PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

Child Protection Conferences

Date of original document  | July 2009
Date document reviewed    | Feb 2018
Date for next review      | December 2020
This guidance should be read in addition to Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children’ March 2018 see for more details and link to Working Together 2018: http://erscb.eastriding.gov.uk/about-erscb/

INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE
The decision whether or not to hold a conference is made when, at the conclusion of enquiries under Section 47 (Children Act 1989), there are concerns that the child/ren maybe at continuing risk of significant harm.
All child protection conferences convened within the East Riding of Yorkshire use the Signs of Safety approach.

An initial child protection conference (ICPC) should take place:
- Within 15 working days of the last strategy discussion/meeting;
- Within 15 working days of notification that a child in another authority is going to move permanently into the area.
- After 24 weeks gestation in the case of an unborn child, however, there may be circumstances when holding an earlier Child Protection Conference is beneficial in the interests of the child and family.

CHILD PROTECTION REVIEW CONFERENCE (RCPC)
A review conference is called in the first instance within 3 months of the ICPC and thereafter at no more than 6-monthly intervals, for as long as the child/ren are subject to a child Protection Plan.

Role of the Social Worker
- To ensure appropriate agency representatives and the family are invited through the completion of the ‘Part A’ request form (the chair will agree the final attendance and may choose to partially or fully exclude attendees). The single assessment and child’s plan and a genogram/eco map for each child/family is available to the conference chair 3 working days prior to the conference date.
- To ensure that the child and family are fully informed about the purpose of the conference and what happens and their level and form of participation, (all children above the age of 10 years are invited to attend conference with the support of an advocate).
- Consideration should be given to inviting or representing the views of any person with parental responsibility or individuals with whom the child has shared a “family life”, close friends or extended family members who form part of the ‘safety network’ for the child/ren.

Role of professionals/agencies
- To attend when invited, but if unable to do so, they must submit a written report and, wherever possible, a well briefed agency representative
- A report, from each agency, is available to the conference chair 3 working days prior to the conference date, this must have been shared with the child/ren and family before conference.
**Role of the chair**

In the East Riding child protection conferences are chaired by Children’s Independent Safeguarding & Reviewing Officers (CISRO’s).

- They meet with the child and family in advance of the conference and explain the Signs of Safety approach. They ensure that the family have sight of all the reports available to the meeting and that these have been read and understood.

- The chairs will ensure that the conference is quorate. As a minimum, at every conference there should be attendance by local authority children’s social care and at least two other professional groups or agencies who have had direct contact with the child/ren. In exceptional circumstances where a child/ren have not had contact with three agencies this minimum quorum may be breached, for example a pre-birth conference.

- They will enable the full contribution of family and professionals present. If there is ‘third party’ information that an agency is concerned about sharing within the conference, they should discuss this with the chair. It is the chair’s decision as to whether information should be shared however good practice should ensure the full participation of the child and family in the conference despite the introduction of additional information.

- The chair will record the discussions held within conference in accordance with the Signs of Safety approach and will formulate the outline child protection plan from the information gathered. The professionals in attendance will be asked to decide if the child/ren are to be subject to a child protection plan and under what category.

- If there is a disagreement or no clear decision reached to place a child/ren on a child protection plan or remove them the chair will request that professionals briefly break from conference to seek advice from their managers. Following this process if resolution can still not be reached the chair will request that the conference is adjourned and rescheduled within 3 working days in line with the ‘Resolving Inter-agency disagreement’ protocol.

- The child protection plan will endeavour to be distributed to relevant agencies and the family within 24 hours and the summary of discussion within 20 working days of the conference.

- The chair will ensure a core group is arranged within 10 working days of an ICPC and following an RCPC agree the core group date as appropriate.

**DISCONTINUING A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN**

A child should no longer be the subject of a plan if conference decides that they no longer continue to be or are likely to suffer significant harm, they have reached 18 years of age, have died or have permanently left the UK. Consideration may be given to a Child In Need (CIN) plan as a step down to be managed by the social work team. The chair and child protection conference making this decision may specify how long they would wish the CIN plan to be in place.

