.

## Information gathering from children

The voice of the child is central to understanding the abuse, neglect or harm that the child has or is experiencing. It is important, therefore that their lived experiences, wishes and feelings are given due consideration.

## Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019

More detailed information can be found here: <https://www.safeguarding.wales/>