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|  Document Control: Title | **Safeguarding Team Alert Policy** |
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| Policy Lead and Approval Body  | BCP CSC SMT (agreed 28.01.2020) |
| Produced By  | Linda Sherwin, Team Manager Safeguarding Service, Quality and Commissioning |
| Revision History Date  | Version | Summary of Changes | Section(s) Changed |
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| Equality & Impact Needs Assessment Location  | To follow |
| Who must be aware of this guidance? / Distribution  | CSC SMTI&F SMTQ&C SMTPublished in Local Resources of BCP Children’s Services policyOthers may be made aware of guidance when an alert is raised with them. |
| Who Must Comply with this Guidance?  | IROs, CP Chairs, Managers across BCP Children’s Services. |



**SAFEGUARDING TEAM ALERT POLICY**

1. **Background to Alert Policy**

BCP must be able to demonstrate that our safeguarding of children and our practice for Children in Care, is robust and effective. This policy will assist both senior and front-line managers in this task.

The Conference and Review Co-ordinators perform the function of Independent Chair of Child Protection Conferences and Independent Reviewing Officer for Children in Care. Their role in both these processes is to ensure the welfare of the child and progression of their plans.

The alert systems process is to drive improvement in practice and in outcomes for children; to reduce drift and to provide independent oversight of key decisions. It should not be viewed as a criticism of individuals; the alert will be made with the spirit of meeting the child’s needs. In some situations individuals will have done all they can and a systemic issue still remains.

Alerts may not always be made within Children’s Social Care as other parts of the multi-agency system may need to respond to meet a child’s needs.

1. **Alerts on CP cases:**

Quality assurance audits are completed following each child protection conference. This highlights good practice as well as issues of concern. Alerts will be raised following a child protection conference if any areas are identified as red/not at all.

1. **Alerts for children in Care**

IROs are guided on their responsibility to raise alerts by the IRO Handbook and Care Planning Regulations. The areas that alerts may be raised for are as set out in the audit which is completed following each review. Formal alerts will be raised for any areas within the audit identified as red/not at all.

A template will be completed to record the alert and saved in attachments on Care Director or Mosaic, until such time as it is available within the work flow.

Informal alert

* Wherever possible the IRO will email or speak to team managers to resolve concerns / emerging issues that they identify in reviews and between review meetings. This process will allow a significant number of issues to be resolved early. IROs will record the discussion and resolution on the child’s record.

Stage 1

* IRO identifies a concern in their audit and completes the alert template.
* Alert template is emailed to the responsible team manager (and copied to the IRO manager and business support, for tracking purposes).
* Team manager completes the relevant section on the form with their response and emails it back to the same circulation within 5 working days.
* IRO makes a decision regarding whether the response resolves the issue, whether further discussion with the team manager is required or whether an escalation to stage 2 is necessary.

Stage 2

* IRO sends alert template to relevant Service Manager, copied to Team Manager (IRO manager and business support, for tracking purposes).
* Service manager completes the relevant section on the form with their response and emails it back to the same circulation within 5 working days.
* IRO makes a decision with the IRO manager, regarding whether the response resolves the issue, whether further discussion with the service manager is required

or whether an escalation to stage 3 is necessary.

Stage 3

* IRO sends alert template to relevant Service Director, copied to Team Manager, and Service Manager, IRO manager (and business support for tracking purposes).
* Service Director completes the relevant section on the form with their response and emails it back to the same circulation within 5 working days.
* IRO makes a decision with the IRO manager, regarding whether the response resolves the issue, whether further discussion with the service manager is required or whether an escalation to stage 4 is necessary.

Stage 4

* IRO sends alert template to Corporate Director, copied to Service Director, Service Manager, Team Manager, IRO manager (and business support for tracking purposes).
* Corporate Director completes the relevant section on the form with their response and emails it back to the same circulation within 5 working days.
* IRO makes a decision with the IRO manager, regarding whether the response resolves the issue, whether further discussion with the service manager is required or whether an escalation to stage 5 is necessary.

Stage 5

* A CAFCASS referral is made where resolution has not been achieved to meet the welfare needs of a Child In Care.
1. **Situations where alerts progress immediately to Service Director or Corporate Director**

In a small number of cases the Service Director or Corporate Director where it is apparent that the Team Manager cannot resolve the issue. The Team Manager will be copied in to be aware of the alert.

1. **Alert Tracker**

Responses to alerts will be monitored on a weekly basis. If a response has not been received within the agreed timescale an escalation will automatically be progressed.

A quarterly IRO report will be completed, which will be presented to QPIB and will identify any themes arising.

Where resource issues are identified, the alert system may be used to track the frequency and severity of impact for children. Only resource issues with a significant impact for children will progress to Stage 4.

END