Occasionally, removal from a child protection plan may be recommended by conference members on the completion of a specified legal process, for example obtaining an Interim Care Order or a Care Order. This may mean that for some children and young people they are subject to a child protection plan and are also ‘Looked After Children’ (LAC), in particular if they have been accommodated by East Riding Children’s Social Care under Sec 20 of the Children Act. Where appropriate East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership will ensure that the child continues to be reviewed through both processes by the same CISRO. When the legal process is completed members will be notified by letter.
A child/ren may also permanently move to another local authority area and in this case the receiving local authority should convene a child protection conference within 15 working days of being notified of the move.

If the whereabouts of children subject to a child protection plan are unknown the children will be reported as missing in accordance with the ‘runaway and missing from home and care protocol’ as follows:

The Safeguarding Missing Alert for Child Protection Cases Pro-Forma should be completed when a child or an expectant mother with her unborn baby goes missing and who is the subject of an East Riding Child Protection Plan. During office hours, the social worker or partner agency should contact the duty CISRO to discuss the case on 01482 396999. Following on from this discussion, the form will need to be completed as thoroughly as possible and as soon as is practicable and emailed to the Child Protection In-box. If the notification is outside of normal office hours, this contact must be to the EDT and the form emailed to EDT in addition to the Child Protection In-box for notification purposes – child.protection@eastriding.gcsx.gov.uk

National alerts will be sent out from ERSCP, containing the form, to all local authorities in the United Kingdom, the Protecting Vulnerable People unit (Humberside Police), East Riding EDT, the Policy, Partnership and Improvement Team, and local hospital contacts if their rough whereabouts are known. In the case of an unborn baby, maternity units local to the identified area will also be notified (contact numbers for which should be sourced as and when needed).

If you have further queries or questions relating to Child Protection Procedures, please use the following contact details: child.protection@eastriding.gcsx.gov.uk Tel.01482 396999.

Further relevant protocols can be accessed by following the links below:

Resolving Inter-Agency Disagreement Protocol
Runaway and Missing from Home and Care Protocol
**APPENDIX ONE**

**GP REPORT FOR AN INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Child</th>
<th>____________________________</th>
<th>DOB  <em><strong>/</strong></em>/___</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient ID number (found on the invitation)</td>
<td>____________________________ (needs to be included on invoice &amp; claim forms)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of GP</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Conference</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to attend</td>
<td>YES/ NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter as much information as possible in the report below. If you don’t have the information available, state ‘unable to comment’ or ‘not known’.

**PART A: Registration Details**

1) Date first registered at this practice: ___/___/____

2) Has the child been registered with any other GP practices since birth?
   YES/ NO   If yes, how many?

3) Please list whose notes you have reviewed in compiling this report and whether or not you hold a full copy of the records?

4) Are you aware of anyone else in the household who is not registered with the practice?

**Part B: Medical Details – Child**

1) Please give details of any health professional that is providing care for the child, other than their GP, Health Visitor or School Nurse?

2) Management of ongoing physical or psychological illness and/or injuries.
   (Please detail when last saw GP / and other professional; number of surgery attendances in past 12 months; number of unscheduled care attendances in past 12 months; any incidence of ‘Was Not Brought’/non-attendances, medication reviews, health monitoring reviews; whether prescriptions have been requested as expected and any comments on compliance with treatment)
3) Is there any significant past medical history?
(Please include details of prematurity, lack of compliance with immunisation schedule, illnesses, injuries, unscheduled care attendances (e.g. minor injury units, A&E departments, Out of Hours Centres, hospital admissions, referrals etc)

4) Do you have any concerns about the child’s growth, development or behaviour?
(If available, please also indicate recent height, weight, BMI and whether this is underweight, overweight or normal and date recorded)

5) Detail any outstanding medical interventions:
(e.g. Any vaccinations still outstanding; Outpatient appointments or investigations awaited etc)

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**PART C: Medical details – Parents/Carers. Please specify who your comments relate to.**

If you have been asked to complete a report for more than one child for the same case conference, and the information in this section is identical, you should indicate that this has been provided on another child’s report form rather than duplicating unnecessarily.

