

# Public Consultation Paper July – September 2017

# **Children's Centre Services**





The County Council is proposing redesigning Children's Centre services. We are asking people who use Children's Centres, other citizens and stakeholders what they think of the plans. This document explains what those proposals are and how you can have your say.

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# **Foreword**



# Children's Centres – Building a new service for Cambridgeshire Communities

Our Children's Centres have provided services at a local level to support the very youngest in our community.

We are proposing redesigning our services at a time when, along with other public sector bodies across the country, Cambridgeshire County Council is looking to make the most effective use of our available resources.

We believe that by delivering differently we will be able to save £1 million and continue to meet the needs of our most vulnerable families by ensuring our services are targeted at those in greatest need, whilst also providing good quality advice and information locally to all families to support families to help themselves and access universal support through good quality child care and health services.

We want to make better use of our buildings, by shaping them into adaptable and multi-functional spaces, designed to deliver to those in greatest need, and offering services across the whole family age range.

We want to gain a better understanding of where else you already access other services, so we can look to deliver in places that matter to you - whether that is libraries, health clinics or community centres. Working in this way, and with others, we will deliver services on a 'outreach' basis that are focussed on the specific needs of people within their communities

By integrating further with partners such as Health, we will ensure the services we offer are good value for money, and are provided at the right time and place for families.

We are working with partners, local communities and staff, and listening carefully to make sure we get this right.

We know there is no 'one size fits all' solution for Cambridgeshire. The consultation has been divided into Districts, so we can gather information and plan the future of our services at a local level.

We urge you to take part in this consultation, which will run from July 17th – September 22nd 2017.

Your feedback is vital part to help us plan and shape our services in future. We want to do this alongside you, and look forward to hearing from you.

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Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Executive Director: People and Communities Cllr Simon Bywater

# **The Consultation**

### What are we consulting on and why?

Cambridgeshire's first Children's Centre opened in 2005 with the aim of helping families in more deprived areas to give their children the best start in life. There has been significant growth and change in the level of provision over the past 12 years.

At the present time there are 40 designated Children's Centres across the County delivered by a combination of the County Council, schools and voluntary organisations. The contracts for externally delivered Children's Centres conclude in April 2018 and the County Council is looking at how to ensure that the money spent has the greatest positive impact on young children's development before re-tendering contracts.

Services for the families and the under 5's delivered from these centres include:

- Access to midwives and health visitors
- Family support services trained staff providing parenting support and advice
- Advice about early years education and childcare
- Employment, training and benefits advice
- Drop-in play sessions
- A meeting place for child carers

The Centres have played a vital role in delivering early childhood services to families with young children, bringing together key services such as childcare, health visiting, midwifery, employment and adult learning into one place. We also know from our work together over many years the importance of delivering support in the community rather than over focusing on the buildings, which is why we already deliver services in over 100 different locations.

Under the 2006 Childcare Act Cambridgeshire County Council must ensure the sufficient provision of children's centres in its area to meet the local need of parents, prospective parents and young children, especially for those in the greatest need of support.

Cambridgeshire County Council has a statutory duty to consult with those affected about any proposals that may result in significant changes to, and/or the closure of, its Children's Centres, which are part of the proposed redesigned Children's Centre service.

#### **National and Local Context**

Over recent years Government policy on supporting families and young children has changed. There is no longer a Government pot of money to pay for Children's Centres or any funding for new ones.

At the same time the Government has introduced a number of other ways to support Families:

- Funding for 15 hours free childcare for two-year-olds in low income families
- Funding for 15 hours free childcare for all three and four-year-olds, and from September this year, up to 30 hours in low income families
- A Family Nurse Partnership which offers intensive and structured home visiting, delivered by specially trained family nurses, from early pregnancy until the child is two for first time mothers and fathers under the age of 19;
- A Healthy Child Programme for children, young people and families, which focuses on early intervention and prevention offering a programme of screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, information and guidance on parenting and healthy choices.
- £5.3 million funding for the Troubled Families
   Programme Together for Families in Cambridgeshire,
   supporting work with families with complex issues. This
   is the current total assumed level of income from Phase
   2 of the national programme, 2015-2020.

