



Good Practice Guide for Interpreting in Safeguarding Meetings/Visits

Safeguarding adults in need of care and support and safeguarding children at risk of significant harm requires essential skills and understanding from professionals including the interpreting service.

This guide is designed to help support you in your role as an interpreter in Derby or when you are booking interpreters. This is a stressful area of work and it is important that you feel informed about your task. You need to know about the nature of the agency involvement as well as the situation for the family.

Interpreters

We expect you to meet your agreement with your agency. This guidance compliments Derby City Council's [Accessible Communications Protocol](#).

In line with your contract as an interpreter for your interpretation and translation agency, Derby Safeguarding Children Board also has expectations that you will:

- Interpret truthfully and faithfully to the best of your ability without anything being omitted or added.
- Have received brief information about the type of meeting and the family situation before interpreting begins. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson or the main professional to ensure that you are clear about the purpose of the meeting or the visit.
- Be competent at interpreting the language that the family understands.
- Show that you are impartial, confidential and respectful at all times.

- Be mindful of the safety of children and vulnerable adults. Any concerns about anyone's safety, including your own, must be communicated to the Chairperson or main professional. If the concern arises after the meeting you must inform your agency or if there is immediate danger, the police.
- Complete the training as required by your agency. You may also want to look at the Derby Safeguarding Children website www.derbyscb.org.uk . On the site there is a free e-learning course, 'An Introduction to Safeguarding' which you are welcome to complete. If you also decide to attend the Level 2/3 course 'Everybody's Business', 'Domestic Abuse' and Safeguarding BME and New Community Children' you will not be charged for these courses.
- Respond to any concerns about an unresolved safeguarding issue by referring to the DSCBs [Escalation Policy](#).

Agencies booking interpreters

- If the family's first language is not English and even if they appear reasonably fluent, the offer of an interpreter should be made. It is essential that all issues are understood and fully explained. If an interpreter is not used the reasons should be clearly recorded.
- Interpreters used for child protection work should have been subject to references and DBS checks and a written agreement regarding confidentiality. Whenever possible they should be used to interpret their own first language and have received training in child protection issues.
- Consider the need for an interpreter for the children as well as for the parent/s.
- You must allow time before the start of the meeting/visit to give a brief explanation of the situation and give the interpreter an opportunity to ask questions.

- You must specify if the interpreter is required to translate everything that is said or if it is possible to summarise.
- You should clarify that the interpreter is prepared to translate the exact words that are likely to be used - especially critical in the case of sexual abuse.
- Ask if the interpreter will explain any cultural issues that might have been overlooked (usually at the end of the interview, unless any issue is impeding the interview).
- If you know that the interview is going to be particularly stressful, arrange a code word to enable the meeting to end.
- Make sure that you have an opportunity to talk with the interpreter following the meeting to allow for clarification or debriefing.
- If any member of staff/agency has a concern about the practice of the interpreter they must follow this up. If the concern relates to the safety of a child during the interpreting process, they should consider the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) process which deals with allegations against members of staff. If the issue relates to fitness to practice, they should contact the agency and or the commissioning team.
- Read this document alongside the Derby City Council's [Accessible Communication Protocol](#) for all interpreting work including interpreting and communication services provided for communicating with disabled people.

Types of Safeguarding Children Meetings

Team around the Family (TAF) meetings and Children in Need (CIN) Review meetings may take place in a number of settings around the city including area offices, schools, homes and nurseries. These are 'voluntary' meetings meaning that parents are involved on a voluntary basis. The meeting's chairperson will take the notes for and lead the meeting.

Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups are meetings that are legally required meaning that parents are expected to cooperate. Child Protection Plans are made when there are concerns that children are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm on an ongoing basis.

Home Visits fall into two categories – announced and unannounced. If there are concerns about children it is usual that the worker has an opportunity to see the child/ren on their own and also see where the children sleep. You can find out more about key safeguarding issues that practitioner's may need to consider when carrying out home visits in the [Derby and Derbyshire Multi Agency Guidance on Home Visits](#).

Contact Visits are held when a child is living separately from their parent/s. Workers are expected to observe and note the quality of the interaction between the child/ren and their parent/s. It is essential that communication is interpreted for the worker to understand what is being said between parent and child. This might be difficult when there are several children and so consideration should be given to the numbers of interpreters needed.

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