



Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Local Protocol

April 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This protocol sets out the local response to serious child safeguarding incidents in respect of the CHSCP's Learning & Improvement Framework. It should be read alongside the statutory guidance as set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and that issued by the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#).
- 1.2 **It does not replace the procedure for making a referral about a child to Children's Social Care (as set out in the City of London Threshold of Needs, The Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework and the Pan-London Child Protection procedures).**

2. Reporting a Serious Child Safeguarding Incident

- 2.1 Under 16C(1) of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017), where a local authority in England knows or suspects that a child has been abused or neglected, the local authority must notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) if:
- (a) the child dies or is seriously harmed in the local authority's area, or
 - (b) while normally resident in the local authority's area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside England.
- 2.2 Serious harm includes (but is not limited to) serious and/or long-term impairment of a child's mental health or intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. It should also cover impairment of physical health. This is not an exhaustive list. When making decisions, judgment should be exercised in cases where impairment is likely to be long-term, even if this is not immediately certain. Even if a child recovers, including from a one-off incident, serious harm may still have occurred.
- 2.3 The local authority must also notify the Panel (and the Secretary of State) of the death of looked after children, whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected.
- 2.4 In all circumstances, local authorities must notify the Panel within **5 working days** of becoming aware of the incident by using the [child safeguarding incident notification system](#).

On receipt, the Panel will share the notification with the Department for Education and Ofsted¹.

- 2.5 **Within 5 working days**, a copy of the notification sent to the Panel must also be forwarded by the local authority to the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) via chscp@hackney.gov.uk (or to the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)).

3. The Rapid Review

- 3.1 Following notification to the Panel, the CHSCP's Senior Professional Advisor (SPA) will lead on the completion of a Rapid Review and the production of a Rapid Review report. The Rapid Review process will be overseen by the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner (ICSC) of the CHSCP.

- 3.2 The Rapid Review will address the following:

- The facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time;
- Whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately;
- The potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- What steps they should take next, including whether or not to undertake a child safeguarding practice review.

- 3.3 The content of the final Rapid Review report will be agreed by the ICSC and shared with safeguarding partners and the CHSCP Case Review sub-group. **It will be submitted to the Panel within 15 working days.**

- 3.4 The Rapid Review report will include a decision about whether a child safeguarding practice review is appropriate, and whether the case raises issues which are complex or of national importance such that a national review may be appropriate.

¹ The Panel will not consider the deaths of looked-after children where abuse or neglect is not known or suspected. The DfE and Ofsted will take appropriate action in these cases.

- 3.5 The CHSCP may convene an extraordinary meeting where required. Attendance at the Rapid Review meeting will be requested from the Case Review sub-group representative. Where unable to attend, any substitute must be of sufficient seniority to make decisions in respect of the overall review process.
- 3.6 If a child or young person has died, the points identified in 3.2 may be considered as part of a Joint Agency Response (JAR) meeting held following the unexpected death of a child. This will only take place where the SPA is chairing the JAR meeting.

4. Decision Making Criteria

- 4.1 In line with the CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements, the ICSC has locally delegated authority from the safeguarding partners to independently determine whether a child safeguarding practice review is appropriate. The maintenance of independence in this regard, ensures a system of reviewing that maintains transparency at its heart.
- 4.2 Criteria to be taken into account includes whether the case:
- highlights or may highlight improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including where those improvements have been previously identified
 - highlights or may highlight recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children
 - highlights or may highlight concerns regarding two or more organisations or agencies working together effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is one which the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel have considered and concluded a local review may be more appropriate
 - where the safeguarding partners have cause for concern about the actions of a single agency
 - where there has been no agency involvement and this gives the safeguarding partners cause for concern
 - where more than one local authority, police area or clinical commissioning group is involved, including in cases where families have moved around
 - where the case may raise issues relating to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of children in institutional settings.

