



Department  
for Education

# **Serious Incident Notification**

**Guide for local authorities – version 1.1**

**September 2025**

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## Summary

This publication gives guidance for local authorities submitting serious incident notifications using the child safeguarding incident notification system.

It includes information on:

- when to submit a notification
- what information is required
- definitions of terms used throughout the notification form

## Who this publication is for

This guidance is for:

- local authorities

## Main points

Changes to the online notification form have been made. Below is the list of changes.

| Changes from April 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The request for the telephone number of the individual submitting the notification has been removed. If needed, we will contact the individual with the email address used to submit the notification.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| As stated in Chapter 5, Paragraph 332 of <a href="#">Working together to safeguard children 2023</a> that local authorities should notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24, a new question has been added to identify if the notification is for a child (0 – 17) or care leaver (18 – 24). |
| To allow for incidents that occurred outside of England to be recorded a new option has been added to the local authority where the incident took place.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| The option to record how many children were involved in the incident has been removed. As detailed below, this information will be required in the Incident Outline section.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Local authorities are asked to report a child or care leavers 'sex'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| The option to multi-select categories of disabilities has been added.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| The options for different types of abuse relating to the characteristics of the incident have been rearranged into one list instead of grouped together.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

| Changes from April 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All questions relating to children's social care involvement are on one page.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Instead of asking for start and end dates of children in need and child protection plans, the timeframe when the child was last on a plan from the incident is requested.                                                                                                                                                        |
| Information on whether the child was known to agencies at the time of the incident or before the incident has been added.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| The request for street name and number of the child's home or placement and education setting has been removed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| The option to report if the child was living in a kinship care arrangement has been added which has replaced if the child was living with relatives.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| The option to report if the child was 'Home schooled' has been renamed to 'Electively home educated' and 'No school' has been renamed to 'No education or early years provision'. The option to report if the child was 'Child missing education' or 'Alternative provision' has been added for reporting the child's education. |
| A new question to identify if the child was on an Education, Health and Care Plan has been added.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

## Known issues with this service

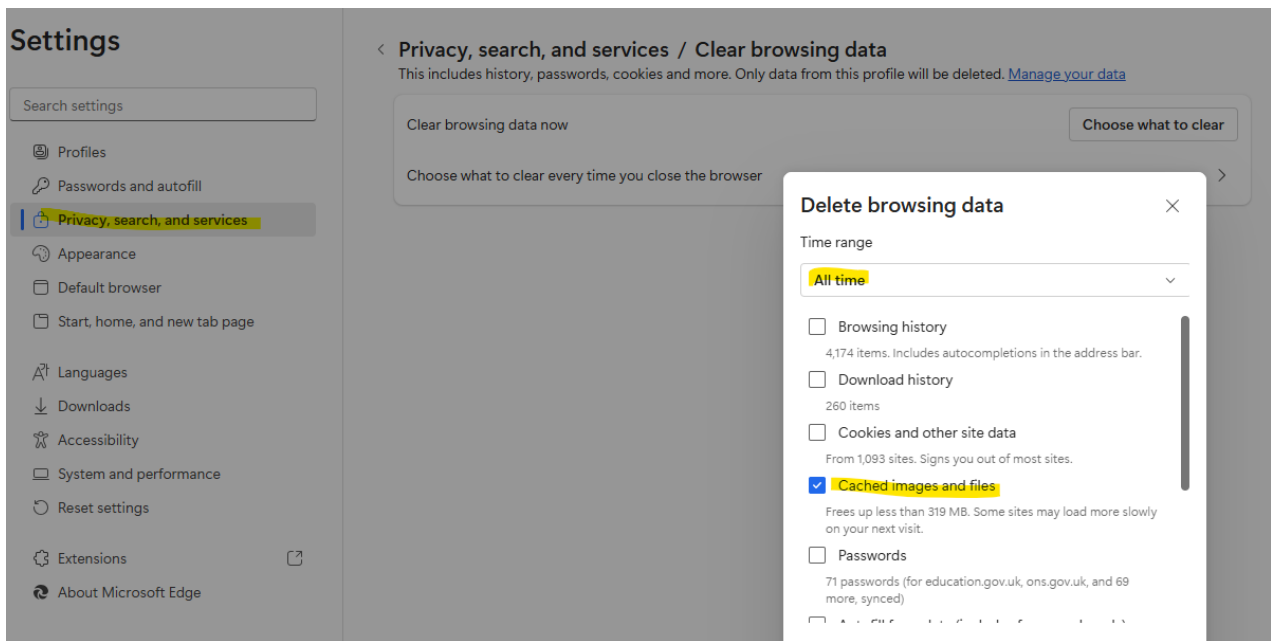
If you are experiencing technical difficulties with the child safeguarding incident notification system, please begin by clearing your browser cached history.

