



Walsall Council



Right child, Right place, Right time, Right amount of time

Resolution Policy for Children on CP plans

Introduction

This policy outlines our commitment to improving and maintaining the effectiveness and the quality of our services for children who are discussed at a CP Conference and those who have a CP plan.

This policy ensures that Walsall Children's Services is fully compliant with its legal duties and responsibilities under 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfE 2018) this statutory guidance relates to the quality assurance of Child Protection Plans. Other influential legislation is;

- The Adoption and Children Act (2002)
- The Children and Young Person Act(2008)
- The Children Act (1989)

Purpose

The purpose is to ensure all children on a Child Protection plan receive meaningful intervention in a timely way that improves their life experiences, keeps them safe and meets their individual needs.

Effective communication between CP Coordinators and Team Managers will enable a focus on the significance, of all those working with the child and their family, providing the very best service possible. This will be promoted through joint meetings, joint training, presentation at unit meetings etc.

Principles

One of the responsibilities of the service is to provide an Independent Coordinator to chair Child Protection Conference. A primary function within this is to assist the Local Authority, through a quality assurance process, in ensuring families are provided with a quality service, are treated respectfully and children are safeguarded.

The underlying principle is that issues of staffing, interagency cooperation or resources should **not** be accepted as obstacles which negate out ability to meet the needs of a child as identified in their child protection plan.

The premise of this policy is based upon the Local Authority already being fully aware of its required statutory and legislative commitments to children who are considered at a Child Protection conference and those who have a Child Protection plan.

This process is intended to clarify communication between CP Coordinators and social work teams, with a focus on identifying and resolving issues at an early stage. The Pre-Conference Guidance should assist the social work teams and the CP Coordinators in achieving this. It is always expected that the least formal approach will be taken but the process confirms the steps to be taken if child protection planning is not working for children and families

Resolution

The role of the CP Coordinator is to ensure the child protection conference proceeds in a respectful and inclusive manner that acknowledges the likelihood to necessitate some difficult conversations. The aim is to ensure any circumstances leading to unmet need, including those of safety, are addressed.

Central to the conference meeting and the decision making process is the impact on the **child as an Individual**. The reaction and effect on children will vary in different situations depending on their personality, age and development, life experiences, level of resilience and support networks in place.

Prior to the meeting, there should be a pre-conference discussion between the CP Coordinator and Social Worker. The purpose of this discussion is to ensure there is sufficient preparation for the meeting to proceed effectively. The pre-conference guidance has been compiled (see appendix1) so that the discussion between Coordinator and Social Worker and as necessary Team Manager is meaningful and essential aspects of the forthcoming conference have been given sufficient thought so that the conference is purposeful.

Key times when a resolution may be triggered

Pre conference conversation between Coordinator and Social Worker including discussion around the pre conference checklist.

Immediately following the conference

Midway check

Escalation process

Good Practice case note

It is important to acknowledge good practice and build on positives that achieve good outcomes for children.

Good practice case notes should be written to the child so that if the child access's their file in later life they can understand the importance of the work the social worker did to improve their life experiences and outcomes.

When the child's file demonstrates that the core tasks are being carried out effectively, the child protection plan is progressing and meeting the child's needs, the Coordinator will complete a good practice case note and share this with the Team Manager.

When the social worker has done some exemplary work, the Coordinator will add this to a case note and share with the Team Manager, Group Manager for S&R and the Principal IRO. This will then form part of the good practice report.

Resolutions

Informal Resolutions

An informal resolution will involve communication between the Coordinator and Team Manager with an agreed way forward and timescale to address the issues or concerns. The Coordinator will record this on an Informal Resolution form on mosaic. Examples of informal resolutions may be; reports not being shared before a conference, visits not consistently recorded on the child's file, parents not being prepared about the purpose of conference

Formal Resolutions

- Agreed actions not progressed in the protection plan
- Insufficient response to significant events
- Statutory responsibilities not adhered too
- is otherwise in breach of its duties to the child in any significant way

Issues or concerns that could generate a resolution, remembering the impact on the child as an individual and the family, are the concerns significant, relevant, valid and impactful. How are they impacting on the child and is the level of intervention the right one for this child at this time?

