

Patient information

Safeguarding children

Information for parents and carers

Our responsibility in safeguarding children

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 place a duty on us to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and protect them from significant harm.

Why do we need to safeguard children?

- West Suffolk Hospital is committed to providing a high standard of service for the health and wellbeing of every child and young person.
- We believe that all children have the right to grow up in a safe environment.
- If we have a concern about the safety of your child, we will follow child protection policies and procedures as set by Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership. We are required to follow specific procedures if we have any questions about the safety of any child referred to us.

Working in partnership to safeguard your child

We always try to work in partnership with parents and to offer help and support at this very worrying and stressful time. It is advisable to cooperate with agencies involved in the best interests of your child.

What will happen?

The medical and nursing staff will discuss their concerns with you, unless they

believe this would further endanger the safety of your child. The medical staff will discuss any medical investigations needed and ask for your consent, or your child's if they are old enough. This may involve any one or all of the following:

- Full examination and history of any medical conditions or mechanisms of injury
- Blood samples to exclude any underlying medical problems
- X-ray of one or more of your child's bones
- Special scanning of the head and brain
- Examination of the eyes

The decisions to carry out these procedures is given very careful consideration and only performed in your child's best interests.

- In line with the child protection policies and procedures, a referral will be made to the appropriate social work department who have a legal duty to investigate child protection concerns. We have a duty to share information about your child with all agencies involved in any investigation, including the police.
- The social worker involved will tell you about the child protection process and any decisions made about your child's safety.

Your child's rights are:

- To be heard
- To have their views and feelings considered
- To have appropriate confidentiality
- To be protected and supported
- To be kept involved and informed, according to their age and understanding
- To ask for explanations and to complain
- To consent or refuse to consent for medical examination if they fully understand what is involved

Your rights as a parent are:

- To be heard
- To be informed and involved
- To be supported
- To ask for explanations
- To have appropriate confidentiality
- To seek legal advice and to complain
- To have an interpreter if needed

Data protection

As with all of our patients, all information about your child and family, that is relevant to the diagnosis and treatment of your child, will be stored in written and computerised records. In the interests of your child's care and treatment, we may have to share some of this information with people in other organisations. If you have any questions, please talk to the people looking after your child or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on Freephone: 0800 917 9673, or email PALS@wsh.nhs.uk.

Who do I speak to if I need further information?

- If you need more information about the medical care and investigations, please ask to speak to the paediatric consultant in charge of your child's care.
- If you need more information about the child protection process, please ask to speak to the social worker appointed to your child's care.
- If you wish to discuss any other issue related to the child protection process, please ask the nursing staff to contact the named professionals for safeguarding children.

For more information, you may find the **Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership** website useful: www.suffolksp.org.uk

Useful numbers

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

West Suffolk Hospital, Hardwick Lane, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 2QZ,

Telephone: 01284 712555 or Freephone 0800 917 9673

Or email: PALS@wsh.nhs.uk

Local Citizens Advice Bureau

To find your nearest CAB visit: www.adviceguide.org.uk

NSPCC

Help for children and young people: Childline 0800 111

Help and advice for adults: 0808 800 5000

Or visit: www.NSPCC.org.uk

Parentlineplus

(Freephone) 0808 002 222 or visit: www.parentlineplus.org.uk

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>