1) Management of relevant current or significant past physical or psychological illness and/or injuries affecting those who have parental responsibility for the child:
(Please detail when last saw GP/other professional, any recurrent non-attendance (DNAS), significant disabilities, ongoing or significant past medical or mental health issues, whether prescriptions have been requested as expected and any concerns about compliance etc)

2) Do you have any concerns about the child’s emotional needs being met by those who have parental responsibility? If you feel unable to comment, please state why (e.g. not enough knowledge of family?)
(Think: basic care, showing affection, defining boundaries, consistency of relationships, ensuring safety, providing stability etc)

3) Are you aware of any history of domestic abuse and/or misuse of substances, drugs or alcohol? If so, please detail below:-

4) Detail any outstanding medical interventions for those with parental responsibility (if relevant to include) (e.g. Outpatient appointments or investigations awaited) and any other comments about parents/carers?
PART D: Summary of information for Conference

1) Highlight any current **dangers/risks** that you are aware of (things that raise concern):

   (Think: recurrent non-attendances or unscheduled care presentations, late presentation to health care, no mention of Social Services involvement to you despite surgery attendances since your awareness of Social Services involvement, feedback from other health professionals that is of concern, immunisations behind, unkempt and unclean, consultation and waiting room behaviour concerns, >2 changes of address in past 12 months, knowledge of or disclosure of domestic abuse, parental mental health or substance misuse issues, only one parent/carer known to the practice, poor housing conditions etc)

2) Highlight any family **strengths/safety factors** that you are aware of (things that reduce risk/are resources):

   (Think: appropriate and timely access to health care settings for children and carers, demonstrating willingness to change, an awareness of Social Services involvement and why the child protection conference has been convened, timely collection of prescriptions, positive feedback from any MDT meetings/correspondence with other agencies, appropriate behaviour in consultation & waiting room, clean, appropriate interaction between parent/carer and child observed, a positive wider family member role-model who is in contact with the child/family etc)

3) Highlight any **grey areas/complicating factors** that you are aware of (things that are unclear/contribute to greater difficulty for the family):

   (Think: child has poor/age inappropriate social/self-care skills, child presents with emotional difficulties, school refusal, parental physical/mental ill-health, complex care needs of sibling or other family member, timeliness of immunisations, hygiene issues etc)

4) From your perspective, what actions would you recommend/suggest in order to make things safer for the child?

   (Think: e.g appropriate health professional review, engagement with outstanding medical interventions/outstanding immunisations/medication reviews? etc)

5) In summary where you have concerns, on a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your level of concern? 

   ____/ 10

   (Where 1 is VERY CONCERNED & 10 is NOT CONCERNED. Please explain the main reason for your conclusion)

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**Name/role of person completing the form:**

**Name of GP if completed by another person (which confirms the GP has read and agreed the content):**

**Date:**

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It is standard procedure for all agencies involved to share their report with parents (and the child/young person if appropriate) **before** the conference, and document any feedback/comments received. This enables awareness of the information that will be shared and discussed at the Conference itself with parents and other agencies.
If there are specific reasons not to do so, you should contact the Conference Chair and discuss your concerns/reasons for not sharing information and document this in the box below.

The local Named GPs for Safeguarding Children can be contacted for advice if you are unsure:
Dr Sarah Coope for Hull (07702 657506) or Dr Helen Thackray for East Riding (Via Health House Willerby 01482 650700)

Telephone numbers for Safeguarding Partnership Conference Chairs:
Hull 01482 790933 East Riding: 01482 396999

If report not shared, please briefly indicate your reasons and state the name of the Conference Chair who you have discussed this with:

If report shared, please add any comments received:
A) Parents/Carers Comments:

B) Child/Young person’s Comments: (if appropriate to share)
**GP REPORT FOR A REVIEW CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Child</th>
<th>___________________________</th>
<th>DOB <em><strong>/</strong></em>/___</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient ID number</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
<td>(needs to be included on invoice &amp; claim forms)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of GP</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Conference</td>
<td><em><strong>/</strong></em><strong>/</strong>___</td>
<td>Date of previous conference <em><strong>/</strong></em><strong>/</strong>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to attend</td>
<td>YES / NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter as much information as possible in the report below. If you don’t have the information available, state ‘unable to comment’ or ‘not known’.

**PART A: Registration Details**

1) Date first registered at this practice: ___/___/_____

2) Has the child been registered with any other GP practices since birth? 
   YES/ NO  If yes, how many?

