

## CASE REVIEW GROUP

# Protocol for Conducting Rapid Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

### APPENDIX 1:

Flowchart: Proposed Case Review Governance, expectations, including membership of CRG

## 1. SERIOUS CHILD SAFEGUARDING NOTIFICATION

A notifiable incident is one in which the local authority knows or suspects that a child has been abused or neglected and:

- (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. (Working Together 2018 Chapter 4 pp. 84)*

Any potential notifiable incident brought to the attention of either partner should be immediately discussed between the Council's Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Chief Executive of the Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST). If the partners agree that the incident should be notified as a serious incident, DCST on behalf of the local authority, must notify the National Panel within **5 working days** of becoming aware of the incident occurring. The notification should be copied to the Safeguarding Business Unit.

DCS must also notify Ofsted and the Secretary of State, within the same timescale, if a child dies and was in the care of the local authority, whether or not abuse or neglect is expected.

Along with relevant partners the local authority will take the necessary steps to ensure the child's, or any other children's, safety through normal statutory procedures.

On receipt of the notification, the Safeguarding Business Unit will immediately notify the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies of the incident. The Safeguarding Business Unit will immediately inform the Chair of the Case Review Group and the Independent Chair of the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

## 2. RAPID REVIEWS

The partnership will undertake a 'Rapid Review' within **15 working days of the incident being notified to the National Panel**, in line with National Panel guidance and Working Together 2018, in order to inform the recommendation of the safeguarding partners to the National Panel about whether a local or national child safeguarding practice review is required.

A Teams meeting will be convened within **48 hours** by CRG to discuss and confirm the case details, scope, etc. for the Rapid Review. Safeguarding Business Unit Manager/Business Unit will commence Rapid Review request using the relevant template within **5 working days of notification of incident to National Panel**. Agencies will inform senior officers of their agency of this request and will provide their returns to Safeguarding Business Unit within **5 days** of the request being made. The Safeguarding Business Unit will collate and prepare the returns for consideration by CRG at the Rapid Review Meeting to be convened. The date of this meeting is to be set at start of the process.

The Rapid Review meeting will be attended by Case Review Group members along with a representative of any other agency involved in the child's life, and DSCP legal representative as required.

The initial information returned by agencies will enable the Safeguarding Business Unit and the Rapid Review meeting to:

- Identify all relevant children and family members pertinent to the review;
- Be informed of any immediate safeguarding arrangements of any children involved and consider whether further action is needed;
- Produce a concise summary of the facts so far as they can be ascertained, about the serious incident and relevant context as known to each agency and a concise summary of each agency's involvement. This should give sufficient detail to underpin the analysis against the Working Together 2018 criteria, but does not require lengthy detailed chronologies of agency involvement that can obscure the pertinent facts;
- Make a clear recommendation as to whether the criteria for a local child safeguarding practice review have been met and on what grounds, and if not, why not, and to provide clear reasons for this recommendation;
- Make a recommendation on whether or not a national review would be considered necessary, and if so, why, and to provide clear reasons for this recommendation;
- Identify any immediate learning already established and plans for dissemination of this;
- Identify the potential for additional learning;
- If the decision is taken not to proceed with a local child safeguarding practice review, a summary of why it is thought there is no further learning to be gained;

As well as setting out the matters above, the recommendation to the safeguarding partners and National Panel will:

- Identify which agencies have been involved in the rapid review, explaining any agency omission whose involvement would be usually expected;
- Who has been involved in the decision-making process for the Rapid Review recommendation.

### **Authoring of the Rapid Review**

The Safeguarding Business Unit Manager or one of the professional members of staff employed by the Safeguarding Business Unit with the CRG Chair's support will prepare the record/report of the Rapid Review and recommendations. However exceptionally the Rapid Review Report may also be externally commissioned from a suitably experienced and qualified individual. The review author will be required to read all agency submissions and attend the Rapid Review Meeting.

### **Agreeing and signing off the recommendations of the Rapid Review**

The Safeguarding Business Unit will send the draft report including the Rapid Review recommendations, to the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies for sign-off. Approval/sign-off should be received **within 48 hours** of receipt of the draft report.

## **Informing the National Panel of the Rapid Review Decision**

The Rapid Review recommendation will be submitted on behalf of the safeguarding partners by the DSCP Business Unit along with a covering letter or email to the National Panel no later than the **15<sup>th</sup> working day** of notification to the National Panel.

The Rapid Review recommendation will state whether the case met or did not meet the CSPR criteria along with the reasons.