Government policy on increasing free early education means that the Council needs to look at how to create more childcare places as part of its Early Years strategy. There is an opportunity to consider this agenda alongside delivery of Children's Centre services.

Alongside these changes the County Council has over the five years 2012-2017 seen a £66.8m per annum (46% per cent) reduction in the funding received from Central Government and we have been working with partners to ensure we look to do things differently to ensure the services we are responsible for delivering are the most efficient and have the biggest impact on improving the lives of Children, Families and Communities across the County.

There has been a delay in the proposed national consultation on the future of Children's Centres over recent years. However the All Party Parliamentary Group on Children's Centres (APPG) undertook an inquiry into the future of Children's Centres in 2016. The findings of this inquiry focussed on the development of "Family Hubs" concluding that Children's Centres needed to be to be increasingly available across the whole family age range, and spectrum of need. Family Hubs should be the identified 'go to' place for a wider range of support particularly targeted to families with significant needs including mental health and relationship support. These findings have helped shape our proposals.

The proposals outlined will enable the council to deliver cost effective services while ensuring that vulnerable families have access to services they need for themselves and their children until they reach adulthood.

It is currently estimated that the proposals would save £1m per year in line with the savings target set by Council last year for 2018-19.

# **Cambridgeshire current and proposed delivery model by districts**

There are currently 40 designated Children's Centres across the county. Children's Centre services are already delivered from other community buildings to provide easier access for families. The enhanced partnerships with midwifery, health visiting, childcare providers and schools will allow us to deliver effective support to those families that most need it where they are able to access it.

The consultation document is structured into Districts (see pages 9-19) in order to highlight the proposals at a local level.

We know there is no 'one size fits all' solution for Cambridgeshire. We want to work with local communities to agree how services can be delivered across the 5 districts of Cambridgeshire.

### Where will I be able to get support?

Cambridgeshire is a large and diverse county. We know we need a flexible offer to make sure you can access our services, no matter where you live.

We will offer services in the following 4 ways:

# **Our Child and Family Offer**



# CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

Where we have high need we will continue to offer a Child and Family Centre, with extended opening hours and skilled staff coordinating services for families across the district.



# CHILD AND FAMILY ZONES

Activities and programmes will also be delivered in other buildings that you know and can access, such as libraries, community buildings and health centres.



### CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OUTREACH PROGRAMME

We will work with you to plan and deliver Outreach Programme activities and outreach provision, based on the specific needs of people at a local level.



### CHILD AND FAMILY ONLINE OFFER

We will develp our online presence to provide information and advice that is both comprehensive and straight-forward. We will focus on things that directly affect families, such as accessible childcare, parenting and child health information. We will use social media at a more localised level, linking families to community support and activities.

#### 1. Child and Family Centres

We will create 10 Child and Family Centres for families with children of all ages. These are proposed to be in our areas of highest need and population and designed to meet the following eight criteria (known as the **Family Friendly Criteria**)

- Flexible access across the day week and year services operating in the evenings, weekends and summer holidays.
- Activity Rooms for use by individual families or groups. Maintained with appropriate activity equipment for all ages and abilities – this will include access for families having contact
- Confidential Spaces suitable for meetings with families, including potentially safeguarding meetings or health consultations (equipped with hand-washing facilities)
- **4. Staffed reception** with skilled staff to welcome, triage, signpost and provide information
- Maximised Use equipped with secure storage for groups, removable tables and chairs to change use of buildings, out of hours secure partner entry, etc
- Safe and Secure Security on access so children are kept safe, and unaccompanied children can't leave the building.
- SEND Accessible throughout the buildings including accessible toilets and changing spaces, appropriate equipment and toys. Autism friendly environment
- **8. Work Space** for CCC staff and partner organisations to touch down and complete their work. Secure Wifi.

#### 2. Child and Family Zones

We have (and will continue to throughout the consultation) been working with colleagues across our districts to look at how we can share space in other buildings, places that you already know and use. We will deliver a range of activities and interventions across a number of other buildings. We propose up to 12 Child and Family zones.

These zones will vary in scale but will meet the majority of the 'Family Friendly' criteria listed to the left under Child and Family Centres.

#### 3. Outreach Programme

Even with the 10 Child and Family centres and the 12 Child and Family zones, we know we will need to deliver some services across more areas in order to ensure access for our families, particularly those in rural locations. We will establish outreach services and regular interventions across these areas.