3) Please list whose notes you have reviewed in compiling this report and whether or not you hold a full copy of the records?

4) Are you aware of anyone else in the household who is not registered with the practice?

**Part B: Medical Details – Child**

1) Please give details of any health professional that is providing care for the child, other than their GP and Health Visitor/School Nurse?

2) Are there any new physical or psychological illnesses and/or injuries which have arisen since the previous conference (see date above)? 
   *(Please include detail of illnesses, injuries, hospital admissions, referrals, lack of compliance with vaccination schedule)*
### PART C: Medical details – Parents/Carers. Please specify who your comments relate to.

If you have been asked to complete a report for more than one child for this conference and the information is the same, you should indicate that this has been provided on another child’s report form rather than duplicating.

| 1) | Have there been any new relevant physical or psychological illnesses and/or injuries since the previous conference, affecting those who have parental responsibility for the child? |
| 2) | Any changes in current relevant physical or psychological health and/or injuries affecting those who have parental responsibility for the child since the last report? |

(Please detail when last saw GP/other professional, any recurrent non-attendance (DNAs), significant disabilities, ongoing medical or mental health issues, whether prescriptions have been requested as expected and any concerns about compliance)

| 3) | Do you have any concerns about the child’s emotional needs being met by those who have parental responsibility? If you feel unable to comment, please state why (e.g. not enough knowledge of family?) |

(Think: basic care, showing affection, defining boundaries, consistency of relationships, ensuring safety, providing stability)

| 4) | Are you aware of any ongoing history of domestic abuse and/or misuse of substances, drugs or alcohol since the last conference? If so, please detail below:– |
5) Detail any outstanding medical interventions for those with parental responsibility (if relevant to include) and any other relevant comments about parents/carers: (e.g. Outpatient appointments or investigations awaited)

**PART D: Summary of information for Conference**

1) Highlight any current dangers/risks that you are aware of (things that raise concern):  
(Think: recurrent non-attendances or unscheduled care presentations, late presentation to health care, no mention of Social Services involvement to you despite surgery attendances since your awareness of Social Services involvement, concerning feedback from other health professionals, immunisations behind, unkempt and unclean, consultation and waiting room behaviour concerns, >2 changes of address in past 12 months, knowledge or disclosure of domestic abuse, parental mental health or substance misuse issues, only one carer known to the practice, poor housing conditions)

2) Highlight any family strengths/safety factors that you are aware of (things that reduce risk/ are resources):  
(Think: appropriate and timely access to health care settings for children and carers, demonstrating willingness to change, an awareness of Social Services involvement and why the child protection conference has been convened, timely collection of prescriptions, positive feedback from any MDT meetings/correspondence with other agencies, appropriate behaviour in consultation & waiting room, clean, appropriate interaction between parent/carer and child observed, a positive wider family member role-model who is in contact with the child/family)

3) Highlight any grey areas/complicating factors that you are aware of (things that are unclear/contribute to greater difficulty for the child):  
(Think: child has poor/age inappropriate social/self-care skills, child presents with emotional difficulties, school refusal, parental physical/mental ill-health, complex care needs of sibling or other family member, timeliness of immunisations, hygiene issues etc)

4) From your perspective, what actions would you recommend/suggest in order to make things safer for the child?  
Think: e.g. appropriate health professional review, engagement with outstanding medical interventions/ outstanding immunizations/medication reviews etc)

5) Where you have concerns, on a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your level of concern? _____/ 10  
(Where 1 is VERY CONCERNED & 10 is NOT CONCERNED. Please explain the main reason for your conclusion)

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<th>Date:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name of GP if completed by another person (which confirms the GP has read and agreed the content):</td>
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</table>

It is standard procedure for all agencies involved to share their report with parents (and the child/young person if appropriate) before the conference, and document any
feedback/comments received. This enables awareness of the information that will be shared and discussed at the Conference itself with parents and other agencies. If there are specific reasons not to do so, you should contact the Conference Chair and discuss your concerns/reasons for not sharing information and document this in the box below.

