

Policy Briefing

WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT safeguarding children board

Aiming High for the Disabled Child: Safeguarding Resource

Disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse or neglect than non-disabled children. This resource for practitioners and Safeguarding Children Boards has been commissioned by the DfES from the Council for Disabled Children. Although specifically intended to help those with planning responsibility for disabled children understand their particular needs and consider how best to safeguard and promote their welfare., the content of the document is equally relevant to practitioners

It sets out guidelines for LSCBs and for individual practitioners involved in safeguarding processes. It also highlights issues relating to communicating with disabled children and provides information about resources and about training.

Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out how individuals and organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. There is specific guidance in part 2, section 11.28 on safeguarding disabled children.

Key issues:

The resource document includes guidance for front-line professionals on safeguarding the disabled child, particularly in relation to issues such as initial contact and referral, S47 enquiries and Initial and Core Assessments.

In addition, there is a useful section on communicating with the disabled child, specifically within a safeguarding context.

The document also sets out the requirements for an effective system to safeguard disabled children, as follows:

- ❖ Clarity of Responsibility – many Local Authorities have created specialist teams to work with disabled children and their families. It must be very clear whether such teams carry responsibility for safeguarding, or whether these responsibilities are carried by a separate safeguarding team. Both models have strengths and pitfalls, discussed in the document.
- ❖ Initial Contact – staff who receive referrals must be aware of the specific safeguarding needs of disabled children, enabling them to effectively differentiate at the point of referral, between a child in need and a child who may be at risk of significant harm.
- ❖ Professionals who safeguard children should receive specific training on safeguarding the disabled child

The full resource document can be obtained at
www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice

Further information can be obtained from the Wakefield and District Safeguarding Children Board on 01924 302625 or wdsqb@wakefield.gov.uk