These will include weekly sessions in community venues, a scheduled programme of courses including parenting programmes delivered across the district, and responsive support to meet local needs as they arise.

#### 4. Online Offer

We know that lots of families want to be able to help themselves and simply need support in knowing what is available and where. We will develop an effective information and advice portal that guides and supports families in accessing good quality help in and across their area.

Any Cambridgeshire family in need will be able to access services from any Child and Family Centre, from any Zone, through any Outreach Programme activity, or via an improved online offer.

### **Summary of proposals**

- We will build on our current Children's Centre offer to offer services to families with children of all ages.
   We want to move toward a new 'Child and Family Centre Offer', which will support families with children from expectant mothers, to babies and toddlers, right through to young adults.
- We will focus services on those families who need them most

Working alongside universal health and community services, we will prioritise support for families with children under the age of 3, families with children with disabilities, and those with other identified support needs.

- 3. We will continue to strengthen our integration with the partner services you value most, such as Health. You have told us that being able to access support from health colleagues like midwives, health visitors and speech therapists from Children's Centres has been a good thing. This is important and we will look to further integrate our work with these partners to offer a seamless service to families.
- We will create a network of 10 Child and Family Centres over 15 sites across the 5 districts – City, South Cambs, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Fenland

These Centres will be located in our areas of greatest need and offer a variety of services. They will achieve the eight criteria for being a 'Family Friendly' environment.

5. We will create 12 Child and Family Zones

These will be places where services will be delivered either from some of our existing centres or other suitable buildings such as community centres, libraries, health centres etc.

- 6. We will identify and allocate resource to deliver outreach provision in other areas not covered by the Child and Family Centres or Zones.
  - We know that in a County with a significant rural population it is essential that we have a flexible and responsive outreach service offer. This outreach may be a regular weekly event in a suitable location or a short term responsive intervention to an emerging need.
- 7. We will create an easily accessible and well informed online information service outlining the local offer of services for families across the County.

  We know that lots of families want to be able to help themselves and simply need support in knowing what is available and where. Outreach services will be available to individual families in greatest need and family support will be available to individual families
- 8. We will look to change the use or re-designate some of the remaining Children's Centre buildings, to provide additional early years provision.

with identified needs.

Increases in free early education for vulnerable two, three and four year olds means that the Council needs to look at how to create more childcare places as part of its early years strategy. There is an opportunity to consider this agenda alongside delivery of children's centre services.

This means that some Children's Centre services in your community may no longer be delivered from the same buildings that they currently are, especially if you live in less deprived areas. However you will have access to a range of Centres in other locations and other Government funded programmes such as free childcare, health services, and outreach services will be available to individual families in greatest need.

# Part Two: What this will look like where you live

Every family, community and district is unique. We know how and where we provide services needs to be different in each of our districts.

Whilst we have a significant amount of data that we have used to plan these proposals, we also know that the people who know areas and communities' best are those who live in them.

Your thoughts and feedback are vital if we are to get a deep understanding of what will work best for you.

The next section of this consultation is in 5 sections, one for each district of Cambridgeshire.



# City

In this section we are going to look at the area of Cambridgeshire where you live. This page will look at our current delivery in Cambridge City and what we need to think about when planning services here.

We will then look at how we are proposing to change our delivery in your district and ask for you feedback on that.

# **Things to know about City**

- Cambridge is a rapidly growing city with large new housing developments, especially around the south and west of the City
- We know that we are likely to need to offer more support to families in new communities for the first few years as the community is established.
- Cambridge is a diverse city, with more families with additional support needs in the north city, Abbey and Cherry Hinton Wards. New community areas are also demonstrating higher support needs.
- It is difficult for a number of families to access childcare across the city, particularly in Cherry Hinton, Coleridge, Romsey, and Trumpington. As the 30 hours free childcare is introduced from September this need will increase.





