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**Child Protection Conferences Protocol**

Protocol for children who come to Child Protection Conference for a second or subsequent time.

**February 2023**

The *London Child Protection Procedures* are underpinned by [**Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)**](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/) which sets out what should happen in any local area when a Child or Young Person is believed to be in need of support. Effective safeguarding arrangements should aim to meet the following two key principles:

* Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each individual and organisation should play their full part; and
* A child centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

The purpose of the protocol is to ensure that due consideration is given to children who are subject to a child protection plan for a 2nd or subsequent time.  This is due to concerns about potential drift, replication of plans and interventions that are the same and ultimately the long-term impact on children.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with the Children in Proceedings Protocol.

If it is determined that presenting to Legal Planning Meeting is necessary, it is the responsibility of the child’s Social Worker and Team Manager to seek legal advice.  As the Legal Planning Meeting considers threshold and is explicit about removal, risks and use of the pre-proceedings process. The Chair of the Legal Planning Meeting, as agency decision maker, makes the decision as to whether to issue proceedings or prepare a ‘Letter before Proceedings’ based on discussion at the Legal Planning Meeting and legal advice provided.

If it is determined by the social work team that a case should not be presented to panel based on a view that threshold would not be met to issue proceedings then this needs to be discussed with the relevant Head of Service to review the case and give a final view on whether Legal Planning Meeting advise is necessary.  If determined not to be necessary consideration will be given by the social worker, team manager and Head of Service regarding timeframes for this to be reviewed and any necessary intervention that needs to be provided that may have not been provided on previous plans. Where there is uncertainty about whether a case should be presented to Legal Planning Panel consideration should be given to a second Head of Service being involved in this decision making.

A child becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time should be taken seriously, and therefore the timing of considering whether a child’s case should have legal advice should be considered at each stage to the child’s journey through the Child Protection process. Consideration of holding a Legal Planning Meeting should happen prior to the Initial Child Protection Conference taking place and prior to the first Review Child Protection Conference.

The Child Protection Plan must make clear to the child, family, and all relevant professionals the exact nature of the concerns which resulted in the child requiring the plan. The Child Protection Plan should set out what work needs to be done, why, when and by whom.

**Families should be left in no doubt what they need to change, what the plan is to achieve change, how change will be measured, how they will be helped to achieve change and what will happen if this change is not achieved.**

The child (depending on his or her age and understanding) and the parents should be clear about the evidence of [Significant Harm](http://www.proceduresonline.com/resources/keywords_online/nat_key/keywords/significant_harm.html), which resulted in the child becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan, what needs to change and what is expected of them as part of the plan for safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare. This should be the subject of continuing discussion with the [Social Worker](http://www.proceduresonline.com/resources/keywords_online/nat_key/keywords/lead_social_worker.html) and other professionals involved.

The Child Protection Chair will ensure oversight of the progress of the Child Protection Plan through the Midway Monitoring Process and use of the Resolution / Escalation process.