The local Named GPs for Safeguarding Children can be contacted for advice if you are unsure:
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Telephone numbers for Safeguarding Partnership Conference Chairs:
Hull 01482 790933  East Riding 01482 396999

If report not shared, please briefly indicate your reasons and state the name of the Conference Chair who you have discussed this with:

If report shared, please add any comments received:-
A) Parents/Carers comments:

B) Child/Young Person’s comments: (if appropriate to share)
# APPENDIX TWO

## ERSCP

**Strictly Confidential**

### Agency Child Protection Conference Report Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child/ren’s Name/s:</th>
<th>Date of Birth:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name (printed)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date report completed</th>
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Please complete all of the boxes where the asterisk is marked.

**The boxes will expand on completion**

This completed form should be returned to the Child Protection inbox three working days prior to the Conference

child.protection@eastriding.gcsx.gov.uk
Please identify Key Events in your work with the family
(this could include for example; how long you have worked with the family; what work you have completed; what worked well/not so well; any failed appointments/contacts; your relationship with the family. Please ‘bullet point’ Key events)

*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are you worried about?</th>
<th>What is working well?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Harm</strong> (actual) - evidence the impact on the child</td>
<td><strong>Safety</strong> (strengths, proven and tested to keep the child safe over time)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Complicating Factors</strong> (behaviours of the parent or child that may pose a risk)</td>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong> (positive aspects of the situation or things being done to address the worry)</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Things that are making this harder to deal with)</td>
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</table>

Safety Scale (Your Judgement)
Please mark and score on the scale of 0 - 10, where 0 means you cannot be more worried and 10 means you would be happy for the child not to be placed on a plan or if this is a review conference for the child protection plans to be removed.

| 0 | 10 |

**Agency Goals**
(What do you and your agency need to see to be satisfied that this child is safe in their current living circumstances and for you to increase your score on the Safety Scale?)

*  

**Parents Goals**
(Following the sharing of this report with parents/carers, what are their goals?)

*  

**Child/ren’s Goals**
(Include any comments made to you by the child about their goals)

*
Note
The information contained within this report is owned and provided by Humberside Police on the understanding that it will be used for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child/children in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013. Any sensitive information deemed relevant is to be included in the Confidential Information section. This will be shared with the Chair of the meeting and other professionals present. This information is NOT for sharing with family members or third parties unless deemed necessary by the local authority to share the information in order to safeguard a child/children from an identified risk. The authorisation of the author is otherwise required for the information to be disclosed.

Any information shared between partner agencies should be in accordance with agreed information sharing protocols within that local authority and the Data Protection Act. Information must NOT be disclosed to any third party without prior written consent from the Chief Constable, unless the local authority share the information for the purposes of safeguarding a child/children from an identified risk. Unauthorised use or disclosure of the content may be unlawful.

If the matter goes into proceedings before the Family Court, the Chief Constable will be notified and given the opportunity to refuse to disclose the information.

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<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
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</table>
2 Parents / Carers / Relevant Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Relationship to child</th>
<th>Police checks Y/N</th>
<th>Address</th>
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*NB - Where police checks have not been undertaken and are deemed necessary for the purposes of the case conference, please submit a request for checks on the relevant police form. This will require the written consent of the person the information relates to.

Date and time of conference :
Location of Conference :
Agency : Police

3 Chronology of Significant Events

Include relevant events and actions taken. Please indicate whether the child was present or seen during a significant event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Event</th>
<th>Summary of Events</th>
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</table>
3 Views of the Child / Children
(If recorded on police systems. If not recorded, make reference to this)

4 What are the current risks to the Child/Children?
Please provide details of risk or vulnerability and identify any safeguarding issues

THIRD PARTY CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION
This information is only for disclosure to the Conference Chair and the professionals attending the conference. It is only to be used for the purpose of decision making for safeguarding children and is not to be disclosed to any third party without the authority of the Chief Constable of Humberside Police, unless the local authority make the decision to share the information in order to safeguard the child/children from an identified risk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Event</th>
<th>Summary of Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
THIRD PARTY CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ENDS HERE

Attendance Criteria

The child(ren) are subject to a current police investigation concerning physical or sexual abuse within the family, or are the subject of enquiries relating to s47 of the Children Act 1989. The child(ren) have previously been the subject of a police investigation concerning physical or sexual abuse within the family and there is clear evidence of an escalation in risk of significant harm.

The case involves an active police investigation of suspected wilful neglect.