## How things would change in the City

Current Children's Centres	Proposed Child and Family Centres	Proposed Child and Family Zones	Proposed Children's Centres that will be re-designated
Romsey Mill		Brookfields (potential shared building with health)	Romsey Mill
The Fields	Abbey Child and Family Centre (The Fields)		
Fawcett		Clay Farm (new shared use space)	Fawcett
Homerton			Homerton
Cherry Hinton			Cherry Hinton (we will look to deliver services as part of the redeveloped Library)
North Cambridge	North Cambridge Child and Family Centre (split site across North Cambridge and Chesterton)		
Chesterton	North Cambridge Child and Family Centre (split site across North Cambridge and Chesterton)		
		Central Library	
7 sites	2 Centres across 3 sites	3 sites	4 sites

More large housing developments are planned across Cambridge City and we will look to create Child and Family Zones in these locations as they develop.

Outreach Programme venues across this district would include libraries, health centres, community venues and schools.

#### Current Children's Centres to be re-designated in City

We are proposing that some Children's Centres would no longer be needed as Children's Centres. We would look to re-designate these spaces to meet other needs of families in the area including Childcare provision, community use and wherever possible ongoing outreach provision as required. In Cambridge City these would be:

Cherry Hinton	Fawcett
Homerton	Romsey Mill

In **Cherry Hinton** we are proposing moving to a different building in the community to deliver outreach services as part of the redeveloped library.

In addition we would no longer run full Children's Centre services from Fawcett School, Homerton Nursery, or Romsey Mill although they are likely to remain as outreach delivery locations.

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# **East Cambs**

In this section we are going to look at the area of Cambridgeshire where you live. This page will look at our current delivery in East Cambridgeshire and what we need to think about when planning services here.

We will then look at how we are proposing to change our delivery in your district and ask for you feedback on that.

## **Things to know about East Cambs**

- It is difficult for a number of families to access childcare in some of our communities, especially around Ely.
- As the 30 hours free childcare is introduced from September this need will increase.
- More families are in need of additional support in Ely,
   Soham and Littleport. These areas are all also growing with large new housing developments being built.
- Outside of the larger market towns, East Cambridgeshire has a number of very isolated villages with poor or no public transport. Our outreach offer to these communities will need to be developed.
- Our current delivery model in East Cambridgeshire has a significant outreach component in communities not served by an existing Children's Centre.





# **How things would change in East Cambs**

Current Children's Centres	Proposed Child and Family Centres	Proposed Child and Family Zones	Proposed Children's Centres that will be re-designated
Littleport	Littleport Child and Family Centre		
Soham		Soham Child and Family Zone (potential shared space with Libraries)	
Ely	Ely Child and Family Centre (split site with Ely Library)		
Sutton			Sutton
Bottisham			Bottisham
5 sites	2 Centres across 3 sites	1 site	2 sites

Where large developments of new homes are planned across this district we will look at how best to meet the new community needs as they develop.

Outreach Programme venues across this district would include libraries, health centres, community venues and schools.

### **Current Children's Centres to be re-designated in East Cambs**

We are proposing that some Children's Centres would no longer be needed as Children's Centres. We would look to re-designate these spaces to meet other needs of families in the area including Childcare provision, community use and wherever possible ongoing outreach provision as required. In East Cambridgeshire these would be:

Bottisham Sutton

# **Fenland**

In this section we are going to look at the area of Cambridgeshire where you live. This page will look at our current delivery in Fenland and what we need to think about when planning services here.

We will then look at how we are proposing to change our delivery in your district and ask for you feedback on that.

# Things to know about Fenland

- It is difficult for a number of families to access childcare in some of our communities, especially around March. As the 30 hours free childcare is introduced from September this need will increase.
- Compared to the other districts in Cambridgeshire,
   Fenland has a greater proportion of families needing additional support.
- Outside of the larger market towns, Fenland has a number of very isolated villages with poor or no public transport. Our outreach offer to these communities will need to be developed.
- Fewer new homes are being built in Fenland than the other districts, but there is considerable growth around March.





# How things would change in Fenland

Current Children's Centres	Proposed Child and Family Centres	Proposed Child and Family Zones	Proposed Children's Centres that will be re-designated
Oasis, Wisbech Town	Wisbech Child and Family Centre (split site Oasis and Wisbech South)		
Wisbech South	Wisbech Child and Family Centre (split site Oasis and Wisbech South)		
Murrow			Murrow *most likely to access Wisbech Centres
Whittlesey		Whittlesey (Scaldgate)	Whittlesey (New Road Site)
March	March Child and Family Centre		
Chatteris	Chatteris Child and Family Centre		
6 sites	3 Centres over 4 sites	1 site	2 sites

Where large developments of new homes are planned across this district we will look at how best to meet the new community needs as they develop.

