

INTRODUCTION

The contents of this publication represent revised local inter-agency child protection procedures, previously published in 2001. In consigning your 2001 procedures to the archives, you are acknowledging the wider focus that is now required in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

These requirements, located in Every Child Matters and reinforced by the Children Act 2004, have in some respects been generated by Lord Laming's critical review of the tragic circumstances surrounding the life and death of Victoria Climbié. In other respects they reflect the detail of revised statutory guidance, "Working Together" (2006), in updating lessons from experience and in refining better-informed practice.

In seeking better outcomes for all children, the focus widens beyond that narrow and sometimes unhelpful prospect of "child protection". The Safeguarding Children Board by definition reflects this wider emphasis and recognises the benefits of early intervention in avoiding compulsory intervention into family life at a later stage. It is built upon a strong sense of accountability being established throughout organisations and recognition that certain populations of children are potentially more vulnerable than others.

This edition therefore incorporates the changes brought about by new guidance. It significantly affects arrangements for **protecting children from maltreatment** and in particular:

- key definitions and concepts
- scope of contributing organisations and networks
- standards around assessments and timescales
- ways in which allegations against people working with children are managed
- future arrangements for reviewing child deaths.

As always, the effectiveness of local arrangements relies heavily upon the contribution of all agencies and individual professionals in providing appropriate support and services to all children, young people and their families.