To clear your browser's cached history (see image below for reference):

1. Select 'Settings' in your web browser
2. Select 'Privacy, search, and services'
3. Scroll to "Clear browsing data" section, select 'Choose what to clear', ensure 'All time' is selected in the "Time range" option and only 'Cached images and files' is selected, select 'Clear now'

If you are still experiencing technical difficulties with the online form, please send a screenshot of the error message and time the error message appeared to

[mailbox.CPOD@education.gov.uk](mailto:mailbox.CPOD@education.gov.uk)



# Overview of the Serious Incident Notification data collection

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel), Department for Education (DfE) and Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) have joint access to the information submitted to the Child safeguarding incident notification system, where notifications are notified under the [scope section](#). The Panel has access to the information submitted to the child safeguarding incident notification system in respect of notifications of children who have died or been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

## Legal duties under the Data Protection Act

### Data processing

It is important that you process all data (not just that collected for the purposes of the Serious Incident Notification process) in accordance with the full requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018). Further information can be found in the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) overview of the [UK GDPR](#).

### Privacy notices

Being transparent and providing accessible information to individuals about how you will process their personal data is a key element of UK GDPR and the DPA 2018. The most common way to provide such information is through a privacy notice. Please refer to the ICO website and DfE explanation of privacy notices for further information.

The DfE privacy notice for collecting data on serious incident notifications, is available in the [Privacy information: children and young people who are aged under 18 and not in mainstream education, and care leavers aged up to 25 - GOV.UK](#)

## Scope

### Children who have died or been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is known or suspected

Section 16C of the CA 2004 states that where a local authority in England knows or suspects that a child has been abused or neglected, the local authority must notify the Panel if:

(a) the child dies or is seriously harmed in the local authority's area, or

(b) while normally resident in the local authority's area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside England.

A child is anyone under the age of 18 and can include unborn children.

Serious harm includes (but is not limited to) serious and/or long-term impairment of a child's mental health or intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development. This is not an exhaustive list. When making decisions, judgement should be exercised in cases where impairment is likely to be long-term, even if this is not immediately certain. Even if a child recovers, including from a one-off incident, serious harm may still have occurred. Local authorities and safeguarding partners should refer to the Panel's guidance for further clarity on issues relating to the criteria for serious child safeguarding cases - [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK](#)

## **Looked after children who have died**

Schedule 2, Part II, para 20 of the CA 1989 states that the local authority must also notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted, where a looked after child has died, whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

Under section 22 of the CA 1989, a child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

- gets accommodation from the local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- is subject to a care order (to put the child into the care of the local authority)
- is subject to a placement order (to put the child up for adoption)

## **Care leavers who have died**

Paragraph 332 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states that the local authority should notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24.

A care leaver is a person who is no longer looked after.

A child is a care leaver if they are aged 16 or 17 and fall into one of the following:

- is no longer looked-after
- has been looked after for at least 13 weeks which began after they reached the age of 14 and ended after they reached the age of 16.

## Rationale

Child protection in England is a complex multi-agency system with many different organisations and individuals playing their part. Reflecting on how well that system is working is critical in improving our response to children and their families.

Sometimes a child suffers a serious injury or death as a result of abuse or neglect.

Understanding not only what happened but also why it happened can help improve our response in the future. Appreciating the impact that organisations and agencies had on the child's life, and on the lives of their family members, and whether or not different approaches or those actions could have resulted in a different outcome, is essential. It is in this way that we can make good judgements about what might need to change at a local or national level.

The local authority, on behalf of the safeguarding partners, has a duty to notify the Panel about all serious incidents that meet the criteria. The number of serious incidents notified is not a reflection of local area performance. Making a notification, will ensure that learning is identified and fed back into the system to prevent future harm or death.