Outreach Programme venues across this district would include libraries, health centres, community venues and schools.

### Current Children's Centres to be re-designated in Fenland

We are proposing that some Children's Centres would no longer be needed as Children's Centres. We would look to re-designate these spaces to meet other needs of families in the area including Childcare provision, community use and wherever possible ongoing outreach provision as required. In Fenland this would be:

#### Murrow

In **Whittlesey** we are proposing moving to a different building in the community to create a Child and Family Zone. In this case the existing Children's Centre building would be available for re-purposing as the local school expands.

# Huntingdonshire

In this section we are going to look at the area of Cambridgeshire where you live. This page will look at our current delivery in Huntingdonshire and what we need to think about when planning services here.

We will then look at how we are proposing to change our delivery in your district and ask for you feedback on that.

## Things to know about Huntingdonshire

- Huntingdonshire is a rapidly growing district with large new housing developments, especially around Alconbury, Godmanchester and St Neots.
- We know that we are likely to need to offer more support to families in new communities for the first few years as the community is established.
- It is difficult for a number of families to access childcare in some of our communities, especially around Huntingdon and Warboys. As the 30 hours free childcare is introduced from September this need will increase.
- It is difficult to travel between villages in Huntingdonshire. This contributes to a number of our current Children's Centre buildings having low numbers of families coming in.
- In Huntingdonshire we see more families with additional support needs in parts of Huntingdon and St Neots. New community areas are also demonstrating higher support needs.





# How things would change in Huntingdonshire

Current Children's Centres	Proposed Child and Family Centres	Proposed Child and Family Zones	Proposed Children's Centres that will be re-designated
Eynesbury	St Neots Child and Family Centre split site between Eaton Socon and Eynesbury)		
Eaton Socon	St Neots Child and Family Centre (split site between Eaton Socon and Eynesbury)		
St Ives (Broad Leas)		St Ives (Broad Leas)	
Huntingdon Town	Huntingdon Child and Family Centre (split site HYC and Huntingdon Town Nursery)		
Brampton			Brampton
Godmanchester			Godmanchester
Ramsey		Ramsey	
Sawtry		Sawtry (new community building)	Sawtry (Infant School site)
Farcet			Farcet
Somersham			Somersham
10 sites	2 Centres over 4 sites	3 sites	5 sites

More large new communities are planned across Huntingdonshire and we will look to create Child and Family Zones in these locations as they develop.

#### Current Children's Centres to be re-designated in Huntingdonshire

We are proposing that some Children's Centres would no longer be needed as Children's Centres. We would look to re-designate these spaces to meet other needs of families in the area including Childcare provision, community use and wherever possible ongoing Outreach Programme provision as required. In Huntingdonshire these would be:

# Somersham Farcet Brampton Godmanchester

In **Sawtry** we are proposing moving to a different building in the community to create a Child and Family Zone. If this case the existing Children's Centre building would be available for re-purposing.

We would deliver in a large number of Outreach Programme venues across this district as large numbers of families live in small villages or rural areas. These venues would include libraries, health centres, community venues and schools.

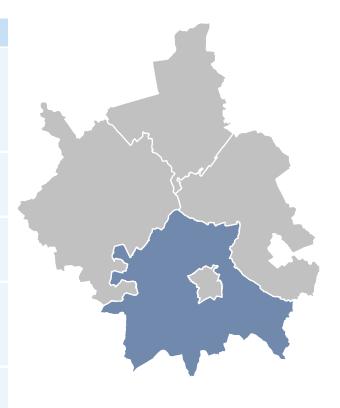
# **South Cambridgeshire**

In this section we are going to look at the area of Cambridgeshire where you live. This page will look at our current delivery in South Cambridgeshire and what we need to think about when planning services here.

We will then look at how we are proposing to change our delivery in your district and ask for you feedback on that.

