One Minute Guide

**Independent Child Protection Conference Chairs**

What is an Independent Child Protection Conference Chair (CP Chair)?

A CP Chair is appointed by the local authority, who has a duty to make sure that children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm receive high quality care and support. CP Chairs adhere to the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Employed by the Council, within CFLL Quality Assurance & Performance Division, CP Chairs are experienced professionals who work **independently** from the case-holding social work team and all other professionals the children and their families have contact with.

What are the responsibilities of an Independent Child Protection Conference Chair (CP Chair)? The CP Chair will use the Child Protection Conference process (Initial Child Protection Conference and subsequent review conferences) to gather and analyse the information and views of practitioners about the child and their parent’s capacity to safely care for them within the context of wider family support and their environment. They will also gain the **views of the child** to ensure their wishes, feelings and thoughts are taken into consideration.

The CP Chair will make the final decision on the whether a plan is needed and if this should be a Child Protection plan or a Child in Need plan.

The CP Chair will create an outline plan, with the family and conference members based on the draft plan brought to conference within the social work report, that will address the level of need and safeguarding concerns impacting on a child. The CP Chair will set out clear outcomes, with agreed actions, who has agreed to do these, and timescales, to **reduce the impact** to the child.

If the child is made subject to a CP Plan, the CP Chair will monitor the progress of this plan on an ongoing basis. They will track this through reviewing the child’s file and speaking to practitioners and their managers in- between the formal review conferences, to ensure actions have progressed as outlined in the plan. If there are concerns about the quality or timeliness of the **progression of the plan** and the outcome for the child, they will follow this up and formally challenge practitioners and their managers.

Main responsibilities of the CP Chair are to:-

* Speak with the child or young person, where possible (taking age/ability into consideration) in advance to help them to understand the purpose of the meeting and the process.
* Listen and promote the voice of the child or young person to make sure their wishes, thoughts and feelings are taken into account.
* Talk to the child or young person’s parents.
* Deliver the conference using Motivational Interviewing (Family Safeguarding model of working with children and families).
* Make sure that the plan has clearly defined outcomes, actions, timescales and who will do these, which are understandable and achievable to everyone who is involved.
* Make certain that actions are carried out in a timely manner in order to bring about necessary change for the child.
* Make sure that an accurate record of the meeting is reflected on the child’s file.
* Raise practice concerns through the Alert Process, when appropriate and necessary.

If you have any questions please Email - cpunit.duty@surreycc.gov.uk

Phone - 0300 1231650 option 1

Last reviewed: January 2024

Reviewed by: Linde Webber

Next review date: January 2025