## Benefits of serious incident notification data collection to local authorities

Data collected at a national level is of value to local authorities and others as part of a wider system of improvement and accountability. Collecting and holding information centrally, as with the serious incident notification data, enables valuable local comparisons to be made that would otherwise be very difficult without the structure of a centrally defined data collection.

A fully completed dataset allows local authorities to better understand variations in serious incidents reported.

## Data collection structure

This section gives an overview of the information that is required to submit a serious incident notification for both children (0 – 17 years of age) and care leavers (18 – 24 years of age).

### Data items collected for all notifications

#### Your details

- name of person completing the form
- contact details
- role

- notifying local authority

## **Notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age)**

### **Reason for notification**

- if the child is a looked after child, a care leaver or neither
- what [scope](#) the notification will be submitted under

### **About the incident**

- local authority where the incident took place
- responsible local authority
- incident date
- date of death

### **Characteristics**

- record all relevant characteristics

### **Incident outline page**

- incident details of what happened
- actions taken

### **Child details**

- name
- date of birth
- sex
- gender
- ethnicity
- disability
- unaccompanied asylum-seeking child
- legal status

### **Children's social care details**

If the child was known to children's social care, the following information requests are:

- current and previous support or services from children's social care including child in need plan and child protection plan details

### **Other agency details**

If the child was known to other agencies, the following information requests are:

- police, health and other details

### **Details about where the child was living**

- where the child was living
- town or city and postcode of where the child was living

### **Education and early years provision details**

- type of education or early years provision
- name of establishment
- town or city and postcode of establishment
- if the child is on an Education, Health and Care Plan

## **Notifications for a care leaver (18 to 24 years of age)**

### **About the incident**

- date of death

### **Characteristics**

- record all relevant characteristics

### **Incident outline page**

- incident details of what happened
- if any other person is at risk

### **Care leaver details**

- name
- date of birth
- sex
- gender
- ethnicity
- disability
- previously unaccompanied asylum-seeking child

### **Other agency details**

If the care leaver was known to other agencies, the following information requests are:

- police, health and other details
- last contact date with social care

## Submission and time limits

Paragraph 330 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states that the local authority should notify the Panel within 5 working days of becoming aware that the incident has occurred. The notification should be submitted via the [Child safeguarding incident notification system](#).

Local authorities submitting notifications to the Child safeguarding incident notification system must be aware that the notification form times out after 20 minutes of inactivity.

## Data collection guidance

This section provides guidance on questions throughout the form.

### Primary child

This notification system is incident based and only one notification should be submitted per incident regardless of the number of children that were involved.

Details must be provided for the primary child only. This will be the child who has suffered the most harm, or the child who is mostly known to agencies, this could be a victim or perpetrator.

Details of other children involved in the incident should be added to the 'Incident outline' page.

### Reason for notification

All incidents meeting the criteria set out in the [scope](#) where a child who has died or been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is known or suspected, should be notified as "serious harm" or "death", except where there is a clear reason to notify as "other", for example, in cases where the notification relates to a child perpetrator.

All child deaths should be notified as 'death'. This includes children that died by suicide or concealed pregnancies including those who are unborn.

Please see the Panel's guidance on considerations for notifying of child suicides - [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK](#).

If notifying the death of a looked after child, as per the [scope](#), there will be an option to record 'no abuse or neglect'.

If notifying the death of a care leaver, as per the [scope](#), there will be an option to record if this notification is for a child or a young person aged 18 to 24. If the notification is for a child, there will be an option to record 'no abuse or neglect'.

### About the incident

If the notification is for a child (0 to 17 years of age), the name of the local authority where the incident took place and responsible local authority is collected. The responsible local authority is where the child is looked after by that authority or where the child normally lives.

The incident date should be the date of serious harm or death of the child or care leaver. This should not be the date the local authority became aware of the incident. If harm was

inflicted on the child and the child later died, these dates can be different, they do not have to be the same. If the incident spans a range of dates, the date that should be recorded is the date of the event that triggered the notification. If the notification is for a child, the child must be aged 0 to 17 years of age on the date of the incident.

The collection of date of death information reflects the Child Death Review Process under Section 16M CA 2004, which makes reviews into child deaths a statutory requirement.

## **Characteristics of the incident**

Please see definitions in Appendix A.

## **Incident outline**

Please provide a brief description of the incident for both child and care leaver notifications. There is a 4000-character limit for each section.