## Things to know about South Cambs

- South Cambridgeshire is a large district that is currently
  mainly made up of a large number of small to medium
  villages. This will change with the building of a number of
  new communities the size of market towns (similar in scale
  to Cambourne)
- Between 2016-2026, we are forecasting an increase of 15.8% (1500 individuals) in the population of 0-4s in South Cambridgeshire (the greatest increase of all the Districts).
- We know that we are likely to need to offer more support to families in new communities for the first few years as the community is established.
- It is difficult for a number of families to access childcare in some of our communities, especially around Sawston and Cambourne. As the 30 hours free childcare is introduced from September this need will increase.
- It is difficult to travel between villages in South Cambridgeshire, especially using public transport. This contributes to a number of our current Children's Centre buildings having low numbers of families coming in.





## **How things would change in South Cambs**

Current Children's Centres	Proposed Child and Family Centres	Proposed Child and Family Zones	Proposed Children's Centres that will be re-designated
Melbourn		Melbourn (Shared building with health)	
Cambourne	Cambourne Child and Family Centre		
Caldecote			Caldecote
Bassingbourn			Bassingbourn
Sawston		Sawston (new community hub)	
Linton			Linton
Histon			Histon
Bar Hill			Bar Hill
Papworth			Papworth
Waterbeach		Waterbeach	
		Northstowe (new shared space)	
10 sites	1 Centre	4 sites	6 sites

More large new communities are planned across South Cambridgeshire and we will look to create Child and Family Zones in these locations as they develop.

We would deliver in a large number of Outreach Programme venues across this district as large numbers of families live in small villages or rural areas. These venues would include libraries, health centres, community venues and schools.

#### Current Children's Centres to be re-designated in South Cambridgeshire

We are proposing that some Children's Centres would no longer be needed as Children's Centres. We would look to re-designate these spaces to meet other needs of families in the area including Childcare provision, community use and wherever possible ongoing Outreach Programme provision as required. In South Cambridgeshire these would be:

Linton	Bassingbourn	Caldecote
Papworth	Bar Hill	

In addition we would no longer run full Children's Centre services from **Histon** Early Years Centre or Caldecote, although these are likely to remain as outreach delivery locations.

In **Sawston** and **Melbourn** we are proposing moving to a different building in the community to create Child and Family Zones. If these cases the existing Children's Centre buildings would be available for re-purposing.

# How to have your say

### A simple Consultation Feedback form is available at a range of sites

Please visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenscentreconsultation

We would encourage responses to be made online as it reduces costs for the Council.

We will be updating our County Council webpages throughout the duration of the consultation.

You will find the most up to date information at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenscentreconsultation

This will include the data we have gathered to help inform our proposals, and a helpful list of Frequently Asked Questions, which we aim to update weekly based on your thoughts, feedback and questions.

We will also be working with a range of participation groups that are already established.

### Alternatively, you can attend these events:

### Huntingdonshire

#### 9.30am to 11.30pm 02/08/2017

The Eatons Children's Centre Bushmead Road, Eaton Socon, St. Neots, PE19 8BT

#### City

### 14.30pm to 16.30pm 03/08/2017

North Cambridge Children's Centre Arbury Community Centre Campkin Road, Cambridge, CB4 2LD

#### **East Cambs**

#### 9.30am to 11.30am 07/08/2017

Ely Children's Centre Spring Meadow Infant & Nursery School, High Barns, Ely, CB7 4RB

### **South Cambridgeshire**

#### 13.00pm to 15.00pm 15/08/2017

Waterbeach Children's Centre Waterbeach Community Primary School Site High Street, Waterbeach, Cambridge, CB25 9JU

#### **Fenland**

#### 13.00pm to 15.00pm 23/08/2017

Oasis Children's Centre St. Michaels Avenue, Wisbech, PE13 3NR

All responses should be received by midday on 22nd September 2017. The analysis of the responses from the consultation will be published and presented to Councillors for a final decision in October 2017.

If you have any queries about the consultation, please email: ask.childrenscentres@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

# Cambridgeshire

# Where children and families thrive

**Data Storage:** We are committed to ensuring that personal and sensitive information that we hold about you is protected and kept safe and secure. You are entitled to request copies of the information we hold about you or your child under the Data Protection Act. If you are concerned about a child or young person and want to speak to someone, contact us on 0345 045 5203 and please give as much information as you can.