

Child Protection Pathway

Tri x 1_3_9_ (May 2025)

Review May 2026



Local Authority Children's Social Care should convene a **Strategy Meeting/discussion** to determine a child's welfare if there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Children's Social Care Team managers request a multi-agency Strategy discussion/meeting.

Day 1

The professionals taking part in the multi-agency Strategy Discussion will decide whether a Section 47 Enquiry (Children Act 1989) needs to be initiated in conjunction with developing a plan of action to ensure that the child/ren are immediately safeguarded.



Day 1

Contact to be made with CP team support for them to pass onto the Safeguarding Unit Duty Child Protection Chair to triage the case, accept S47 enquiries are initiated and agree that the threshold for convening an Initial Child Protection Case Conference may be met. Duty Child Protection Chair will record the agreement and rationale on Liquid Logic following a conversation with the team manager should there be any discrepancy. Social worker should advise details for report to be requested from police.



Day 1

Duty Child Protection Chair informs the CP Team Support that an ICPC is required and informs them of the date the Strategy Meeting/discussion was held.

CP Team Support advise the Safeguarding Unit Service Manager who will allocate a CP chair

CP Team Support will:

- book the ICPC in the electronic diary
- request report from police
- add the details to the weekly conference diary which is used as a prompt to Team Managers.

If it is agreed that the threshold for convening an ICPC is not met then a Child and Family assessment is to be completed. If the conclusion is that the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm a further Strategy Meeting/discussion is to be convened and refer back to box 1.



Day 5 - Conclusion of Section 47 investigation



S47 enquiries have concluded that the child(ren) are at risk or likely to be at risk of suffering significant harm.

S47 enquiries have concluded that the child(ren) are **NOT** at risk or likely to be at risk of suffering significant harm.

Social Worker/Team Coordinator to email the conference invite list to Conference Information, Health and Police. Upon receipt the Police will carry out their checks and provide a report for conference.

The Conference Co-ordinator will also send out invites to all other statutory agencies and identified attendees via post and secure email.

If the invite list is not received by the close of business on day 5, this will be escalated by the Safeguarding Unit Service Manager.

Team Manager needs to liaise with all agencies and inform the CP Chair of the outcome of the discussions.

Information to be recorded on Liquid Logic.

Day 5 to day 12 – Preparation – CP chair

Allocated Child Protection Chair reviews the Section 47 and emails the social worker (and team manager if required) to discuss the case and any issues that they need to be aware of in preparation for the conference. CP chair requests that the social worker advises on the appropriateness of the child/ren attending the conference and if not how their voice will be heard in conference.

CP chair to discuss with social worker any concerns that may be known around risks of parents attending the Civic Centre. Should there be any risks the social worker should complete a risk assessment in advance of the conference.

Day 6 to day 12 – preparation social worker

Social worker to complete work with the child/ren around their voice being heard in the conference. Whether it would be good for them to attend and if this is something that they would like to happen. If this is the case social worker should speak with the child/ren about what to expect in the conference and what would be expected of them. Social worker to discuss the support that they may require to attend and whether they would like to be supported to attend in person at Swann House or attend on Teams.

Social worker to ensure that the child is aware of the ability to have an advocate to speak on their behalf in the conference or decide that they would like the social worker to speak for them. Social worker can speak with the child/ren about the use of MOMO or use of drawings or letters to put across their views, wishes and feelings. Social worker to ensure that the ground work is completed with the child/ren about how their voice is going to be heard in the conference and how they will be supported to attend if they are attending.

Social worker to speak with parents to ensure that arrangements are in place for travel and any child care that is required for them to attend the Civic Centre in person. Social worker should assist parents in being able to attend the conference. Social worker to ensure that they have discussed with parents the reason for the conference, what they should expect and what the expectations of them are.

At least 2 days prior to the ICPC Social Worker to share the contents of the authorised conference report with the parents (and child if appropriate). The report should be authorised at least 5 days prior to the conference.

Day 13 – Preparation – CP Chair

At least 2 days prior to the ICPC the chair call the parents to introduce themselves, provide them with information about what to expect and answer any questions that parents / carers / children may have about the conference. If appropriate and they are attending, the CP chair should arrange to speak with the children.

The CP chair should start to audit the file and start the checklist to aid preparation for the conference.



Day 15 - Initial Child Protection Conference

Parents should attend in person at the Civic Centre with their child(ren)'s social worker. Any interpreters should attend in person at the Civic Centre.

Professionals can attend in person or via Microsoft Teams. Professionals attending on teams are expected to have their camera's on throughout the meeting and should be in a place where they are unlikely to be disturbed and where the conversations that are held will be confidential.

The minute taker will be available at the start of the conference to assist in any issues around recording or attendance.



If the expectation that a full multi-agency presence is not met and the ICPC will not be effective:

- CP Chair to alert the Safeguarding Service Manager for approval to rearrange the ICPC (Service Manager to record agreed actions under Management Oversight on Liquid Logic)
- CP Chair to send Informal Stage CP Issue Resolution to Safeguarding Lead for all the partner agencies who failed to attend
- ICPC re-arranged date communicated to all and a safety plan drawn up.
- In exceptional circumstances, the CP Chair may decide to proceed with the conference with the agreement of the Safeguarding Service Manager.