## **Notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age)**

Please include details of:

What happened?

- when and where the incident took place
- other children involved - names, relationship to the primary child (please see guidance for primary child) e.g. sibling, child perpetrator, and where relevant, if they were known to any agencies i.e. education settings. It is important to provide the name of the education setting for all children involved in the incident
- who the primary child was living with at the time of the incident and relationship to the child e.g. parent, carer and who has caring responsibilities for the child
- important events relating to or leading up to the incident.

What actions have been taken?

- include details of any actions that have been taken including what is being done to safeguard any child at risk from the alleged perpetrator

## **Notifications for a care leaver (18 to 24 years of age)**

Please include details of:

What happened?

- when and where the incident took place
- the event leading up to the incident
- the names of the people involved, including any staff members
- why the incident happened
- any other details that you think are important
- where was the care leaver living at the time of the incident.

Any other person at risk?

- include details if any other person is currently at risk e.g., a child of the care leaver, sibling, or other care leaver

## **Child or care leaver details**

### **Name**

Record the primary child name or care leaver name.

### **Date of birth**

If the exact date of birth is not known, record an approximate date of birth based on the primary child's estimated age at date of incident.

For unborn children, please record date of birth not known and highlight in the previous incident outline section that this child is unborn.

### **Sex**

This should be the primary child/care leaver's sex as recorded on a birth certificate or on a gender recognition certificate. This is a value which identifies the sex of a person as recognised in law. If the child is unborn, 'Not known' sex should be recorded.

### **Gender**

If the primary child or care leaver identify differently to their registered sex at birth, then 'No' should be recorded.

If the child is unborn, 'Not known' gender should be recorded.

### **Ethnic group**

Ethnic groups are specified using the ONS 2021 census categories.

The ethnic group of unborn children should be recorded as 'Not known'.

## Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. The Equality Act 2010 sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

The child/care leaver is not required to be receiving support or services for their disability, provided they meet the criteria outlined in the above definition. Please record all known relevant disabilities that have affected the child/care leaver regardless of approved diagnosis. The child/care leaver may have multiple disabilities, in which case more than one category from the below list can be recorded. 'Other' can also be used in conjunction with any of the other categories.

| Disability options                     | Description                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No disability                          | No disability                                                                                                          |
| Physical disabilities                  | e.g. getting about the house and beyond, holding and touching, seizures.                                               |
| Sensory disabilities                   | e.g. hearing, vision                                                                                                   |
| Learning or understanding disabilities | e.g. speaking and/or understanding others, having special educational needs.                                           |
| Social and behavioural difficulties    | e.g. a condition entailing behavioural difficulties, includes attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).         |
| Other mental health conditions         | e.g. anxiety, depression                                                                                               |
| Other                                  | If one or more of the child's disabilities under the Equality Act 2010 does not fall into any of the above categories. |

## Unaccompanied asylum-seeking child

An unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) is a person aged under 18, applying for asylum in his or her own right, who is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who in law or by custom has responsibility to do so.

Please record if the care leaver was a former unaccompanied asylum-seeking child.

## Legal status

This question is for notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age).

Record the legal status of the child at the time of the incident. This does not include legal status of the child after the incident happened.

| Legal status options       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| None                       | No legal status                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Adoption                   | A child that was a permanent and legal member of their new family at the time of the incident. This doesn't include children that were in the adoption process at the time of the incident. |
| Care order                 | A child that was placed in the care of a local authority under Section 31 of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.                                                                      |
| Emergency protection order | A child that was subject to an emergency protection order under Section 44 and 45 of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.                                                              |
| Interim care order         | A child that was subject to an interim care order under Section 38 of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.                                                                             |
| Placement order            | A child that was placed for adoption with prospective adopters under Section 21, Adoption and Children Act 2002, at the time of the incident.                                               |
| Police protection          | A child that was taken into protection by the police under Section 46 of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.                                                                          |
| Section 20 accommodation   | A child that was accommodated by the local authority under Section 20 of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.                                                                          |
| Special guardianship order | A child that had a permanent legal home with a special guardian under Section 14A of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.                                                              |

| Legal status options | Description                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Supervision order    | <p>A child that was supervised by a local authority under Section 31 of the CA 1989, at the time of the incident.</p> <p>A child is not a looked-after child under this order.</p> |
| Ward of court        | A child that was a ward of the court at the time of the incident where the High Court can be appointed as a child's supreme legal guardian.                                        |
| Other                | Any other legal status                                                                                                                                                             |

## Children's social care details

These questions are for notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age).

