



Parent's Guide to Child Protection Conference

What is a Child Protection Conference?

A Child Protection Conference is a meeting between family and the professionals who are most involved with your child/ren. The aim of the conference is to discuss, and then decide what will support the wellbeing and safety of your child/ren.

There is an initial conference known as ICPC. This is the meeting where the discussion first takes place, and the decision is made about whether your child/ren is placed on a child protection plan. This initial conference is followed by review conferences known as RCPC. The first RCPC takes place within three months of the ICPC to review progress of the child protection plan; then again, at least every six months while the child protection plan remains in place.

Working Together 2023 provides statutory guidance on how conferences should be conducted and who should attend.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Who attends the Conferences?

There are a number of professionals invited to a conference which include your child's social worker, school, health visitor and Police.

They are asked to provide written information to all conferences and attend where necessary. If an invited professional is unable to attend, they will submit a written report setting out their views. Professionals should share their report with you before the conference, the Police will determine what information they will share depending on the specific circumstances of the child protection conference.

We always want the child to be involved and your child/ren can be offered an advocate from our independent children's advocacy service to help share their views.

<https://www.york.gov.uk/children-families/speak/1>

It is very important that you as parents/carers attend all conferences about your child/ren and that you are part of the discussion and contribute towards the development of a plan to keep your child/ren safe. We know this can be difficult so you can ask another adult to come to support you; this may be friend or advocate. It is very

rare that you will not be able to attend all of the conference, if this happens the reason will be explained, and your views will be reported into the conference by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) or social worker.

What happens at the Conference?

The social worker prepares a report for the conference setting out what is going well for your child; strengths and safety, the worries and risks. This report will be made available to you at least three days prior to the conference so you have opportunity to read it ask any questions, share your views and be prepared for the conference.

The chairperson of the meeting is called an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). They work for the Local Authority, sit separately to the social work teams and are managed by different managers. Their view is independent to that of the social work teams.

They will make contact with you before the conference to explain the meeting. and check you have had chance to read the reports provided by other professionals and ask if there are any specific issues that they would like to raise.

In York we use a Signs of Safety approach within the conferences. The information shared is organised into:

- Family and Network Details – who loves your child/ren and supports you?
- What has got us to this point? First/Worst/Last incidents which have led to concerns.
- What is working well? Strengths and safety which already exist.
- What we are worried about? Past harm, future danger, complicating factors
- Danger Statement and Safety Goal
- Scaling Question (everyone is expected to scale within the meeting, even if it is the first-time hearing all of the information).
- Planning – what needs to happen next

The IRO will lead the discussion, ask relevant questions and ask for contributions from all members of the meeting. Towards the end of the meeting, you and professionals will listen to the scaling question.

You will hear a clearly defined question where 10 is the best, most safe outcome and 0 is the worst, most worrying situation and you will be asked to give a scale and why you think this. This is an important part of being able to measure the risk, as well as using

this as a starting point to show progression and reduction in risk as things move forward.

All professionals will be expected to give a view about whether they believe a child protection plan is needed, or not and the reason they think this. You will be present for this discussion and can offer a view but will not be part of the decision making.

What happens if your child has a Child Protection Plan?

If your child/ren become subject to a Child Protection Plan a social worker is appointed as the lead practitioner.

A Core Group made up of family members and professionals who are involved with your child or family will be identified to work closely to achieve the actions outlined in the Child Protection Plan.

The first Core Group meeting must take place within 10 working days of the ICPC. A copy of the Child Protection Plan is sent to you within 48 hours of the conference.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the conference you can talk to the IRO, your child's social worker or make a complaint to haveyoursay@york.gov.uk.



Where do I go for further information?

Please visit the [CYSCP website](#) for up to date information and latest news.