### **3. CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS (CSPR)**

#### **Purpose:**

Chapter 4 of Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 (WT 2018)<sup>1</sup> sets out arrangements for improving child protection and safeguarding practice. WT 2018 states that:

- *The purpose of reviews of serious child safeguarding cases, at both local and national level, is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. ...*
- *Reviews should seek to prevent or reduce the risk of recurrence of similar incidents. ....*
- *The responsibility for how the system learns the lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) and at local level with the safeguarding partners. ....*
- *Locally, safeguarding partners must make arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases which, in their view, raise issues of importance in relation to their area. They must commission and oversee the review of those cases, where they consider it appropriate for a review to be undertaken (WT 2018).*

### **4. CRITERIA FOR LOCAL CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW (CHAPTER 4 WORKING TOGETHER 2018 pp 86-88)**

In determining whether to carry out a local practice review the safeguarding partners must consider 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*

The safeguarding partners should also have regard to the following circumstances:

- *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*

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<sup>1</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2>

- *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*

Working Together 2018 (p 87) states that:

*Meeting the criteria does not mean that safeguarding partners must automatically carry out a local child safeguarding practice review. It is for them to determine whether a review is appropriate, taking into account that the overall purpose of a review is to identify improvements to practice.*

Working Together 2018 (p 88) also states that:

*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 where there has been good practice, poor practice or where there have been ‘near miss’ events. Safeguarding partners may choose to undertake a local child safeguarding practice review in these or other circumstances.*

## **5. NATIONAL REVIEWS**

*The criteria to be taken into account by the Panel for the purpose of section 16B(1) of the Act include whether the case in question—*

- (a) highlights or may highlight improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including where those improvements have been previously identified;*
- (b) raises or may raise issues requiring legislative change or changes to guidance issued under or further to any enactment;*
- (c) highlights or may highlight recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children.<sup>2</sup>*

## **6. CONDUCT OF CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS**

The statutory safeguarding partners are legally accountable (Children and Social Work 2017, Section 17) for the conduct, supervision, progress and quality of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

The CRG have delegated responsibility from the Safeguarding Partners for drafting terms of reference for approval by the safeguarding partners or nominated deputies, commissioning reviewers, overseeing the review, scrutinising the draft report, and agreeing the draft report for approval by the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies, and publication planning. The Chair of the CRG is responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding partners are kept informed of the progress of the review and issues that may require their consideration during the review process.

The CRG Chair must be at a senior level within DCST, e.g. at Assistant Director level. Members of CRG should be at an appropriate level of authority for decision-making on behalf of their agency, for example, Head of Service.

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<sup>2</sup> The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

The Case Review Group will be responsible for:

Facilitating the case review process (in accordance with statutory guidance) in its entirety, to include the following:

- Consideration of all cases referred to the CRG: both cases notified to the National Panel and requiring a Rapid Review, and cases that are not notified to the National Panel but are referred to the CRG.
- Overseeing the Rapid Review process and agreeing the draft report for sign off by the statutory safeguarding partners.
- Consideration of other review processes that partner agencies may have initiated or may initiate such as Serious Incident investigations within partner agencies; CDOP case review, etc.
- CRG via the Safeguarding Business Unit will maintain dialogue with the National Panel as relevant.
- CRG members will ensure that their agency provides the information required to inform any Rapid Reviews and CSPRs and learning reviews/activity.
- Commissioning of CSPRs and learning reviews/activity to be conducted through a range of methods
- Communicating and keeping the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies updated of the review's progress, and also the Independent Chair.
- Overseeing the quality and progress of reviews, including review reports.
- Agreeing a draft report of the CSPR for submission for approval by the statutory safeguarding partners of their nominated deputies
- Ensuring involvement of relevant children/young people, parents/families and practitioners in the CSPR.
- Escalating any concerns in relation to the review.
- Media planning and publication planning of reviews prior to publication involving relevant senior managers in agencies affected and Communications colleagues as appropriate.
- Disseminating learning as relevant within the partnership (through a range of methods and mechanisms, including briefings).
- Ensuring that the findings/learning inform policy and procedure development as relevant and audit and assurance activity (including connectivity around assurance with the SCP Quality Sub-group) to improve safeguarding practice.
- Monitoring progress on actions arising out of review activities.
- Actions to be included as part of case review discussion at CRG meetings and included in the CRG action log.
- Ensuring links around DHRs and SARs as well as Serious Incident reports conducted for any learning.

### **Other agency or SCP Referral to the CRG**

Where a practitioner believes that a case merits discussion at CRG, in relation to multi-agency practice/safeguarding learning, then they should discuss this with the safeguarding lead in their agency, who with support of their Senior Officer, will make a referral to the CRG. Upon receipt of a referral the Safeguarding Business Unit should immediately inform the CRG Chair (and the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies and the DSCP Independent Chair for their information). The referral should be considered by CRG, who may agree to undertake an internal multi-agency learning review.

DSCP will respond to requests for information to support rapid reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews from other Safeguarding Children's Partnerships. On receipt of such a request, the Safeguarding Business Unit will immediately inform the CRG Chair, and the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies. The information requested will be collated and supplied by the Safeguarding Business Unit. There should be regular update on these cases at the CRG until they are concluded.

**7. COMMISSIONING A LOCAL SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW (WT 2018 and Regulation 12 - 14 of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 16F) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/section/16F>**

Where the decision is made to commission a CSPR, from an Independent Reviewer, the Safeguarding Business unit will co-ordinate the tendering process for the Safeguarding Partners, based on the draft terms of reference. The selection of a reviewer will take into account the following:

- Professional knowledge, understanding and relevant experience of the review author and Chair
- Knowledge and understanding of research
- Any conflict of interest
- And other criteria as described in WT 2018 (pp 89)
- Tendered day rate

The proposed selection of a reviewer must be agreed by the CRG Chair, and signed off by the accountable officers of the safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies.