A child known to children's social care can include a child receiving services or support e.g. early help, children in need/protection assessment or plans prior to the incident or at the time of the incident. This can include children who have been referred for support as well as children from the same household whose siblings are currently receiving support from children's social care (further information can be provided in the free text box on this page).

If the child was known to children's social care, the following information requests are:

- if the child was receiving support or services from children's social care at the time of the incident.
- if applicable, child in need (Section 17, CA 1989) plan details including the start date (if the child was on plan at the time of the incident), or range of time since the plan ended (if the child was previously on a plan). Child in need plans can start before the child is born. In this instance, please record the start date before the child's birth.
- if applicable, child protection (Section 47, CA 1989) plan details including the category of plan and the start date (if the child was on plan at the time of the incident) or range of time since the plan ended (if the child was previously on a plan).
- if applicable, any further details of children's social care involvement (max 4000 characters). E.g. any further detail of early help, referrals, previous child in need/protection plans and where siblings may be known to services.

Child in need and child protection plans do not include other plans such as leaving care support or adoption support plan.

## **Other agency details**

### **Notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age)**

Please include details of:

- if the child was known to other agencies at the time or prior to the incident.

If the child was known to agencies at the time of the incident, the child was currently receiving support or services.

If the child was previously known to agencies, the child previously received support or services, but that support ended.

### **Notifications for a care leaver (18 to 24 years of age)**

Please include details of:

- if the care leaver was known to social care or any other agencies prior to the incident.

If the care leaver was known to agencies at the time of the incident, the care leaver was currently receiving support or services. Please include, if known, the last date the care leaver was in touch with social care.

If the care leaver was previously known to agencies, the care leaver previously received support or services, but that support ended.

## **Other agency examples**

Other agency details can include:

Police – for example children/care leaver who have offended or who have been victims and are known to police, probation or youth offending services. Children whose parent(s)/primary carer/giver are known to the police for criminal offences or if the police have been called out for incidents, e.g. domestic abuse and children who are known to UK border force, immigration or counterterrorism.

Health – for example children known to general practice services, health visitors, midwives, school nurses, maternity, children and young people's mental health services, adult mental health services, sexual health, alcohol and drug services (parent(s)/primary care giver or child), inpatient/outpatient hospital care, private

medical care or therapy. These can include if a child/care leaver was referred or on a waiting list for a service but an appointment had not yet been completed.

Other – for example children/care leaver known to voluntary organisations or charities, housing and homelessness support services and Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass).

## Where was the child living

These questions are only for notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age).

Where the child was living at the time of the incident and the address of this placement (city and postcode only).

| Child living options     | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foster care – short term | Short-term foster care placements are those where the child is looked after for a few weeks or months while plans were being made for their future. This doesn't include children that live in kinship foster care (also known as family and friends foster care).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Foster care – long term  | Long-term foster care placements are those where the child is placed with foster families for an extended period, often until they reach adulthood. This doesn't include children that live in kinship foster care (also known as family and friends foster care)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Home                     | Living at home includes children that reside with their parent(s) or adopted parents. This does not include children living in foster care or kinship arrangements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Hospital                 | Children who live in an institution that provide medical or surgical treatment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Kinship care             | <p>Kinship care is an arrangement where a child lives with and is cared for by a relative, friend or other connected person for the majority of the time, rather than with their parent(s). The arrangement may be temporary or longer term.</p> <p>An informal kinship care arrangement is where a family has made a decision privately about where a child should live without the involvement of the Local Authority.</p> <p>A formal kinship care arrangement is where the carer has been granted a legal order for the care of the child, or where they have become kinship foster carers.</p> |
| Mother and baby unit     | Children who live in a hospital ward that provide mental health treatment for mothers while keeping them with their babies.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| Child living options        | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Residential children's home | A residential children's home is a type of long-term care given to children who cannot stay in their birth family home. These can include secure children's home, supported accommodation or unregistered placements.                                    |
| Residential family unit     | A residential family unit provide accommodation for children and their parent(s).                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Residential school          | A residential school is where students live and study during the school year.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Semi-independent unit       | A semi-independent unit is a place that provide accommodation and support for young people who transition from care to independent living.                                                                                                               |
| Young offenders institute   | A young offenders institute is a place that provides accommodation for young offenders. These offenders will have received a custodial sentence following criminal offence convictions or may be being held on remand awaiting trial on pending charges. |
| Other                       | Any other living option.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Not known                   | If it is not known where the child was living at the time of the incident.                                                                                                                                                                               |

## Education or early years details

These questions are only for notifications for a child (0 to 17 years of age).

