



'Working together to keep children safe'

Norfolk Independent Reviewing Service

Service Update: Changes to Child Protection Conferences: Implemented - 10/07/2017

Why are the changes taking place?

Following feedback from Ofsted we are making changes to the format of Child Protection Conferences and the way Child Protection Plans are written with the purpose of more clearly evidencing identified risk for children.

The outcome of these changes will be that risks will be clearly understood by all directly involved in the child's life. Identification and onward management of the detailed plan of action to reduce these risks will become the responsibility of family members and the multi-agency group involved with the child. The change in format will also enable the Independent Chair to better monitor progress and outcomes for the child from the ongoing safety planning.

What will be different?

Child Protection Conferences will focus on identifying the high level risks and danger for children as well as identifying actions / support needed to reduce immediate risks (between Conference and Core Group). This will become the outline Child Protection Plan from Conference. It will be the role of Core Group members in their meetings to develop the Child Protection Plan using a Signs of Safety approach to engage both family members and professionals in identifying and agreeing the detail of the action and support needed i.e. who will do what, when and how?

Core Group will not change or remove risks / danger or related safety goals identified during Conference. However, they can add to this list and develop the plan to address these as necessary between Conferences.

The first Core Group following the Initial Child Protection Conference will now be chaired by a Social Work Team Manager, who will oversee the formation of the detail within the Child Protection Plan.

Core Group will monitor and scale the progress of the Child Protection Plan between Conferences.

Independent Chairs will continue to have the authority to overrule a majority decision within Conference, i.e. for the plan to be held within the Child in Need framework rather than Child Protection or vice versa.

Review of Changes:

There will be a 3 month review of the changes to Child Protection Conferences and Plans (October 2017). Feedback will be sought from all stakeholders to inform this review. In addition, an audit of Child Protection Plans and observations of Child Protection Conferences will inform the review outcome. Direct feedback from family members and professionals will also be sought during this period.

What are the expectations of the multi-agency group?

EMPHASIS: JOINT RESPONSIBILITY IN IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING RISK.

- All professionals need to bring copies of their reports to Conference (min 12) and genuine attempts will have been made to share these with family prior to Conference.
- The multi-agency group must be prepared for Conference i.e. have already considered from their knowledge / involvement with the family, any risks / danger, the impact of these on the child(ren) and what differences they would need to see to be certain that risks had significantly reduced?
- Priority must be given to attending Conference **and** Core Groups.
- All professionals will contribute to the development and delivery of Child Protection Plans.
- All professionals will contribute to the ongoing monitoring and scaling of progress of Child Protection Plans.

What key points do I need to remember?

- Conference will identify high level risks and any contingency plan required.
- 1st Core Group following Conference will be chaired by the Social Work Team Manager.
- Family and Core Group professionals will explore and develop how these risks will be reduced i.e. who will do what, when and how.
- The high level risks identified at Conference **will not** be changed within the Child Protection Plan by Core Group, but additional risks and actions may be added.
- **It is essential that all agencies provide a report to Conference and that this is shared with family members and the Independent Chair prior to the meeting.**

The Multi-Agency Conference Report format for all partner agencies can be found at: -
<http://www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/how-to-make-a-referral/>

Any questions? - Please contact the Independent Reviewing Manager for your area on 01603 222288

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