



*Altogether Better Policing*

## **DURHAM CONSTABULARY POLICY**

<b>Durham Constabulary Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme</b>	
<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants and Children Policy</b>
<b>Registry Reference No.</b>	<b>DCP 164</b>
<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>Head of Crime &amp; Justice Command</b>
<b>Date approved at FLG</b>	<b>9 July 2013</b>
<b>Life Span</b>	<b>3 years</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>V2</b>
<b>Protective Marking</b>	<b>Not Protectively Marked</b>
<b>Publication Scheme Y/N</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>All Durham Constabulary policies are drafted in accordance with Human Rights and Equality Legislation</b>	

## Version Control

Version	Date	Reason for Change	Produced / Amended by
1.0	Sept 2004	Initial document	Review in 3 years.
2.0	July 2013	Reviewed policy and procedures	Policy and procedures reviewed, changes discussed at C&J SMT meeting Author: DCI Ashton Agreed at FLG July 2013

**1.0 Name of Policy**

Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants and Children.

**2.0 Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to Police Personnel in the investigation of Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood.

**3.0 Motivation or Driving Forces**

Occasions arise where it is incumbent upon the Police Service and Her Majesty's Coroner to investigate the circumstances leading to a person's death. This guidance acknowledges this requirement with regard to sudden unexpected death in infants and children up to the age of 18 years, proffering practice and procedure which respects the private and family life of an individual in accordance with Article 8 of the Human Rights Act, 1988 and the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000.

**4.0 The Legal Basis and Legitimate Aims**

This guidance outlines specific actions for officers attending scenes and does so in a manner which will maintain the highest professional integrity of the investigation whilst ensuring that bereaved parents and family receive a quality service, advice and support. This policy should be read in conjunction with the ACPO Guidelines on the investigation of Infant Deaths (2011) and Chapter 5 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013).

In the event that a reported death is subsequently found to be suspicious, adherence to the policy will provide investigating officers with necessary information and potential evidence to assist their enquiry. Additionally, the policy ensures referral of cases to other agencies must be made and an assessment of the needs and protection of siblings may ultimately save a life.

Durham Constabulary recognises its statutory responsibility to share information to ensure children are safeguarded. Durham Constabulary also recognises that investigations into infant and child deaths must involve a multi-agency approach and our actions will be in accordance with the County Durham and Darlington NHS Guidelines for the management of Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood Corporate Policy.

**5.0 Policy Statement**

It must be a clear priority for Durham Constabulary to secure best evidence and working with other agencies to determine the cause of death. A thorough police

investigation will assist in the continuing battle to reduce the incidence of infant death and may provide comfort to the parents if a cause of death is established.

## **6.0 Brief Description of the Attached Appendices**

All procedures, tactics and guidance relating to this policy are included on the Procedures, Tactics and Guidance document which accompanies this policy and is protectively marked as RESTRICTED.

## **7.0 Monitoring and Review**

The policy will be formally reviewed by the Policy owner within 3 years. The review will consider:

- Its effectiveness in the business area concerned
- Any changes to legislation or common law
- Challenges to the policy
- Most policies will be current for a three year period

## **8.0 How to Complain**

This is a mandatory section for all Durham Constabulary policies and should serve to give guidance for those wishing to seek redress regarding the policy itself or its implementation. For those policies which are primarily externally focused this section might include brief details of how a member of the public could initiate a 'complaint against the Police'.

Durham Constabulary operates a 'Fairness at Work Policy'. The main purpose of which is to ensure that individual members of staff who feel aggrieved about the way they have been treated, either by management or by their colleagues, are given every opportunity to have their grievances resolved in a fair and just manner. It is a flexible means of resolving problems at work and intended to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

Internally focused policies might make a very brief reference to the Durham Constabulary Fairness at Work Policy or the Confidential Reporting Policy.

Complaints about the overall policies and procedures of a police force, as well as a number of other issues relating to quality of service or operational decisions should be made to the Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary at the following address:

**The Chief Constable**

Police Headquarters

Aykley Heads

Durham

DH1 5TT

Tel: 101

Fax: 0191 375 2011

Email: [CFR@durham.pnn.police.uk](mailto:CFR@durham.pnn.police.uk)