



Child Protection Conferences

A guide for parents and families



**achieving
for children**

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1. What is a child protection conference

A child protection conference is a meeting between a family and professionals that is held when there is a concern about the safety of a child.



The professionals will be people involved with you and your child.

As a parent you can bring one person to support you. This can be a family member or friend.



Please remember they will hear all your information.

You can bring a solicitor to listen and give you advice, but they cannot talk in the conference or ask people questions.

2. Who attends

Conference Chair



The Chair is an experienced social work manager who is independent from your child's social work team. Their job is to run the meeting in accordance with the child protection procedures. They will meet you just before the conference to talk about the meeting and how they can support you to take part.

The Chair will give everyone a chance to speak, will help to build a plan of what needs to happen and is responsible for the final decision about whether the plan is called a child protection plan.

Can my child come to conference?

If your child is 12 years or older they can attend part or all of their conference. They can also share their views in other ways for example by writing a letter, through an advocate or talking to the Chair.



Social worker and social work manager

You have already met your social worker as this will be the person who completed the assessment with you and your family.



Sometimes the social work manager attends the conference.

You may meet the new social worker in the meeting if your family will be transferred.



Which other professionals might attend

Education: If your child is at nursery or school, they will be invited.



Health: If you have a child under 5 years old, your health visitor or someone from the health visiting service will be invited.



If your child is over 5 years old and attends school, the school nurse will be invited.

Your GP will be invited to share relevant health information about you and your child, usually in a written report.

Police: A representative from the police will attend the first conference. They send the chair written information for every conference and their report is shared verbally in the meeting.



Other professionals working with you and your child would be invited. For example someone supporting you with mental health, domestic abuse, substance misuse or probation.

They will be asked to attend to share information about you and your child, to see how they can help and to make decisions.

Reports

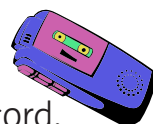
All the professionals invited to the conference write a report about how they support you and your child, what they think is working well and what they are worried about. The social worker writes an assessment.



Each professional is responsible for their own report and will share this with you two working days before the first conference, and five working days before any other conferences.

Recording

The meeting will be audio recorded and this recording will be held securely on your child's record.



A written summary of the conference and the plan will be typed onto a board during the conference and will be sent to you within one working day of the meeting, with a letter confirming the decision of the conference.

3. What happens at a conference

The Chair will ask everyone to say their name and how they are involved with your family.

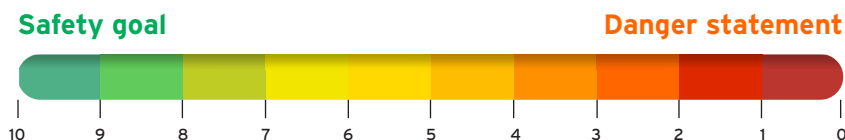


They will ask the social worker to read out the danger statement from their assessment and explain why the conference is needed.

They will ask you what you think and what works well in your family. The professionals will share their views.



The Chair will type the key points on a board for everyone to see and ask you to think about what safety goals we should work towards.



Everyone in the conference will be asked to use this scale to think about how confident they are that we have achieved the safety goals for your child. The Chair will ask everyone for their reasoning.

The plan

In the meeting everyone will agree a plan of what needs to happen next to support you to achieve your child's safety goals. Everyone will think about what things may help. It is important to make sure that the plan is right for you and your family.



Decision making

The Chair will ask the professionals whether they think your child is at risk of significant harm based on the information available. Each professional must give their opinion and the chair will confirm the decision of the meeting. The decision of the Chair is final.



If the decision is that your child is at risk of significant harm, then the plan will be called a child protection plan.

4. What happens after a conference

The written summary and plan will be sent to you within one working day of the meeting, with a letter confirming the decision of the conference.



If a child protection plan is made there will be regular core group meetings when family and professionals meet to look at how the plan is working.

The social worker will visit your child at least every 10 working days, usually at home.



Another conference is held in three months and then every six months. A decision to end the child protection plan can only be made at conference.

5. How to prepare for conference

It might be helpful for you think about the strengths of your family.



What you are worried about.



What the next steps might be for you and your family.

You can always put your thoughts in writing and send these to the Chair two working days before the meeting.

6. Your right to complain

The Local Safeguarding Children's Board has a complaints process to challenge the decision of the conference if you think, for example, that process was not followed or you have reason to believe that the decision of the conference was incorrect.



If you wish to access this process please put your concerns in writing and send this to the Chair as soon as possible. If you would like someone to help you to write this you can speak to the social worker.

