

Outline current legislation guidelines



The UK government provides guidelines to organisations and individuals in England and Wales to inform them about how legislation enacted in Parliament should be interpreted and applied. Policy is the term used to describe as a principle or rule used to inform decision making within organisations, so that they are able to achieve a rational or desirable outcome. Policy differs from legislation as it guides actions, but cannot compel or prohibit behaviours. A procedure is a document written to support a policy principle or rule.

A Procedure is designed to establish corporate accountability for implementation of a policy by describing the set of actions that have to be executed and by whom within an organization in relation to it. Practitioners working with children do so within a complex framework of both national legislation and guidance, and local policy and procedure, directed at safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. For practitioners to achieve the best outcomes for children it is essential that they are familiar with the legislative and policy framework within which work.

In terms of current legislation and policy safeguarding the welfare of children and young people is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment preventing impairment of children's health or development ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. Child protection is an aspect of safeguarding children's welfare and refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Children Act (1989) The Children Act (1989) charged local authorities with duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, to work in partnership with parents and to provide " services for children in need, their families and 17). The Act also imposed upon local authorities a " duty to investigate if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm" (section 47).

The Children Act (1989) requires courts to make the welfare of the child the paramount consideration in any judgments made. It also introduced the principle that delays in court proceedings are harmful to the child. The Act articulated the principle that parents have responsibilities for their children not right over them. Education Act (2002) The Education Act (2) included a provision (section 15 requiring school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Laming Report (2003) The Laming Report arose from the inquiry into the murder of child abuse victim Victoria Climbié. In his report Lord Laming made a total of 108 recommendations for the overhaul of child protection in England and Wales. Key recommendations of the Laming report included: The creation of a children and families board chaired by a senior government minister, to coordinate policies and initiatives, that have a bearing on the wellbeing of children and families.

A national agency for children and families, led by a children's commissioner, should be established to ensure local services meet national standards for

child protection and implement reforms. The report directed that Safeguarding Boards for children and families should be established by councils, with members drawn from social services, education, housing, the NHS, the police and probation services. The boards should appoint a local director of children and family services to monitor effective interagency working on child welfare and protection.

The creation of a national children's database that keeps a record of every contact a child has with a member of staff from the police, health and local authorities. Every Child Matters (ECM) (2003) The I-JK government responded to the Laming Report with the Every Child Matter (ECM) green paper launched in 2003. ECM covers children and young adults up to the age of 19, or for those with disabilities up to the age of 24..

Its main aims are for every child, irrespective of their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to: Be healthy Stay safe Enjoy and achieve Make a positive contribution Achieve economic well-being All childcare settings are required to demonstrate that are promoting the 5 (SHEEP) principles of ECM. Each of these themes has a detailed framework attached whose outcomes require multi-agency partnerships working together to achieve.