The reason for the conference has arisen out of the child(ren) being placed in police protection.

Complex/serious domestic violence where DV co-ordinators have current direct involvement with the family in order to manage risk.

The conference has arisen from the presence or association of a registered sexual offender within the household.

Any other case subject to the agreement of a PVP Supervisor and the Case Conference Chair.
APPENDIX FOUR

Child Protection Conferences A Guide for Parents/Carers

What is a Child Protection Conference?

A child protection conference is a meeting which is held when Children’s Social Care or another agency are concerned that your child or children are at risk of suffering significant harm. It may be that an ‘enquiry’ has taken place, often referred to as a Section 47 enquiry. A social worker will start to complete an assessment to look at all aspects of your family life and the care of your child/ren.

What is the purpose of the Child Protection Conference?

As a parent / carer, you should always be invited to attend a Conference unless there are really good reasons given as to why you should not attend (see note about exclusions).

The professionals who are attending the conference will have written a report. Where appropriate they should have talked to you about the issues contained in their report prior to conference.

The chair of the conference will ensure that you have a key role in contributing to the conference and will be asked to express your views, ask questions and correct information given by other people present.

You may bring a friend, relative or Solicitor to a Conference to support you. The Conference chair will meet with you and your supporter before the Conference begins. However, this supporter will not be able to speak on your behalf or take part in the discussion, but they can take notes and remind you of things you want to say.

It is important to remember that if you are bringing a friend as a supporter, this needs to be someone you can truly trust as they may hear information about you and your family you may not wish them to know.

If you need any assistance so that you can attend the Conference, such as transport or child care, you should contact your Social Worker as soon as you receive the invitation.

Exclusion of a parent from a Child Protection Conference?

The decision not to allow you to attend a Conference is a very serious step, and the final decision about such an exclusion is made by the Independent Safeguarding & Reviewing Manager and the chair of the Conference.

Some of the reasons may include:

- The threat or risk of violence towards another family member or professional attending the Conference (this may be based on information given by the Police)
• Evidence that your child may be placed at risk of harm if you attend
• Evidence that taking part in the Conference may be harmful to your health or well being
• Evidence that you are under the influence of drugs / alcohol

The exclusion will usually be to the Initial child protection conference only until any risks identified above can be assessed or understood.

**If I decide not to attend the conference or I am excluded, how will my voice be heard?**

If you decide that you would rather not attend the Conference, or you have been asked not to attend on this occasion, it is still important that your views are included in the discussion.

You may give information to the Social Worker, or by writing/emailing/telephoning the conference chair, who will read out your information at the Conference (please use the address/email address or telephone number on your invitation).

**The Conference Process:**

The conference chair will make sure that everyone in the meeting has the chance to say what they think and take part in the discussion.

If you are attending the conference, the chair will meet with you before it starts to let you know who will be there, what will happen during the meeting and check that you have received copies of the reports prepared by the professionals who know your child/ren, for the conference.

The conference will use the ‘signs of safety’ approach which may be different to child protection conferences you have attended in the past or in other areas of the country but it is hoped that you will feel more included in the meeting and able to discuss your worries more openly.

Any information gathered at the conference will be written up on whitePartnerships/paper for everyone to see. A summary of the discussions of what is said at the conference will be taken by a ‘child protection administrator’. After the conference, a record of these discussions will be sent to you within 20 working days of the conference taking place.

At the start of the Conference, everyone will be asked to introduce themselves before the Chair explains why the conference has been called and what the worries are for your child/ren’s safety and welfare.

All the people at the Conference, including yourself, but not your supporter, will then be able say what they think needs to be done to protect your child/ren.

If it has been decided that you will be excluded for part of the discussion, the chair will tell you before the Conference starts and will arrange for you to be taken into another room when the time comes.

At the end of the Conference, the Chair will go over the main points of what has been discussed and agreed, so that everyone at the Conference understands what needs to be done. Although you have been asked to contribute to the conference it is the professionals in attendance who will make the decision whether to place your child/ren on a ‘child in need plan’ or a ‘child protection plan’.
The content, although not the detail, of the Child Protection Plan will be agreed at the Conference and written down, and you will be sent a copy of this. A more detailed plan will be drawn up at the first meeting of the Core Group.