4.3 Meeting the criteria does not mean that a child safeguarding practice review will automatically be undertaken. A determination will be made on whether one is appropriate, taking into account that the overall purpose of a review is to identify improvements to practice.

4.4 Some cases may not meet the definition of a 'serious child safeguarding case', but nevertheless raise issues of importance to the local area. That might, for example, include cases where there has been good practice, poor practice or where there have been 'near-miss' events. **The ICSC may choose to undertake a child safeguarding practice review or a different type of review in such circumstances.**

5. The Panel response to the Rapid Review

5.1 The response of the Panel to the Rapid Review will be reported back to the safeguarding partners. Should the Panel disagree with the decision of the Rapid Review, the SPA will circulate the details of the response and convene a meeting/telephone conference of the ICSC and safeguarding partners to consider the information provided and review the initial decision.

6. Initiating a Child Safeguarding Practice Review

6.1 On commencement of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the CHSCP will issue formal notification to those organisations where involvement with the family has been identified and the respective Case Review sub-group leads.

6.2 The notification will include a brief synopsis for the case, a rationale for the decision and next steps, including nominating agency leads and chronology / Individual Management Review (IMR) submissions. The Terms of Reference will detail the review methodology and timescales.

7. Engaging the Child / Family

7.1 Where it has been decided to initiate a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the CHSCP team will contact the family (and child if appropriate) by letter. Where possible, a lead

practitioner currently working with the family (social worker/police officer) will be identified to discuss the review process in more detail.

- 7.2 Where there are ongoing criminal investigations or pending criminal proceedings, the decision about how and when to notify the family needs to involve both the police and the Crown Prosecution Service as appropriate.

8. Timescales

- 8.1 **Reviews will be completed and published within six months** unless there are extenuating circumstances such as an ongoing criminal investigation, inquest or future prosecution. Any delay to the completion or publication of a review recommended by the ICSC will be approved by the Strategic Leadership Team and the reasons notified to the Panel and Secretary of State.

9. Publication

- 9.1 In some circumstances, it may be inappropriate to publish a review report. In such circumstances, the ICSC, on behalf of the Strategic Leadership Team, will set out for the Panel and the Secretary of State the justification for any decision not to publish either the full report or information relating to improvements.

- 9.2 Publication of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews or information about the improvements that should be made will be via the partnership website. The NSPCC maintains a national case review repository where case reviews remain available electronically for five years.

10. Learning

- 10.1 Disseminating and embedding learning is an important part of supporting a culture of continuous improvement. Senior leaders across all organisations will be expected to drive a culture whereby learning is effectively disseminated and embedded into the day to day practice of front-line staff. Key learning will be delivered by the following mechanisms.

- The CHSCP training programme and annual conference
- Single agency training
- CHSCP TUSK (Things You Should Know) briefings

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- Campaigns and promotional material
- Communications through CHSCP Web / Twitter
- Publication of reviews and hosting of learning seminars
- The CHSCP annual report
- Policy and protocol development
- Reflective practice and supervision of staff and volunteers
- Service team meetings that focus on how identified improvements will be implemented

11. Reporting other cases to the Case Review Sub-Group

- 11.1 Alongside the statutory notification process for Local Authorities to report serious child safeguarding incidents, any organisations can request that a case is considered by the CHSCP Case Review sub-group for a review.
- 11.2 If, at any time, the circumstances of the case suggest that the criterion set out in 2.1 have been met, the Local Authority should be alerted by the organisation submitting the request (or the CHSCP team) without delay. The Local Authority will decide whether a notification to the Panel should be made.
- 11.3 For cases that do not require notification, valuable learning can nonetheless be accrued for safeguarding practitioners. These cases will be considered at the scheduled meetings of the CHSCP Case Review sub-group and a decision made as to whether a multi-agency case review will be initiated. Requests for a case to be considered for review should be made using the [cases for consideration notification form](#).

12. Contact Details

Ofsted:

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Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel:

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CHSCP Team

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