

CONTACT NUMBERS

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| Warrington Safeguarding Children Board Policy & Practice Manager | 01925 457075 |
| Service Reception Team Poll Tax House, Ryland Street Warrington | 01925 444239 |
| Out of Hours Service | 01925 444400 |
| Principal Officer (Safeguarding Children) | 01925 457013 |
| Children's Safeguarding Unit | 01925 457016 |
| Warrington Police Station | 01925 652222 |
| Police Public Protection Unit | 01244 614878 |
| Designated Nurse - Safeguarding Children | 01925 643113 |
| Designated Doctor - Safeguarding Children | 01925 405712 |
| Consultant Paediatrician or Senior Registrar | 01925 635911 |
| Senior Education Welfare Officer | 01925 442928 |
| Senior Probation Officer | 01925 650613 |

For further information visit our website www.safeguardingwarringtonchildren.org.uk

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Warrington Safeguarding Children Board



VIDEO INTERVIEWING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This guide is intended to help parents and carers to understand why, how, where and when video interviews are undertaken

Video interviewing children and young people

The use of video interviewing means that the child or young person only needs to give the detail of their allegation once. In legal terms this is called “the evidence in chief.”

Specially trained social workers and police officers (who do not wear uniforms) only undertake video interviews.

A video interview is undertaken as part of an evidence gathering exercise and forms the most important part of the police’s criminal case. It is not intended to be a form of therapy, but such help will be offered once the investigation is complete

Once a child or young person under the age of 18 alleges an incident of sexual abuse, an investigation begins (see the leaflet, What Happens When Children’s Social Care Receive Allegations of Child Abuse). Allegations of sexual abuse are generally investigated jointly by the police and social care and will probably include a video interview. This is usually a one off interview where as much information as possible is gained from the child. By using a video it prevents the child from having to repeatedly talk about the events which have taken place.

Children under 14 years who disclose physical abuse may also be video interviewed.

What the child or young person says during the video interview will form his or her evidence to the police. (Adults would do this by making a statement.)

The interview is conducted at a specially equipped house in Warrington and with the full consent of the child and a person with parental responsibility for the child. If consent were refused legal advice would be sought.

You can go with the child and watch the interview as it takes place on a separate television in another room.

The Police and Children’s Social Care are then able to decide how to act on the basis of what the child has said during the video interview. If the case proceeds to a criminal court, the video will be played and will be the child’s evidence. The child must be available to answer any questions the court may want to ask. This is done via a video link so that the child never sets foot in the main courtroom and, as such, does not have to see the alleged offender/ abuser.

If a child or young person is needed in Court they will be supported via the Children’s Witness Support Service.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE VIDEOTAPES AFTER THE INVESTIGATION IS CONCLUDED?

The videotapes are the property of the police and are kept in secure cupboards at the police station, and have to be kept for a certain amount of time by law.

No one else can get access to the videotapes unless specific permission is granted.

If your child is required to have a medical or be interviewed on video, please do not be afraid to ask questions about the process. It is important that you are fully informed and comfortable, this will also help your child feel safe and able to tell what has happened to him/her.