- Families not prepared, they have not been told what a CP conference is, what the process is, who is invited etc.
- Report has not been shared in advance, for Initial Child Protection Conference this is at least a day in advance and for Review Child Protection Conferences 3 days in advance of the conference.
- No cultural genogram has been completed and is available
- There has been no Family Meeting or Family Group conference
- Checks have not been undertaken with relevant agencies including other LA's
- Significant professionals have not been invited
- Dads have not been invited or plans made to involve them
- A lack of consideration as to parental safety issues, i.e. both parents have been invited when it is inappropriate for them to be in a meeting together, i.e. non molestation order in place
- Arrangements have not been made for the child to attend
- No consultation form has been completed
- The child's voice is absent
- No interpreter has been booked
- Child has not been seen as required
- Core groups have not been held in the required frequency
- There is no safety plan when one is needed
- There are immediate safeguarding risks.
- No Social Worker, Senior Practitioner or Team Manager present who can talk with a knowledge of the family.
- No receiving social worker
- Agreed tasks have not been completed or there is drift and delay with the plan

Stages of Resolutions

Note whilst it is usual to go through the stages starting from the lowest denominator the process can be started at any point to mirror the severity of concerns. When issues are outside of the social workers remit and every effort has been made to address the issue with partners then the matter should be shared with the Head of Service for Safeguarding.

Examples of Formal Resolutions stage One;

Note; deciding what level to start the resolution is dependent on context and impact it is having on the child as an individual, however some examples may be;

- No response or the CP Coordinator disagrees with the response to the informal resolution.
- Insufficient preparation for the CP Conference to be purposeful and effective
- Children not in attendance due to inactive social work
- Childrens wishes and feelings not being ascertained
- CP consultation form not being completed
- Lack of relevant information, assessment and analysis
- No family meeting or family group conference
- Absent fathers
- No safety plan
- Little or no progress since last CP conference/midway check

Examples of Formal Resolutions stage Two;

- No response or the CP Coordinator disagrees with the response to the formal resolution stage one.
- There are immediate safeguarding risks
- Any CP Conferences that are cancelled
- Issues with other agencies cannot be resolved

Examples of Formal Resolutions stage Three,

- No response or the CP Coordinator disagrees with the response to the formal resolution in the previous stage.
- There are immediate safeguarding risks that are not being addressed sufficiently
- Issues with other agencies cannot be resolved

Examples of Formal Resolutions stage Four:

- No response or the CP Coordinator disagrees with the response to the formal resolution in the previous stage.
- There are immediate safeguarding risks that are not being addressed sufficiently
- Issues with other agencies cannot be resolved

Examples of Formal Resolutions stage Five:

- No response or the CP Coordinator disagrees with the response to the formal resolution in the previous stage.
- There are immediate safeguarding risks that are not being addressed sufficiently
- Issues with other agencies may need to be brought to the attention of the wider partnership.

The CP Coordinator will always copy in the Group Manager for S&R and the Principal IRO.

Informal Resolution; whenever possible this will be the option used to resolve any concerns or issues. CP Coordinator will contact the Team Manager to discuss

Stage one; Formal Resolution to Team Manager and Group Manager; the CP Coordinator will contact the Team Manager, preferably in person, but if not by email to discuss/notify of the issues/concerns. This will be followed by a formal resolution being raised on mosaic. The Team Manager will respond to the resolution within 7 days with Group Manager approval.

Stage two; Formal Resolution to Group Manager and Head of Service; the Coordinator will raise a formal resolution on mosaic with an email notification. . The Group Manager will respond to the resolution within 4 days with Head of Service approval.

Stage three; Formal Resolution to Head of Service and Assistant Director; the Coordinator will raise a formal resolution on mosaic with an email notification. The Head of Service will respond to the resolution within 3 days with Assistant Director approval.

Stage four; Formal Resolution Assistant Director and Director of Childrens Services; the Coordinator will raise a formal resolution on mosaic with an email notification. The Assistant Director will respond to the resolution within 3 days

Stage five; Formal Resolution to the Director of Childrens Services; the Coordinator will raise a formal resolution on mosaic with an email notification. The Director of Childrens Services will respond to the resolution within 3 days. The Director of Childrens services will also consider bringing the issues to the attention of the wider partnership.