

## **Challenge & Support Sessions**

In 2021 our service reviewed the process we have for scrutinising, supporting and challenging the plans for children who have been subject to a CP Plan for 2 years or more.

This review was completed in collaboration with practitioners, IROs and Managers and has resulted in us replacing the previous Designated Review Conference process with restorative Challenge and Support Sessions.

### **Providing some context:**

- Good practice indicates that Child Protection Plans (CPP) lasting over 2 years warrant scrutiny. In such cases as this and for children who are nearing 2 years on a CPP, it is necessary to ensure that the CPP continues to be an effective approach for the child and family, that drift and delay are not contributing factors and that timely escalation and decisive actions is taken where necessary and appropriate.
- The numbers of children in Newcastle who meet this criteria is low, however it is recognised that practice in this area needs to improve, and following a review we will now roll out and embed Challenge & Support Sessions in place of Designated Review Conferences

### **Restorative Challenge & Support Sessions:**

- Our Independent Reviewing Team Manager, Lyne reviews the monthly Care First report and identifies those children reaching the point of having a CP plan for 14 months.
- A facilitator is allocated from a rota of 3 specific facilitators to achieve consistency of approach:
  - Principal Social Worker
  - Social Work Centre of Excellence CSC Lead
  - Independent Reviewing Team Manager
  - Challenge & Support Sessions will all be supported by a Relational Practice Lead (RPL)
- The facilitator or RPL will contact the relevant social worker, Team Manager and IRO to arrange a Challenge & Support Session
- The social worker can invite other professionals to the session and family members relevant to the discussion.
- The facilitator and RPL will prepare for the Session by reading the CP Plan and the most recent CP Review minutes.

- The Challenge and Support Session will be framed by using the [Rethink Formulation or the 6 P's<sup>\[1\]</sup>](#). That is:

“Rethink Formulation provides a consistent and clear model for developing a shared understanding of a family and their presenting issues. This formulation can travel with the family into different services and should reduce the number of assessments they have by providing an effective way to analyse the information we already have about their strengths and needs. Rethinking what we know about a family, and what we then do with that knowledge, is key to working with that family in a restorative and sustainable way”

**The 6 P's are:**

1. **Presenting issues** – What is happening right now that is causing concern?
  2. **Precipitating issues** – What happens / has happened that triggers the presenting issues?
  3. **Predictive factors** – What is likely to happen if presenting issues not addressed effectively?
  4. **Pre-disposing factors** – What challenges / adverse experiences family faced (current/past)?
  5. **Perpetuating factors** – What factors are maintaining the presenting issues?
  6. **Protective Factors** – What strengths & positive factors are there to use to impact of current situation?
- The Facilitator & RPL will complete the Challenge & Support Session documentation during the meeting and will ensure this is placed on the child's record and sent to the relevant Service Manager

**What happens next?**

- When the next CPR (15 months) is held, the outcome of the Challenge and Support Session should be fed into the CPR
- If the child/children remain subject to the CPP at the 15 month CPR, the children will be reviewed by the CSSU Service Manager in collaboration with the responsible Service Manager. Where necessary – oversight of the plan will be escalated to the AD.

---

<sup>[1]</sup> Leeds Innovations and Partner in Practice Programme