**Wiltshire Council**

**Child Protection Conferences**

A child protection conference brings together family members (and the child/ren where appropriate), supporters / advocates and those professionals most involved with the child and family to make decisions about the child's future safety, health and development. If concerns relate to an unborn child, consideration should be given as to whether to hold a child protection conference prior to the child's birth.

The tasks for all conferences are to:

* Bring together and analyse, in an inter-agency setting the information which has been obtained about the child's developmental needs, and the parents' capacity to respond to these needs to ensure the child's safety and promote the child's health and development within the context of their wider family and environment;
* Consider the evidence presented to the conference and taking into account the child's present situation and information about his or her family history and present and past family functioning, to decide whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm;
* Recommend what future action is required in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, including the child becoming the subject of a child protection plan, what the planned developmental outcomes are for the child and how best to intervene to achieve these;
* Appoint a lead social worker from children's social care for each child who requires a child protection plan.
* Identify a core group of professionals and family members to develop, implement and review the progress of the child protection plan
* Establishing timescales for meetings of the core group, production of a child protection plan and for child protection review meetings; and
* Agree an outline child protection plan, with clear actions and timescales, including a clear sense of how much improvement is needed, by when, so that success can be judged clearly.
* Put in place a contingency plan if the agreed actions are not completed and/or circumstances change impacting on the child’s safety and welfare.

The Local Authority children's social care manager is responsible for making the decision to convene a child protection conference and the reasons for calling the conference (or not calling a conference) following completion of a S47 enquiry must be recorded.

A conference should be also be convened, if requested by a professional, supported by a senior manager / named or designated professional unless there is evidence that the child is not at risk of or suffering significant harm. If there is disagreement about the decision to hold the conference between agencies, the escalation procedures should be applied.

1. **Types of conferences**

An **initial child protection conference** must be convened when the outcome of the s47 enquiry confirms that the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. The Local Authority children's social care manager is responsible for making the decision on the completion of the s47 enquiry.

Where a child has become subject of child protection plan a **review child protection conference** will be held within 3 months of the initial conference and six-monthly thereafter until such time as conference members consider the child/children to no longer be at risk of significant harm.

**Transfer-in Conferences**

**Transfer in conferences** should take place when a child ,who is the subject of a child protection plan, moves from one Local Authority (Referring LA) area to another LA area to live there **permanently** e.g. for a period of more than 3 months. Children’s social care, designated health professionals and the police should be notified promptly by the referring LA of the fact that a child on a child protection plan has moved into their area.

**Consideration of what is a permanent move will vary with each case. However the following may indicate the family’s intention to remain in the area:**

* The family are in permanent accommodation, this will require proof of tenancy either private, Council or Housing Association from the referring Local Authority or written confirmation from a family member that they are residing with them on a permanent basis.
* The child/ren is/are registered and attending children’s centre/nursery or school – MASH will confirm this directly with the school (rather than relying on Impulse).
* Family registered with GP practice or similar
* Family networks and links to the area should also be considered.

1. **Preparation and attendance**

* Once a permanent move is established, the MASH will accept the referral and send a request to convene a child protection conference to the Conferencing and Reviewing Service.
* MASH will add Wiltshire agencies to the invitation form and send this to the allocated Social Worker from the other Local Authority to add other relevant agencies and they will be required to forward this directly to the conference and reviewing service (CRS) to organise the conference.
* The referring Local Authority shall be requested to submit a child protection conference report to the CP Chair 5 working days before the transfer-in conference which should include a chronology, most recent Single Assessment and CP Plan.
* The MASH will message the relevant Safeguarding & Assessment Team desktop to ensure a social worker and where relevant, a manager, attends the transfer-in conference and the CRS will confirm the date/time/venue of the conference.

Until there is confirmation that the move is considered permanent, the child/family remains the statutory responsibility of the referring Local Authority until the date of the transfer-in conference when Wiltshire Council will take responsibility. However Wiltshire Council may agree to undertake visits to the child on behalf of the referring LA by agreement, particularly if the family has moved some distance from the referring Local Authority. This decision will be made on a case by case basis.