



Serious Incident Notification Policy & Procedure (Child Safeguarding Practice & Review 'Panel')

Introduction

This policy sets out the arrangements relating to the notification of serious child safeguarding incidents and the death of a child in care, incorporating changes in the light of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

It set outs what to do when a child in Birmingham, or normally resident in Birmingham dies or suffers a serious injury in the circumstances set out below.

The process set out here is separate to the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures in relation to **Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews** and the work of the Child Death Overview Panel. - **see Child Death Reviews.**

Criteria for Serious Incident Notification (SIN)

If a child in the Local Authority area or a child who is normally resident in the Local Authority area dies or suffer serious injury, and meets the following criteria, a notification must be completed:

- A child has died (including cases of suspected suicide), and abuse and neglect is known or suspected.
- A child has been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

Whether the incident constitutes serious must be considered before notification based on the definition set out in (**Working Together 2018**) While not exhaustive "Seriously harmed" in this context includes, but is not limited to, cases where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect, any or all of the following:

- A potentially life-threatening injury;
- Serious and/or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional or social development.

Notification to "The Panel" through this process must also be used to fulfil the local Authorities duty to inform the Secretary of State for Education when a Looked after Child has died (including cases where abuse or neglect is **not** known or suspected).



If the above criteria are met the Birmingham Children Trust (BCT) is required to notify the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (The Panel) and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP). Serious Incident Notifications (SIN) should be made within **5 working days** of the Trust becoming aware of the incident.

Providers of regulated settings or services continue to have a responsibility to notify Ofsted directly about serious issues and incidents, including the death of a child according to their regulations and procedures using the Ofsted online notification system: [Link to Ofsted Notification On-line Form](#).

You can access the Notifications of Significant Events for Regulated Settings and Services [here](#).

Internal Notification

Any Incident that may meet the above criteria or is likely be subject to media attention must be reported without undue delay to the relevant Area Assistant Director who in turn will notify the Director of Practice and the Assistant Director Safeguarding. If the child is a child in care to another Local Authority, the Social Work Team Manager should also notify that placing Local Authority immediately.

Management Briefing

The relevant area Head of Service must complete a management briefing and send a copy to the Director of Practice, the relevant Area Assistant Director and the Assistant Director Safeguarding using the embedded template.



BCT Mangnt Brief
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The Director of Practice in consultation with colleagues above will determine if the incident meets the specified SIN criteria and thus triggering the requirement to submit a Serious Incident Notification to Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (Panel) and Secretary of State if it relates to a Child in Care. They will also decide whether a serious incident meeting is required and if the Trusts Chief Executive and Chair and Birmingham City Council (BCC) Director of Childrens Services, and /or Lead Member need to be informed.



Serious Incident Meeting

A serious incident meeting should be held whenever an incident requires a co-ordinated response from BCT, whether the child was open or known to BCT or not. The meeting should be convened and chaired by an Assistant Director or Head of Service. The following might be invited depending on circumstances:

- Assistant Director,
- Assistant Director Safeguarding
- Head of Service responsible for any relevant services;
- Legal Services
- Communications Officer
- HR

The meeting will:–

Review what happened and establish the personnel involved and the timeline;

Ensure that files and records are secured;

- Check that all necessary notifications are sent, and relevant senior staff in BCT and BCC are informed
- Consider any media issues;
- Consider any immediate HR action;
- Ensure a multi-agency strategy meeting is taking place to address all care planning and child protection issues
- Ensure support for all family members affected is in place
- Set a date for a further meeting to discuss progress, if required.

Serious Incident Notification Process

When a decision has been made in consultation with the Director of Practice that the incident meets the criteria for notification to the Panel, the Assistant Director Safeguarding will notify the Safeguarding Practice Learning Manager (SPLM) using the following e-mail:

SafeguardingPracticeLearningManager@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk and will forward a copy of the Management Briefing and any other information relevant to the notification.



The SPLM who is registered with the Panel will complete the **serious child safeguarding incident notification** liaising with the relevant area Head of Service. This needs to be completed within **5 working days** from the date that BCT become aware of the incident.

When the Serious Incident Notification is submitted we will receive acknowledgement by way of an email which contains a SIN reference number. The SPLM will keep the list and detail of all SINs.

Further contact details for “The Panel” and the Secretary of State for Education if required are:-

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| <p>DfE helpline Telephone: 0370 000 2288 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm</p> <p>On-Line Contact Link</p> | <p>The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Panel Secretariat c/o Department for Education Level 8, Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT Email: Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk</p> |
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Notifying BSCP

The SPLM will inform the relevant Head of Service and the BSCP Practice Manager of the notification by sending them a PDF copy of the completed online form and the SIN number provided by “The Panel” as soon as completed.

Monitoring and Reporting

For monitoring and reporting purposes the SPLM will maintain a register of all Serious Incident Notifications, and will act as a single point of contact for coordinating a response to enquiries from Government Departments and Ofsted about these cases.

The BSCP Practice Manager in liaison with the SPLM will bi-monthly cross reference the SIN register and track the progress and outcome of all SIN notifications such that an accurate overview can be provide as and when required by BCSP, BCT or others.

Other Considerations

The following are further considerations for those overseeing the management of the death of, or serious injury to a child with whom they have had involvement.



The child's Social Worker or Team Manager will:

- a. Immediately inform his or her line Manager;
- b. Notify the parent(s) if needed immediately and in person, if possible;
- c. In the event of a child's death, discuss with the parent(s) if necessary, the arrangements for seeing the child and for the funeral (in the event of sudden unexplained deaths arrangements for the funeral may need to be delayed);
- d. In the event of a serious injury to the child, arrange with the parent(s) to visit the child in hospital;
- e. Obtain as much information as possible on the circumstances surrounding the cause of death/serious injury;
- f. Arrange a strategy meeting to be chaired by the Head of Service; the strategy meeting must plan the multi-agency investigation, needs of all affected children and support needs of all family and carers (e.g. foster carers);
- g. Ensure that school and education colleagues are informed;
- h. Draft a management briefing for the Head of Service.

Needs of Social Worker / Team / Manager / Carer

Following a serious incident consideration must be given to the needs of those staff and carers involved in the case. The impact of a child death on the Social Worker, team, Manager and carer needs to be considered in terms of:

- The need for support and/or counselling for those involved;
- The provision of access to legal and professional advice about the ongoing conduct of the case;
- Support for staff in the event of Police investigation/interviews;
- Provision of employee support and counselling where needed
- The need for team debriefing whilst observing confidentiality;
- The need to acknowledge that a child death can impact on the work of the team and mitigate this through support to the team;



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- The need of support to Foster Carers and others directly involved in the child's care.