

Parent/Carer Information Leaflet

Child Protection Medical Examinations



*Best Care
Healthy Communities*

This information leaflet will explain the Child Protection Medical Examination process for parents.

When there are any concerns raised about a child's safety, social workers and doctors always follow a standard process. The professionals involved in child protection examinations have specific training for this and your child will be seen by a specialist children's doctor (Paediatrician) who is used to examining children.

Please ask questions if there is anything you don't understand. The team realise that parents may find this process upsetting but please be assured we will always act in the best interests of the child.

1. Consent

Firstly, an adult with parental responsibility will be asked to give consent (permission) for the examination by the doctor. In some instances, older children (secondary school age) who fully understand what is involved may be able to give consent themselves. Ideally, consent will be confirmed by signing the consent form. However verbal consent can be given to the doctor over the phone in certain circumstances.

If you or your child do not give consent to the examination but the doctor, social worker or police feel an examination may be in your child's best interest, they will discuss this further with you. If they are concerned and do feel an examination is necessary and needed to ensure your child's safety, they may seek a Court Order. If approved, a Court Order would give the doctor permission to speak to, or medically examine your child, without parental consent.

2. Child Protection Medical Examination

Firstly, the specialist children's doctor (Paediatrician) will talk to you, your child and your social worker about any concerns that have been raised and will make a written record of these.

The doctor will also ask for some general medical information about your child including:

- previous illnesses, regular medication and any allergies
- your child's birth history
- vaccinations given
- your child's development and their progress at nursery/school
- family history of any illnesses
- who lives at home with your child.

The doctor will then measure your child's height, weight and carry out a general medical examination, for example listen to their heart and lungs. The doctor will also carry out a detailed 'head to toe' examination. If there are any injuries or marks seen, the doctor will carefully measure these and draw them in the child's medical notes. This detailed examination can take quite a long time but it is important for the doctor to make an accurate record of any injuries/marks.

After the examination is finished, the doctor will explain their initial findings to you, the social worker and your child, depending on their understanding.

The doctor will then need to complete a written detailed report for the professionals involved; your GP, the social worker, the police (if involved) and sometimes the school nurse or health visitor. This written report is detailed and may take some time to be completed. This child protection report and the clinical notes may be used as evidence in Court if necessary.

3. Medical Photography

In some cases, the doctor will request that photographs are taken of injuries/marks seen on the examination and the doctor will discuss this with you if they feel photographs are needed. The photographs will be taken by the Medical Photography Department, based at a separate centre, and the images will be stored securely

4. Further Tests (x-rays and blood tests)

Sometimes the doctor may need to arrange other tests, for instance blood tests or x-rays and this will always be discussed with you if these are needed.

5. Sharing relevant information, reviewing cases and storing information

The information is shared with the social worker and the Police (if they are involved) in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Specialist children's doctors from our Trust routinely review cases at local child protection review meetings. This is to ensure our doctors are managing cases appropriately, and in a standard and consistent way. All information regarding your child will be stored securely and following national data protection legislation (General Data Protection Regulation GDPR 2018).