

# Context conferences

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A guide for professionals



**achieving  
for children**

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## 1. What is a context conference?

Contextual safeguarding and exploitation is harm which occurs outside of the family in spaces and places often identified within community settings and typically from someone who is not a family member.

A context conference is a meeting about the specific location with the key professional from that space or place. Professionals and community members attend who are connected or responsible for the location and can assist in developing safety from a child safeguarding perspective.

The focus of the meeting is to support and plan around the location, rather than a focus on a named child or family. Individual child and family details are not to be discussed in context conferences.

## **2. Who attends the context conference**

### **Can children or families attend the meeting?**

No.

### **Chair**

The chair is an experienced social work manager and child protection conference chair who is independent from the assessment and intervention of the location. Their job is to run the meeting.

The chair will give everyone a chance to speak and will help to build a plan of what needs to happen.

### **Context assessor**

This is the children's social care professional who has completed the context assessment and the contextual safeguarding complex strategy meeting.

### **Which other professionals might attend**

When deciding who to invite, it is important to consider who has the capacity to implement change in the context and who is best placed to represent community opinions of those that may be affected by the interventions. Each professional invited to attend will be asked to share information about the location to see how they can help with the plan.

The following list outlines a range of practitioners or agencies that could be represented.

- Children's Social Care (but not any individual children's social workers)
- Local council representatives
- Community safety
- Environmental health
- Licensing
- Transportation
- Education and local schools
- Representation from parents forum (or similar)
- Representation from young people or school council (where relevant)
- Police (safer schools officer or community police)
- Youth Justice Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHs)
- Local youth provision
- Voluntary and community organisations
- Health – school nurse
- Health – sexual health
- Housing
- Local businesses

## Reports

Most professionals who are invited to the meeting write a report about how they support the location or community space. This should include what they think is working well and what they are worried about.

Each professional is responsible for their own report and will share this with the chair prior to the context conference.

## Recording

The chair electronically captures the key discussion points and this is presented on a screen during the meeting. This document, which includes the intervention plan, is circulated by the conference service within one working day of the conference.

The meeting will also be audio recorded and a copy of this audio recording will be safely stored by Achieving for Children. The audio recording will not be circulated to meeting attendees.

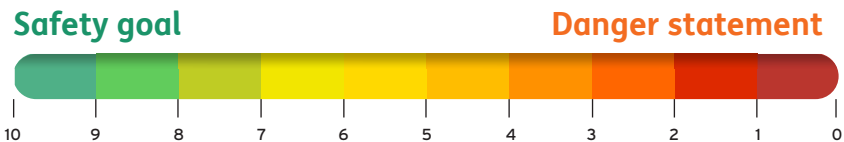
### 3. What happens at a context conference

The chair will ask everyone to say their name and how they are involved with the location.

They will ask the context assessor to read out the danger statement from their assessment and explain why everyone is there.

They will ask the location lead what they think and the meeting attendees will share their views.

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



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

#### The plan

A context intervention plan will be agreed at the context conference about what needs to happen next to achieve the location's safety goals. Everyone will think about what things may help. It is important to make sure that the plan is right for the location and community. It will be the responsibility of individual agencies to follow up and provide progress updates at subsequent review meetings.

## **4. What happens after a context conference**

The written summary and plan will be sent to professionals within one working day of the meeting.

The context assessor will continue to review the circumstances with the identified professional network and work towards achieving the goals together.

Another context conference may be held in three months.

## **5. How to prepare for a context conference**

Please consider if all the appropriate people have been invited.

It might be helpful for you to think about the strengths of the location. What you are worried about, what might make things safer in the location and how that could be achieved.

You can always put your thoughts in writing and send these to the chair before the meeting.

## **6. Your right to complain**

If you are concerned about something that happened in the context conference, please talk to the chair as soon as possible. We want to work with you and it's important that you are comfortable with all the support that is being provided.

