

## Is this information kept by Children's Social Care?

Yes - a record will be kept of the fact that your non-mobile child was referred and examined alongside the findings of that examination. You can request to see your records at any time:

In West Sussex - contact Children's Social Care on 01403 229900.

In Brighton & Hove – contact the Data Protection Team 01273 295959 or [data.protection@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

In East Sussex – contact the Data Protection Team, 0303 123 1113

We understand that this process can be distressing and worrying. Our aim is to support you and keep you fully informed at all times of what is happening and why. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

### Further information is available from:

Your local Health Visiting Team/  
Community Nursing Team

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Children's Social Care

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My non-independently mobile child has a bruise, unexplained skin mark or possible eye injury  
- what next?

Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

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Bruise Guidance explained

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**Sussex**  
Child Protection  
& Safeguarding  
Procedures

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Procedures

<https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/>

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**Pan-Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures**

**Tel: 01273 292379**

**Phone: 01273 292379**  
**Email: [BHSCP@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:BHSCP@brighton-hove.gov.uk)**

## Why is there concern that my non independently mobile child may have a bruise/unexplained skin mark?

Bruises/unexplained skin marks on a child who cannot crawl or walk are very unusual and research has shown that it can be a serious cause for concern.

There may also be other concerning injuries that are unexplained such as burns, sub-conjunctival haemorrhages (small bleeds in the whites of the eye)/other eye injuries, or injuries to the mouth.

Bruising is the commonest presenting feature of physical abuse in children. Recent serious case reviews and individual child protection cases both nationally and locally have indicated that professionals have sometimes underestimated the significance of bruising in children who are **not independently mobile**.

As a result there have been a number of cases where bruised children have suffered significant abuse that might have been prevented if action had been taken at an earlier stage.

## Commonly Asked Questions:

Is bruising common in babies?

No. Bruising in babies who are not rolling or crawling is unusual. It is very unusual for a baby to get a bruise during everyday activities such as nappy changes, bathing or feeding.

Bruising can be related to a health condition which has not been previously identified although sometimes bruising in babies is due to a deliberate injury and therefore it is important that each baby is fully assessed.

Accidents do occur. You may feel that you are able to explain the reason for your baby having a bruise or mark. However your baby will still need to be carefully assessed. A consultant paediatrician (a specialist children's doctor) will be able to tell the difference between bruises and other types of mark.

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 an unusual 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.
- ◆ The bruise/unexplained skin mark can be a sign that your child has sustained an injury- this may well have been accidental.

All staff in Sussex follow the Bruising in Children who are Not Independently Mobile 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 skin or eye mark with you has a duty to contact Children's Social Care (CSC). A meeting will be held which includes children's social care, the Police and a Paediatrician (a doctor specialising in children).
- ◆ You will be contacted and given an appointment following the referral. This is most often at your local child development centre or hospital. 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, 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 skin mark.
- ◆ The paediatrician will inform CSC of the outcome of your child's examination. You will be told of any decisions taken and if there are any further actions required these will be discussed with you.