**What is a Child Protection Plan?**

Government guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2018) requires all local authorities to hold a list of all children who have a Child Protection Plan. The list contains information about:

- The child and his / her family
- The Professionals involved with the family
- The category of abuse or neglect
- Decisions and recommendations of Conferences

A Child Protection Plan does not affect your legal status as a parent or your responsibility for your child.

‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ sets out a number of categories for making a child the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

These are; Physical abuse, Emotional abuse, Sexual abuse & Neglect

**What does having a Child Protection Plan mean for my child and myself?**

If the Conference decides that a Child Protection Plan is necessary, a group of professionals, who will mostly be involved with you and your child, will meet regularly with you. This is called a Core Group. (a separate leaflet will be given to you if appropriate)

The Core Group will meet on a regular basis, to discuss the details of the Child Protection Plan and will to formulate a safety plan for your child/ren.

Within three months of the Initial Conference, a Child Protection Review must be held to make sure that the actions agreed at the Conference to improve your child/ren’s safety have taken place. Further Review Conferences must be held at least once every 6 months for as long as your child/ren is the subject of a Child Protection Plan. At each conference a decision will be made to either continue the child protection plans or cease them.

**What if I want to make a complaint?**

There is a complaints procedure if you or your child feels:

- Unhappy about the way a Conference was organised
- Unhappy about something which happened during a Conference
- The decision was not reached properly

A separate leaflet can be obtained from your Social Worker, the Chair of Conference or directly from the Children's Social Care Customer Relations Team

**Telephone Number:**  01482 393939

**E-mail - Customer.relations@eastriding.gcsx.gov.uk**

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APPENDIX FIVE

Child Protection Conferences A Guide for Professionals

The East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership (ERSCP) is committed to ensuring risk is robustly assessed and managed and that evidence based interventions are employed to ensure that wherever possible children can be safeguarded within their families.

The Signs of Safety approach was introduced into Child Protection Conferences in October 2013. This approach seeks to strengthen risk assessments and maximise family participation in conferences with the aim of improving the outcomes for children in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

What is a Child Protection Conference?
A Child Protection Conference is convened when concerns exist that children are suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, significant harm. At conferences information about the children and their parent’s capacity to safely care for them within the context of wider family support and their environment will be shared and analysed. Judgments will be made about the likelihood of children suffering significant harm in the future and decisions will be made about what action is needed to safeguard and promote their welfare.

If you are invited to a Child Protection Conference then your contribution is important. Please attend. If you cannot attend, please provide a report and arrange for a ‘well briefed colleague’ who is able to fully participate, to attend on your behalf.

Attendance by key partner agencies is monitored and reported to the ERSCP.

What you need to do before the Conference
It is important that families do not hear new information at the conference and it is the responsibility of all agencies that have relevant information to make this available to the conference in the form of a written, legible and signed report. The report should be provided to and discussed with parents, and children where appropriate, at least 48 hours in advance of an initial conference and 3 working days before a review conference.

These timescales are to give families sufficient time to prepare for such important meetings about their family life. Please respect them by keeping to these timescales.

The report should be provided to the Conference Chair at least 3 working days prior to conference. The expectation is that you will provide other agencies identified on the part A (attached) with copies of your reports at least 3 full working days prior to conference to enable sharing of information between professionals.
Please also ensure that you bring a **minimum of 6 copies** of your report with you to share with professionals.

To work collaboratively towards agreed goals we need to ensure that professionals as well as families are *held to account* for their contribution to safeguarding children. The Chair is responsible for quality assuring the practice of all the professionals involved in conference.

**The Conference Process**

- Thirty minutes before the Conference is scheduled to start you will be taken into a room to read all the reports.
- Please do not talk about the family during this reading time.
- At the same time, the Chair meets with family members in the conference room to talk about how the meeting will run and how they might best participate.
- The family may also read reports during this time and will check their genogram for factual accuracy. The family genogram is highlighted during the start of the conference and also ensures that all agencies have the correct family information, names, spellings and dates of birth.
- All conference members will then come together and the conference is convened. The Social Worker is the first professional asked to **summarise** what they know about the child and family, including what they consider to be the key dangers/harm factors and factors that help the child to be safer.
- Other professionals are then asked for their information. As all professionals will have read your report you only need to pull out your **key worries**. By keeping your information sharing succinct and focussed you will help to inform a clear plan to keep the child/ren safe.
- Family members are given the opportunity to ask questions about any information shared at conference, so it is important that you have prepared them for what you will be saying.
- When you are sharing the information take care in your analysis to distinguish between fact, observation, allegations and opinion. If opinions or general information is provided about a family or family member, the Chair will ask the presenter to provide the evidence on which the opinion or generalisation is based. When you provide information from another source i.e. it is second or third hand, this should be made clear.