Day 15 – Initial Child Protection Conference

Multi-agency decision to be made as to whether the child(ren) become subject to a Child Protection Plan and if so the category agreed. Professionals should refer to the details provided around categories with their invitation to make an informed decision.

SMART outline Child Protection plan formulated in conjunction with the parents and the professionals in attendance. This plan should include the risks identified, actions as agreed, who will undertake the actions and by what date and the outcomes that will measure whether the actions have been effective to ensure change for the child(ren) and reduce the risk of significant harm.

Immediately after the meeting the CP chair will provide the minute taker with the attendance sheet and child protection plan



Day 16

Within 24 hours of the ICPC the Child Protection minute taker will send the conference Decisions and Recommendations to the CP Chair for approval. Once approved the CP Chair will inform via email the team manager and minute taker and copy onto a case note. The minute taker will distribute copies to the parents, statutory agencies and all other attendees at conference.

Day 26

Multi-agency Core Group to be held within **10 working days** and every **4 weeks** thereafter. The Outline Child Protection Plan to be developed by the Core Group members.

Updated copy of the Child Protection Plans and the minutes to be sent to parents and all involved persons within 5 working days. including the Child Protection Chair.



Day 36

The minutes will be available within 20 working days of the conference and the social worker should record on case notes that they have shared these with the family.



Week 6 of the Child Protection Plan

CP Chair undertakes a mid-point review to ensure that the plan is progressing. They will follow the LL form to ensure core groups are being held in a timely manner and the SMART plan is being updated to ensure timely progression.

This will look at the voice of the child, visits, supervision, details of any significant events and audits to ensure that progress is effective for the child/ren.



Should there be evidence of drift or delay and the CP plan is not evidencing impact or progress for the child(ren). The CP Chair to discuss with the Team Manager and record the required actions in liquid logic.



Throughout the plan

The social worker should ensure that they inform the Child Protection chair of any significant events that have impacted on the children as and when they occur.



1st Child Protection Review Conference (within 3 months of the ICPC)

Invite list to be provided to CP admin support at least 10 working days prior to the review conference.

2 days before the conference the CP chair is to review the child's case records and ensure that the review report is complete and that the Social Worker has shared the report with parents at least 3 days prior to the conference. Comments to be recorded on Liquid Logic under CRM oversight. CRM to have a conversation with the SW around any issues that may arise, risks that the CRM should be aware of and how children and their families are being supported to participate in their review.

ALL key professionals from the Core Group are expected to attend the review conference in order for multi-agency decisions to be made regarding the Child Protection plan.

CONTINUED BELOW

In exceptional circumstances where no representative from a key partner agency is available, a report is expected outlining involvement, their view on the progress of the Child Protection plan and their decision as to whether the child(ren) should remain on a CP plan or de-escalate to a Child in Need plan.

If there is an ongoing Police investigation it is expected the Police Officer will be present.

All professionals are expected to have camera's on for the duration of the meeting and to be in a place where they are unlikely to be disturbed and take into consideration the confidentiality of the meeting.

In exceptional circumstances where consideration should be given for a child(ren) to come off a Child Protection plan at the 1st Child Protection review. A discussion between the Team Manager and the Child Protection Chair will need to take place to advise as to the rationale of the multi-agency group for agreeing the threshold that the child(ren) is/are no longer suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm.

Any de-escalation needs to be agreed by the Service Manager from the Social Work team and the Service Manager from the Safeguarding Unit and recorded on the child(ren)'s case records.



Mid-point review undertaken by the CP chair 2 and a half months after the 1st review conference



2nd Child protection review to be held. (within a maximum of 6 months of the first Review conference)

Invite list to be provided to CP admin support at least 10 working days prior to the review conference.

ALL key professionals from the Core Group are expected to attend the review conference in order for multi-agency decisions to be made regarding the Child Protection plan.

In exceptional circumstances where no representative from a key partner agency is available, a report is expected outlining involvement, their view on the progress of the Child Protection plan and their decision as to whether the child(ren) should remain on a CP plan or de-escalate to a Child in Need plan.

If there is an ongoing Police investigation it is expected the Police Officer will be present.

All professionals are expected to have camera's on for the duration of the meeting and to be in a place where they are unlikely to be disturbed and take into consideration the confidentiality of the meeting.



Mid-point review to be completed by CP Chair.

Service Manager of Safeguarding Unit/
Children's Services Auditor to complete an audit to ascertain whether there is any drift in the Child protection plan and why it is not progressing



Child protection Chair to escalate any issues regarding drift via the Issues Resolution procedure.

14 month point of the Child Protection Plan

Partnership CP Supervision meeting to be chaired by Safeguarding Service Manager to ascertain what actions are required to safeguard the Child(ren).



Children should be removed from a Child Protection Plan when it is evidenced that they are no longer suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

It is possible that they have unmet needs therefore the case will de-escalate to a Child in Need Plan

If the child(ren) move out of Stoke-on-Trent to another Local Authority and there is no plan for the family to return to Stoke-on-Trent, a request will be made for a Transfer in Case Conference to the relevant Local Authority. Until such a time that the case is accepted and transferred to the receiving authority it remains the responsibility of Stoke-on-Trent agencies.