Where the child was receiving education or early years provision and the address of this placement (city and postcode only). If the child was receiving more than one education or early years provision at the time of the incident, please record the placement the child spent the most amount of time at.

A 'yes' or 'no' question if the child was receiving an Education, health and care (EHC) plan. An EHC plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has Special Educational Needs.

| Education or early years options | Description                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alternative provision            | An alternative provision of education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education. |
| Child missing education          | Children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education.                                                               |
| Childminder                      | A person who receives payment for working in their own home, looking after at least one child for more than two hours a day.                                                        |

| <b>Education or early years options</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| College                                 | An educational institution that provides further and higher education.                                                                                                                 |
| Electively home educated                | A choice by parent(s)/primary care giver to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time.                |
| No education or early years provision   | Children not of compulsory school age who are not receiving education or early years provision at the time of the incident. This can include children under school or early years age. |
| Nursery                                 | Any place where young children and babies are taken care of by professionals.                                                                                                          |
| School                                  | Any educational institution that provides primary, secondary, or both types of education. This does not include alternative provision.                                                 |
| Other                                   | Any other education or early years placement.                                                                                                                                          |
| Not known                               | It is not known if the child was receiving education or early years provision at the time of the incident.                                                                             |

## Appendix A – Characteristics of the incident definitions

Please record all that apply and were known or suspected at the time of notifying.

| Characteristic              | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alcohol misuse              | <p>Alcohol misuse child - concerns about alcohol misuse by the child or young person. For example, a child or young person drinking alcohol in a way that is harmful or that they are dependent upon alcohol.</p> <p>Alcohol misuse person - concerns about alcohol misuse by another person. For example, friend, family or partner drinking alcohol in a way that is harmful or that they are dependent upon alcohol.</p> <p>Alcohol misuse parent - concerns about alcohol misuse by the parent(s)/primary care giver. For example, the child's parent or primary care giver drinking alcohol in a way that is harmful or that they are dependent upon alcohol.</p>                   |
| Child criminal exploitation | <p>As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.</p> |
| Child is carer              | <p>Is a child who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Child missing               | <p>This can include children who have ran away from home or care placement, a child who has been reported as missing to the police or a child who is not at their placement or place they are expected to be (e.g home or school) and their whereabouts is not known (<a href="#">Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care 2014</a>).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Child perpetrator           | <p>A child who has committed a crime or a violent or harmful act.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Characteristic            | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child sexual exploitation | <p>Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Domestic abuse            | <p>Domestic abuse child - concerns about the child being the victim of domestic abuse. For example, the child sees, hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse, and is related to the person who inflicted the abusive behaviour or the person who the abusive behaviour was directed towards (<a href="#">Domestic Abuse Act 2021</a> introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse (section 1 of the Act). The statutory definition is clear that domestic abuse may be a single incident or a course of conduct which can encompass a wide range of abusive behaviours, including a) physical or sexual abuse; b) violent or threatening behaviour; c) controlling or coercive behaviour; d) economic abuse; and e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse.</p> <p>Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021). The</p> <p>definition ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members.</p> <p>All children can experience and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children. Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children (0 to 18), as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.</p> <p>Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse.</p> |

