You have a concern

You need to consider whether urgent action is needed – i.e. the child is at immediate risk of death or has significant injuries; if this is the case immediate medical treatment and police involvement should be sought and then follow this process

In most cases there will be sufficient time to follow this process; when considering if you have concerns that warrant referral to a Referral and Assessment (MASSS) you should use the tools available on BSCB web page

http://boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child

Consult with your Designated Person/Manager

Make sure you have all relevant information available this should include basic details about the child, what your concerns are and why you have them at this time and a summary of your involvement with the child/family – and whether there is an Early Help Assessment in place

When having this discussion it may be useful to use BSCB’s tool ‘Is this significant harm?’

http://boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/a3b2e3c1d9c180877248696d8b8a07a6.docx

You should ensure that you record a summary of the discussion and the outcome of it within your records – this should include a rationale for your decision about whether or not to refer

Tell the parents/carers/child about the referral if possible and appropriate

You should discuss this with your designated person and consider whether in telling parents/carers/child you are placing the child or any other children at further risk which can’t be managed

If in any doubt make the referral and seek the advice of the social worker

You should document this discussion and decision making in your records
Contact the social worker by telephone and clearly state you are making a referral this will avoid confusion 01204 331500

Make sure you record who you are talking to, make sure you provide a clear account of your concerns and why you are contacting the social worker now

At the end of the call you should know what is going to happen next, the timescales for action and what your role in this will be

When making a referral use BSCB’s tool ‘Useful Information when making a referral’
http://boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/07898bca8a650f8969d65facd1d5e75d.docx

If the duty worker does not agree that social work involvement is needed you should listen to their reasoning for this and their advice about alternative action – including recommendations to use early help processes; if at the end of this you still do not agree then you should use BSCB’s resolving professional differences process http://greatermanchesterpsc.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_resolv_prof_dis.html

You should ensure that the child and their family continues to be supported and kept safe while awaiting resolution

After you make a telephone referral to a social worker you should follow this up, securely, in writing using the Early Help Template to confirm your concerns and to share any additional information you know about the child and their family R&A@bolton.gcsx.gov.uk

You override consent as you are taking action to safeguard a child – Early Help Assessment Template can be found at http://boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/833b5f9e1a3510db3e82d8276c5a58e.docx

If you have had no acknowledgment that the written information has been received, you should re-contact the social worker and request an update

If you know there is an Early Help Assessment and Plan open but you are not the Lead Professional, you should tell the Lead Professional about the action you have taken and why as soon as possible; if you are not sure if there is an Early Help Assessment you can check with the Integrated Working Team on 01204 331394 who will let you know and share details of the Lead Professional where one is identified – it would be good practice to share this information with the Lead Professional

If you are the current Lead Professional making the referral and there is an Early Help Assessment and Plan in place, this should be updated to include the reason for the referral, detailing the needs and risks and used to follow up your referral in writing to the social worker - this helps to avoid duplication and gives the social worker the best possible information from which to start their assessment

Remember - send a secure copy to the Integrated Working Team boltonISA@bolton.gov.uk