

Child Protection Processes and Practice Requirements Guidance



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Booking an Initial Child Protection Conference and Threshold Discussions

The Team Manager uses the Significant Harm Checklist to inform threshold and decision-making in Strategy Discussions and Section 47 Enquiries.



If the Team Manager feels an Initial Child Protection Conference is necessary, the Team Manager phones the Safeguarding and Review Business Support Team on 01384813274 to identify who the duty Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is for that day. The Team Manager then has a **threshold discussion** with the duty Independent Reviewing Officer using the Significant Harm Checklist.



The duty Independent Reviewing Officer records the outcome of this threshold discussion on the child's file.



The Team Manager sends notification to the Safeguarding and Review Business Support Team to proceed to an Initial Child Protection Conference.



The Significant Harm Checklist

Step 1: Can the concerns be evidenced to have an impact (significant harm) on the child?

- Consider whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, ill-treatment or impairment of health or development as a result of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect (see definition of harm categories).
- Consider each individual child's health and development compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

Step 2: Are the concerns attributable to parental care?

- Is the kind of care you would expect from a 'reasonable parent'?

Step 3: Can it be evidenced that significant harm is likely?

- The level of parental engagement and understanding of concerns should be taken into account.
- Protective factors should be taken into account.
- Likelihood means that there is a "real, substantial risk" of the harm continuing.

If YES to ALL steps 1- 3: Significant harm threshold is met

If NO to ANY of the steps 1-3: Significant harm threshold is not met.



Myth Buster

MYTH

Young people aged 16 to 17 years should not be on a Child Protection Plan.

Age should not be the determining factor. Decisions should be made on a case by case basis, and informed by the Significant Harm Checklist. There needs to be an analysis of the potential risks faced by the young person and the impact of harm; an analysis of the young person's needs, and the level of support they require; and an analysis of any supportive factors, and the level of protection this support can offer to the young person.

MYTH

Children cannot be removed from a Child Protection Plan at the first review.

Decisions around removing children from a Child Protection Plan at the first review should be made on a case by case basis, and informed by the Significant Harm Checklist. There needs to be a robust review of the impact of the plan, informed by an analysis of parental engagement, whether this has been meaningful, and whether any progress made is sustainable to reduce risks towards the child in the longer term.

MYTH

Once children have been removed from a Child Protection Plan, they need to be made subject to a Child in Need Plan for a period of 12 weeks.

Decisions to remove children from Child Protection Plans should be based upon a clear assessment of risk, and an analysis of impact, need, and sustainability of progress made, informed by the Significant Harm Checklist. Whilst Child in Need interventions are voluntary, Child in Need Planning at this point should be considered and encouraged for a period of up to 6 – 12 weeks.

MYTH

Children cannot be removed from a Child Protection Plan if all recommendations have not been completed.

All decisions to remove children from a Child Protection Plan should be informed by the Significant Harm Checklist, and an analysis of the evidence base gathered. It may be the case that all recommendations have not been completed, however, following assessment, the child's situation has improved, the potential risks to the child has reduced, and there is no longer evidence of significant harm or risk of significant harm.



Practice Requirements for Cases being presented to Initial Child Protection Conference

Notification to the Safeguarding and Review Business Support Team

The Safeguarding and Review Business Support Team are notified of the intention to proceed to an Initial Child Protection Conference at the point of the Strategy Meeting / Discussion taking place, or by day 3 of the Section 47 Enquiry. The Team Manager uses the Significant Harm Checklist to inform threshold and decision-making.

Meeting Attendees and Updating Liquid Logic

Details of meeting attendees are completed **at least one week prior** to the Initial Child Protection Conference taking place. Details should include specific email addresses and mobile numbers for individual professionals, rather than generic details, to ensure the right professionals are invited. All contact details for family members should be kept up to date on Liquid Logic, as this enables the Independent Reviewing Officer to contact the family prior to the Conference taking place.

Social Work Reports for Initial Child Protection Conference and Timescales

The Child and Young Person's Assessment is the Social Work Report for the Initial Child Protection Conference. All Social Work Reports for Conference must have an outline plan for the child, young person, and their family. Any changes to the plan will be agreed at the Initial Child Protection Conference.

Team Managers must include their comments and authorise the Social Work Report for Conference prior to the report being shared with the family.

All Social Work Reports for Conference are shared with the family **5 working days** before Conference; and with the Independent Reviewing Officer **3 working days** before Conference.

Social Worker Attendance at Initial Child Protection Conference

The allocated Social Worker will attend the Initial Child Protection Conference; and the Social Worker who the child's case will be transferring to will also attend the Conference. This gives the child and their family the opportunity to meet the new Social Worker and obtain their contact details, enabling a smoother and more effective transfer to take place.

First Core Group Meeting / Child in Need Meeting Following Initial Child Protection Conference

The first Core Group Meeting / Child in Need Meeting will take place straight after the Initial Child Protection Conference. This prevents the risk of the first Core Group Meeting / Child in Need Meeting being delayed, and gives the core group the opportunity to discuss in more details how they will work together to progress the plan.



Process Map – Practice Requirements for Cases being Presented to Child Protection Conference

The Safeguarding and Review Business Support Team are notified of the intention to proceed to Initial Child Protection Conference at the point of the Strategy Meeting / Discussion taking place, or by day 3 of the Section 47 Enquiry. The Significant Harm Checklist is used to inform threshold and decision-making.

Details of meeting attendees are completed **at least one week prior** to an Initial Child Protection Conference taking place. Details should include specific email addresses and mobile telephone numbers for individual professionals. All contact details for family members need to be kept up to date on Liquid Logic to enable the Independent Reviewing Officer to contact the family prior to the Conference taking place.

The Child and Young Person's Assessment is the Social Work Report for the Initial Child Protection Conference. All Social Work Reports for Conference must have an outline plan for the child, young person, and their family. Any changes to the plan will be agreed at the Initial Child Protection Conference.

Team Managers include their comments and authorise the Social Work Report for Conference prior to the Report being shared with the family.

All Social Work Reports for Conference are shared with the family **5 working days before Conference**; and with the Independent Reviewing Officer **3 working days before Conference**.

The allocated Social Worker will attend the Initial Child Protection Conference; and the Social Worker who the child's case will be transferring to will also attend the Conference. This gives the child and their family the opportunity to meet the new Social Worker, enabling a smoother and more effective transfer to take place.

The first Core Group Meeting / Child in Need Meeting will take place straight after the Initial Child Protection Conference, giving the core group the opportunity to discuss in more details how they will work together to progress the plan, and to answer any questions parents / carers may have.

