

## 7 Minute Briefing

# The Voice of the Child

RNOH Safeguarding Children Team



### Background

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The UN convention on the Rights of the Child ('89) and Working Together to Safeguarding Children ('18) state that children should be heard and have their views taken into account. At the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital Trust we are committed to embedding the 'Voice of the Child' into our everyday practice by ensuring we talk with and listen to children and young people and makes sure their wishes and views are reflected in our documentation and communication with them, their parents and carers and other professionals.

### Why it Matters

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Safeguarding Practice Case Reviews – previously Serious Case Reviews; have consistently found evidence that the voice of the child was not heard when a child (particularly adolescents) articulated their distress-either through their behaviour, verbally or otherwise-it was either not heard or responded to appropriately.

### Further Information

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Contact the RNOH Safeguarding Children Team

[rnoh.safeguardingchildren@nhs.net](mailto:rnoh.safeguardingchildren@nhs.net)

☎ Ext: 5337



### Capturing the Voice of the Child

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Professionals must use their skills and experience to capture the voice of children regardless of their age, stage of development or physical capabilities. This can be done through the use of age appropriate tools, technologies, person-centred conversation, non-verbal communication, behaviour, observation, clues and indications from sibling behaviour and the physical environment. We often only see children for very short periods of time but their behaviour or interactions with us and those caring for them can give us vital information to help us work with them to provide safe, effective care and make sure they feel informed and involved in the choices and decisions made about them. Wherever possible speak to the child alone

### Remember:

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- ☑ Ask the child directly about what has happened/what they would like to happen.
- ☑ Have a Voice of the Child section in clinic letters and use their words about how things are going for them. This is in line with CQC recommendations.
- ☑ Was Not Brought – not did not attend, putting the responsibility back to the parent or carer.
- ☑ Early help – identifying concerns early can have a significant impact on positive outcomes for children, young people and families.

### Documentation

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Remember: Always write verbatim when documenting - not interpreting the child's words in our own.

Record the voice of the child either verbal or non-verbal interaction.

### VOICE OF THE CHILD

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- ☑ Value the views and opinions of children in by listening to them
- ☑ Open, friendly and non-judgemental in our engagement, developing trusting relationships
- ☑ Involve children in the planning, design and delivery of services
- ☑ Communicate through a wide range of methods in a manner that is understood
- ☑ Ensure that views are captured through different mediums