

# Welfare Checks Prompt sheet

## Introduction

**This guidance aims to support practitioners in any agency to take a holistic approach to completing a welfare check.**

When assessing a child's welfare, it is important to share relevant information with other agencies and through forums such as Team Around the Child meetings or Strategy discussions. For Police officers, using body worn cameras can help to gather information and support the assessment of a child's welfare.

**If you are unable to assess any aspect of a child's welfare, you must agree a plan about how this will take place.**

## Factors to Consider

### Environmental, Safety, Supervision and Animals:

- Is the home warm and clean, with age appropriate safety measures including sleeping arrangements? Any damp or mould?
- Any hazardous items or materials e.g. Drugs, weapons, faeces, blood? Any dangerous animals or animals with poor living conditions?
- Are adults appropriately supervising with necessary safety equipment e.g. Car seats, stair gates?
- Are parents handling infants safely and responding to their needs?

## Additional Factors to Consider

### Emotional and physical health, food and essentials:

- Is the area to prepare food safe (including sterilising bottles)?
- Do the family have access to running water and adequate food? Does the child appear hungry?
- Are the parents responsive?
- Does the child appear healthy and well grown? Do they have any visible injuries?
- Is the child clean and wearing appropriate clothing? Do they have uncreated skin conditions or infestations?

## Babies and young Children

### Considerations for babies and young children:

Babies under 1 are more vulnerable, and responding to them in the same way as older children is not sufficient. It is important to act in a timely way to follow up concerns and assess welfare, as harm to babies' health and development can have a long lasting effect.

- Consider a joint visit with another agency if their expertise is needed to assess the baby's welfare.
- Babies must be seen fully to establish their welfare, and so they cannot be bundled up in blankets or thick clothing.

**Remember** - if you do not know the child's date of birth, you cannot effectively assess their development, and you must take further action to establish their age.

## Parents and Carers

### Parents/Carers considerations:

- Is there concern about the impact of domestic abuse, disability, mental health, substance misuse or self-neglect on the child?
- Are parents sharing their names and dates of birth? Is the child visible to any agencies, such as GP or school/nursery?
- Consider whether there is a vulnerable adult in the home. E.g. someone with a learning need or a victim of domestic abuse.
- Is there evidence of a concealed pregnancy?

## Voice of the Child

### Consider the voice of the child.

- What are your observations of non/ pre-verbal children?
- For verbal children, is there anything they feel worried about, and what do they want to happen?

## Additional documents

**You should also refer to the following documents for additional guidance:**

- **SSCP Effective Support document**
- **Family Strengths and Needs Toolkit**

