



Suffolk
Safeguarding
Partnership

My non-independently mobile child has a bruise/unexplained mark or injury

What happens next?

Guidance for parents and carers

Why is there concern that my non-independently mobile child may have a bruise/unexplained mark or injury? Bruising and unexplained injuries in a child who is not independently walking, crawling, bottom shuffling or pulling up to standing is very uncommon. It may be a sign of an underlying medical condition or, in some cases, physical abuse.

What could be the reason for the bruise/unexplained skin mark?

- It might not be a bruise/unexplained skin mark at all, it may be a birthmark; not all birthmarks are present at birth but can appear days or weeks later.
- The bruise/unexplained skin mark may be a sign of a medical condition such as a blood disorder which requires further medical investigation and potentially treatment.
- The bruise/unexplained skin mark can be a sign that your child has sustained an injury.

All staff in Suffolk follow the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership's Non-Independently Mobile Children Guidance which specifies the actions they should take. We aim to ensure that your child receives the best care at all times.

What is going to happen next?

- The professional who discussed your child's bruise/unexplained mark or injury will seek the advice of a paediatrician (a doctor specialising in children).
- If the mark or injury cannot be explained your child will be given an appointment, usually within 24hrs of the referral, to be seen by a paediatrician. This is most often at your local hospital but may be at the child development centre or elsewhere. This is done quickly because if any further

treatment or investigations are required it is important this happens as soon as possible for your child.

- At the appointment, the paediatrician will ask you about your child and any family history, examine your child fully and then decide if any further medical investigations are required. Any information you can give about your child is extremely important in finding out the reason for your child's bruise/unexplained injury or mark.
- The paediatrician will inform Children's Social Care if their examination of your child and results of any blood tests or x-rays done still cannot explain the cause of the mark or injury. This is to investigate if the injury could have been caused on purpose or through neglect. You will be kept informed throughout the whole process of any decisions made and if there are any further actions required.
- Where it appears the injuries to a child remain unexplained the police will be informed. If there are serious concerns the police may consider use of police protection powers to ensure that the child remains in hospital or in a safe place for a period of up to 72 hours whilst enquiries are ongoing.

Is this information kept by Children's Social Care?

Yes – If Social Care are contacted, a record will be kept that your child was referred and examined, and that a copy of the examination will be held in your child's records.

You may request to see your child's records by contacting Information Management Services on 01473 264814 <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/privacy-and-data-protection/>

Our aim is to support you and keep you fully informed at all times. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

Further information is available from Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership.

www.suffolksp.org.uk