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**Resolution Process for Child Protection**

Process for Resolving Disputes around Child Protection Planning

**February 2023**

1. **Introduction**
   1. Child Protection Conference Chairs have a key role, through the child protection process, in monitoring and reviewing the Plans of children. The aim is to ensure that each child subject to Child Protection has his or her needs properly assessed, identified and met.
   2. The resolution process addresses how disputes regarding the progression of the Child Protection Plan are resolved. It does not address what happens if a professional / parent disagrees with the outcome of a Child Protection Conference. This is addressed in *The Child Protection Appeals Procedure.*
2. **Criteria for initiating an Escalation**
   1. The issue of concern is specified according to types grouped in four categories set out below.

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| 1. Engagement |
| Aspects of the child protection plan not being progressed |
| No allocated social worker |
| Key professionals not invited to the conference |
| 1. Timeliness |
| Visits not maintained as required in CP Plan |
| Core Groups not held |
| Social work reports not provided to conference, or not completed properly or not signed by the line manager. |
| Social work reports not provided to families before the conference. |
| 1. Practice Issues |
| Child concerned cannot be adequately protected at home with a child protection plan and insufficient legal safeguards are in place. |
| Previous recommendations not addressed by time of subsequent review |
| 1. Other (specified by the Child Protection Conference Chair)   Chronology not being completed  ICPC booked out of timescales  S47 not completed |

1. **The Period before starting the Resolution Process**
   1. When there is a difference of opinion regarding the Child Protection Plan the Child Protection Conference Chair should attempt to resolve the issue directly with the Line Manager. This concern will be captured in the escalation document as informal
   2. If the Child Protection Conference Chair and Line Manager cannot resolve the issue, within 5 working days, this is a dispute. At this point, the Child Protection Conference Chair should start the Resolution Process.
   3. Some matters due to the nature and the concern raised may require a formal resolution (bypassing an informal resolution) this should be made clear to the Line Manager.
2. **The Resolution Process**

* 1. The Resolution Process is based around a 4 stage escalation system, using the proforma on Mosaic known as “Child Protection Resolution”.
  2. Stage 1: The Child Protection Conference Chair will send the form on Mosaic to the Team Manager. If the response is not satisfactory or delayed the matter is escalated to the next stage by the Child Protection Conference Chair.
  3. Stage 2: The issue raised at Stage 1 with the Team Manager is now raised at with the Service Manager, managing the Team Manager. A response is expected within 5 working days. If the response is not satisfactory or delayed the matter is escalated to the next stage by the Child Protection Conference Chair.
  4. Stage 3: The issue raised at Stage 2 with the Service Manager of the Team Manager, is now brought to the attention of the Service Manager S+QA . The expectation is that the two Service Managers will reach a resolution regarding the issues and this will be recorded.

* 1. Stage 4: Where the matter has not been resolved at Stage 3, the Child Protection Conference Chair will issue a stage 4 escalation to the Divisional Director of Children’s Social Care. The Child Protection Conference Chair will do this by drawing up a written statement of the issue, what they have done to try and resolve the issue and what they want to happen to resolve the issue. The Child Protection Conference Chair will email this statement to the Divisional Director of Children’s Social Care together with copies of the Stage 1 - 3 escalations. A copy of the statement should also be sent to the appropriate Social Workers, Managers and Service Manager.
  2. On receipt of the Stage 4 escalation statement the Divisional Director of Children’s Social Care will have 8 working days to reply. The Divisional Director will decide whether to have a formal meeting to consider the issue and, if so, who should attend such a meeting. The Divisional Director should then make a formal written reply to the Child Protection Conference Chair regarding the issue.
  3. The Decision of the Divisional Director is final

**Escalation Flow Chart**

**Type of Escalation Timescale for responding**

**Informal/Formal Level (recorded in episode) 5 days**

**Formal 1st level Escalation to Team Manager 5 days**

**Formal 2nd level Escalation to Service Manager 5 days**

**Formal 3rd level Escalation to Service Manager SQA for 5 days**

**Discussion with the SM at Stage 2**

**Formal 4th level Escalation to Divisional Director 8 days**