The most pertinent points that are raised during discussions are written up by the chair into the following framework:

- **What are we Worried About**
- **What’s Working Well**
- **What Needs to Happen**

The chair will move between worries and what’s working well seeking views from all conference members.

The conference chair will then ask ‘What are you worried will happen to this child/children if nothing changes?’ (Danger Statements)
A Safety Judgment scale will also be used to ensure that all participants are enabled to make a judgement in respect of the safety of the child/ren.

The chair will then ask the social worker ‘Tell me what you need to see to be willing to close the case’. The chair will read the response in the workers words and then check out whether everyone agrees and if there is anything else.

The Plan
After relevant information has been shared the meeting starts to draw up the child protection plan to address the harm that has been identified. You need to be able to describe in concrete terms what you will see when things are ‘safe enough’. These outcome statements focus on the differences that you will see in the child. Alongside outcome statements, tasks for family members and professionals will start to be agreed. You will be asked to say what you can contribute to help achieve the outcomes and to commit to clear and achievable timescales for any tasks.

Decision Making
All professional members of the conference are asked about the future likelihood of significant harm to each of the children. This is the basis upon which a decision is then required from each member of the meeting about the status of the plan. That is, whether the plan should be a Child Protection Plan or a Children In Need plan.

Even if you have not met the family before you are still asked for your decision on the basis of the information presented to the conference. The Chair will explain the threshold for a Child Protection Plan and will ask each professional for their view on whether the threshold for a Child Protection Plan has been met and the reasoning behind your decision. You may be asked for a view on the category: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect.

The Chair makes a closing statement and includes the conference decision regarding the child/ren’s plan.

Attendance of Children and Wider Family at Conference
All children aged 10 years and over will normally be invited to their conference. In some circumstances the young person may choose not to attend in person but agree for their views to be represented at conference. A member of the Children Rights and Participation Team will always support the child if they wish.

A young person may attend for all or part of the conference; the Children Rights and Participation worker will be available to the child to help with this.

Wider family member/friends/neighbours may be invited to the conference if they need to know information in order to reduce the risk to the child and they are able to contribute to the task of keeping the child safer.

There may be occasions when family members are excluded from the conference. The decision to exclude resides with the chair and the Independent Safeguarding & Reviewing Manager; for information about the basis for exclusion please refer to ERSCP procedures.

Bringing a professional observer to Conference
As part of professional development you may want to bring a member of staff from your agency to attend the Conference as an observer. All enquires of this nature should be made to the chair
at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. If appropriate, the Chair will then seek the agreement of the family and the social worker and respond to the request. Any observers who have not followed this process may not be admitted to the meeting.

**When will I get copies of the Plan and summary of discussion?**
The child protection plan agreed at conference will aim to be sent out within 24 hours of the conference. The summary of discussion of the conference will be sent out by the unit within 20 working days of the conference. If you have any amendments to the accuracy of these, you should put your amendment in writing to the Chair **within 7 working days**.

**Confidentiality**
Information shared verbally or in writing in the Conference must only be shared outside the meeting if it is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children. The conference summary of discussion and any reports submitted to the meeting are confidential and should not be passed to a third party without the consent of either the Chair or through an order of the Court.

If you have any queries about child protection conferences that cannot be answered by reading the relevant part of the child protection procedures or discussion with your named / lead / designated Safeguarding Manager, then please contact us on 01482 396999.

**Feedback and Evaluation:**
At some point throughout the year you may be asked to complete an evaluation form to tell us how things went and we will use this information to think about conferences in the future. We will be trying to find out if the new way of doing things is better for families and helps children become safer and get the help they need more quickly.

Thank you for taking the time to read this guidance.