| Characteristic                | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Drug misuse                   | <p>Drug misuse child - concerns about drug misuse by the child or young person. For example, the child or young person is using a substance for a purpose that isn't consistent with legal or medical guidelines.</p> <p>Drug misuse person - concerns about drug misuse by another person. For example, friend, family or partner living in the same household as the child is using a substance for a purpose that isn't consistent with legal or medical guidelines.</p> <p>Drug misuse parent - concerns about drug misuse by the parent(s)/primary care giver. for example, the child's parent or primary carer is using a substance for a purpose that isn't consistent with legal or medical guidelines.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Elective home education       | A choice by parent(s)/primary care giver to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Emotional abuse               | The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. |
| Extremism                     | Extremism is defined in the Prevent strategy as the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Fabricated or induced illness | Fabricated or induced illness happens when a parent(s)/primary care giver exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| Characteristic                | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Faith linked abuse            | Abuse linked to faith or belief is where concerns for a child's welfare have been identified, and could be caused by, a belief in witchcraft, spirit or demonic possession, ritual or satanic abuse features; or when practices linked to faith or belief are harmful to a child.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Female genital mutilation     | Female genital mutilation is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there is no medical reason for this to be done ( <a href="#">NHS</a> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Filicide                      | The act of a parent killing their child.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Gangs                         | <p>The word 'gang' can mean different things in different contexts. It can be distinguished between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs (<a href="#">NSPCC</a>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer group - A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.</li> <li>• Street gang – “Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.”</li> <li>• Organised criminal gangs - “A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.'”</li> </ul> |
| Knife crime                   | Knife crime relates to crimes involving knives or other bladed or pointed articles.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Life-limiting/serious illness | <p>Life-limiting illness are those that cannot be cured and lead to a child's or young persons death.</p> <p>Serious illness are those that carry a high risk of death.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Mental health                 | <p>Mental health child: concerns about the mental health of the child or young person regardless if the mental health concerns are suspected or diagnosed.</p> <p>Mental health person: concerns about the mental health of another person regardless if the mental health concerns are suspected or diagnosed. For example, friend, family or partner.</p> <p>Mental health parent: concerns about the mental health of the parent(s)/primary care giver regardless if the mental health concerns are suspected or diagnosed.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| Characteristic          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Neglect                 | <p>The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent(s)/primary care giver failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)</li> <li>• protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger</li> <li>• ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)</li> <li>• ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment</li> <li>• provide suitable education</li> </ul> <p>It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.</p> |
| Online abuse            | Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Overlay                 | Overlay is a type of accidental death that occurs when a larger person rolls on to and smothers an infant when sleeping.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Parent is a care leaver | One or both of the child's parent(s)/primary care giver is a care leaver aged under 25. A care leaver is a person who has been in Local Authority care (e.g. residential or foster care) for a period of at least 13 weeks or more, or periods amounting in total to 13 weeks or more, since they were age 14, and ending after age 16.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Parent is in care       | One or both of the child's parent(s)/primary care giver is in the care of the local authority.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| Characteristic         | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical abuse         | <p>A form of abuse which leads to serious harm or death from severe physical assaults or non-accidental injuries. Examples can include; punching, kicking, shaking, throwing, burning, biting, or otherwise causing physical harm.</p> <p>Adult on child abuse is when an adult is the perpetrator, and a child is the victim.</p> <p>Child on adult abuse is when a child is a perpetrator, and an adult is the victim.</p> <p>Child on child abuse is when a child is a perpetrator, and another child is the victim.</p> <p>Care leaver abuse is when the care leaver is the victim.</p> |
| Risk-taking behaviour  | <p>Serious harm or death due to the child engaging in dangerous activities where there is no evidence that the child intended to harm themselves.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Road traffic collision | <p>A road traffic collision occurs when a vehicle collides with another object. This can include a child or young person being present in the vehicle or the vehicle colliding with the child or young person.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Self-harm              | <p>Self-harm is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body (<a href="#">NHS</a>). Further classification includes suicide attempt (<a href="#">NICE</a>).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| Characteristic | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sexual abuse   | <p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>Extra-familial harm is harm in contexts outside the child's family environment.</p> <p>Intra-familial harm is harm in contexts inside the child's family environment.</p> <p>Adult on child abuse is when an adult is the perpetrator, and a child is the victim.</p> <p>Child on child abuse is when a child is a perpetrator, and another child is the victim.</p> <p>Care leaver abuse is when the care leaver is the victim.</p> |
| SUDI           | Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy is the sudden, unexpected death of a child up to 1 year of age that could not have been anticipated as a significant possibility in the previous 24 hours.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Suicide        | Suicide is the act of a person who has killed themselves with intention. For the purpose of this notification those children or young people who are suspected to have died by suicide should also be categorised under this characteristic.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Trafficking    | Trafficking is where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and then exploited, forced to work or sold ( <a href="#">NSPCC</a> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| Characteristic | Description               |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Other          | Any other characteristic. |



Department  
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