**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**The Conference Service**

The Conference Service – previously known as the ‘CPU (Child Protection Unit)’ sits within the Practice Improvement & Quality Assurance Service Area.

The Conference Chairs are called Child Protection Advisors (CPA’s).

There are 11 CPA’s and a Team Manager (see separate Structure Chart)

**What can you expect from the Conference Service?**

The admin team are staffed by Capita. They take calls from SW’s for ICPC requests. They co-ordinate a spreadsheet of all CPA’s and use this when booking. They will send an Outlook meeting request which confirms the room booking and alerts the SW and safeguarding administrators of the booking. You then simply accept the meeting request and that’s you booked in. It is always worth checking you don’t know the family before accepting the invite: if that’s the case then decline the invite with explanation why and copy in the CPA team manager. They will send out invitations to ICPC/RCPC once the SW has completed invite list and emailed CPU to advise it is complete. They deal with all the reports that come in to Conference and are responsible for sending out Chairs Record once requested to do so. They communicate with other Local Authorities regarding transfer Conferences and children on CP that are transferring in/out of area. You need to email CPU with the outcome of each Conference; they update databases which are sent to A&E’s at the end of the day.

**Safeguarding administrators**

The safeguarding administrators are Capita staff. They will print all reports prior to the Conference and set up the room. They will meet and greet people. They will take notes of the Conference (some by hand, some type). They will send you the Decision Document task after the Conference and will email draft mapping after the Conference. After a few days they will email you the draft Chairs Record for you to check, make changes, then add to mosaic before sending CPU a task to Distribute the Chairs Record and required reports.

**Allocation**

When an ICPC/RCPC has been booked, the allocated CPA should add themselves as a worker (drop down Child Protection Advisor) to the child’s file to show they are the allocated CPA. If the children are not placed on a CP plan or a no longer subject to a CP plan, the CPA will end the working relationship so they are no longer the allocated CPA. The CPA will only have the Chairs Record outstanding.

**Duty Rota and implementation**

Each day of the week there will be a duty CPA. The Team Manager writes the rota for the year ahead giving us our fair share of days. This inevitably then requires some swaps as CPA’s already have commitments in their diaries. The duty CPA should be available throughout the day to cover Conferences in the event another CPA is unable to be in work.

If you are ever off sick, car broken down, personal issues etc, contact the Team Manager (or Principle Manager) to advice of the situation. They will then contact Duty CPA and ask them to cover.

On occasions it is too short notice or there is no CPA on duty and therefore the Team Manager would have to decide if the Conference needs to be cancelled.

**Supervision**

Monthly supervision to be arranged at a time that’s suits CPA and manager. Always inform CPU so that you can be marked on the dairy as ‘unavailable’ to Conference.

(Do also let CPU know of any other ‘unavailable’ slots, e.g. A/L, training, personal appointments).

Within supervision, we specifically address some key areas (National Indicators):

* NI64 – long term – on CPP for 15 months or more – consider change of CPA or peer review
* NI65 – repeat - having been on a CPP before within the last two years.
* Off at first RCPC
* Other cases of concern – your choice, cases that concern you, practitioners that concern you, case you want to monitor progress between Conferences

Consider bringing any of these cases to team meetings for discussion

**Quality Assurance & Practice Improvement**

Consultation with Children’s Social Care

Prior and post Conference there will be liaison with Children’s Social Care around quality assurance. It is the role of the CPA to scrutinise (inspect, probe and inquire), challenge (question, dispute and disagree), comment (describe, assess, appraise, critique and interpret) and monitor (track, keep a watchful eye oversee) a child’s journey.

Prior to the Conference this can take place in many forms such as:

* Finding out when a report to the Conference will be available for the family and CPA.
* Case noting ‘CPA review of file prior to RCPC/ICPC‘ around the SW report, mapping and chronology (and for RCPC’s core groups and CP visits) and if these have been completed.
* Alerting the SW, PM and GM to the findings in the file prior to RCPC/ICPC in a case note (use the Safeguarding drop down).
* Discussing the report, recommendation, the safety plan and interventions this could take place in person, over the phone or email and should be recorded.
* Completing the quality monitoring form in the ICPC/RCPC Part 2 workflow post Conference and providing scaling on the report and whether the recommendations from the previous meeting have been achieved (as appropriate).
* Raising awareness of good practice using the - Recognition of Good Practice Notification. This is emailed to the SW, PM, GM and CPA Team Manager.

Consultation with other agencies

This takes place with agencies in several forms prior to and post Conference. Outside agencies should provide reports to the CPA for the Conference. They may at times provide updates verbally and are likely to have questions for the CPA about the plan and will make contributions to the plan. The CPA will utilise the expertise of each professional within the Conference.

The CPA will monitor the progress of the plan and the pace it develops. This at times may require the CPA to scrutinise, challenge, comment and compliment the involvement of the agency. At times the CPA may have to support the Social Worker to ensure that the relevant agencies attend core groups and Conferences to support multi-agency planning and prevent inquorate Conferences taking place.

If difficulties or training needs are encountered that cannot be supported within the Conference or by the CPA, these can be raised with the agencies safeguarding lead – the Team Manager has a list of these.

Informal Dispute Resolution Case Notes

All disputes should first be resolved with a face-to-face or telephone conversation with the person concerned where at all possible. The use of Informal Resolution is by way of a ‘case note’ to raise issues in the first instance. This is used when raising issues informally. For example, CP plans not progressing, SW reports not completed for Conference, chronologies not updated. The CPA adds a case note to the child’s file and sends alert to Social Worker, Practice Manager and Group Manager. It is then the expectation Children’s Services will address the points raised. This data is then collated by the performance team. If the use of informal process does not change practice in the future then it should be escalated to the Formal Issues Resolution process.

Formal Issues Resolution

CSU Dispute Resolution Process – see attached.

**Reference Points;**

[Dispute Resolution Guidance FINAL Sept 18.docx](file:///C:\Users\nhym8240\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\1OKT37WC\Dispute%20Resolution%20Guidance%20FINAL%20Sept%2018.docx)