The Safeguarding Business Unit will be responsible for issuing a contract to the selected reviewer. This will include the agreed day rate, the expected total maximum days for the review, and arrangements for agreeing any additional work beyond the expected total number of days.

The CRG will support the Independent Reviewer to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made and quality is maintained and also make certain that:

- Practitioners are fully involved and contribute their perspective
- Families/parents/children and young people are informed and invited to contribute to reviews.
- Consideration has been given to utilising advocacy when capturing the views of children and young people during the review process or of parents with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The CRG group will quality assure the draft and final version of the review to ensure that the final report contains analysis, a summary and recommendations for further action with relevant agencies identified and focussed on improving outcomes for children (in accordance to Working Together 2018). The group will also be responsible for ensuring progress against any action plan arising from the review and for feeding into the other relevant sub-groups to take forward learning from reviews, and seeking assurance, for example the Quality sub-group.

**Flowchart - Proposed Case Review Governance, expectations, including membership of CRG**

**Serious Incident Requiring Notification**

**Local Authority**

DSCT (on behalf of the LA) notifies National Panel of serious incidents within 5 days and also notifies the Safeguarding Business Unit within the same 5 days and DSCT submits the referral to the DSCP for CRG.

**All Other Agencies**

Partner agency via their Safeguarding Lead or CRG representative, with support of their Senior Officer make a referral to Safeguarding Business Unit for consideration by CRG. Other SCPs may also make a referral to CRG

**Case Review Referral Form received by DCSP Business Office**

Safeguarding Business Unit upon receipt of referral will immediately notify the CRG Chair; and the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies and the DSCP Independent Chair. A teams meeting will be convened **within 48 hours** by CRG to discuss Rapid Review, scope, etc. Safeguarding Business Unit Manager/office commences Rapid Review request **within 5 working days**. Agencies to provide their returns to DSCP office **within 5 days**. Safeguarding Business Unit will collate returns and prepare for consideration by CRG at Rapid Review Meeting to be convened (date to be set at the start of the process).

**Case Review Referral Form received by DCSP Office**

Upon receipt of a referral the Safeguarding Business Unit should immediately inform the CRG Chair (and the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies and the DSCP Independent Chair for their information). The referral should be considered by CRG, who may agree to undertake an internal multi-agency learning review.

**Rapid Review (RR) Meeting**

1. At the Rapid Review meeting the CRG Chair will confirm the purpose of the meeting and ensure that an overview of the case is outlined based on the information available at that time.
2. The Safeguarding Business Unit Manager will remind the meeting of the options available to them in considering the circumstances of the case, based on WT 2018. Legal advice should be provided by the DCSP Legal Advisor if required.
3. All agencies present will be required to give an overview of the information known to them. The CRG Chair will seek to ensure that information is clear and unambiguous. Consideration will be made of any issues of national interest or importance, and of immediate learning. Representatives at the meeting will make a recommendation to the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their deputies. The DSCP Independent Chair will also be informed of the recommendation.
4. The CRG Chair will ensure an accurate summary of information is articulated for the record of the Rapid Review and key information is carefully considered to determine whether the criteria for CSPR is met or not.
5. The Safeguarding Business Unit Manager, with the CRG Chair's support, will prepare the record/report of the Rapid Review and recommendations for those present at the meeting, the CRG.
6. The draft report to be sent to the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their deputies for sign-off within 48 hours upon receipt of the draft report.
7. The approved Rapid Review Record/report is submitted to the National Panel within 15 working days of receipt of the referral.

**Outcome of the Rapid Review recommendations and Safeguarding Partners Decision**

Safeguarding Business Unit Manager provides Rapid Review Outcome to National Panel (by day 15)

National Panel send acknowledgement of receipt and date of their panel. Panel response is expected within 10 working days of the date of their meeting

Safeguarding Business Unit – Communicate outcome of National Panel decision to CRG Chair, the accountable officers of the statutory partners or their deputies and DSCP Independent Chair

## CSPR/REVIEW PROCESS GOVERNANCE

**CRG:** have delegated responsibility from the SCPs, to carry out all activity related to undertaking reviews – from receiving the notification/referral to completion of the review, publication, dissemination of learning and monitoring of action plans – see TOR for details. There is an expectation for CRG Chair to be at a sufficiently senior and competent level at an Assistant Director level with CRG membership to be at an appropriate level of authority/decision making for example at Head of Service.

**Accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies Touch point:** They are updated on reviews/progress; Independent Chair is informed for comments and advice. Expectation of senior officer responsibility to oversee overall review process and for sign-off of review reports.

**CRG:** Agree on approach and keep the accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their deputies informed of the reviews. CRG commission the review and/or Independent reviewer accordingly. CRG monitor all aspects of the review, including progress and quality of the any reports; CRG agree for a draft report to send to accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their deputies and Independent Chair for comments early-on. CRG sign-off final draft report for circulation to relevant agencies' senior officers for sign-off, accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their deputies sign-off and Independent Chair sign-off.  
Escalation of any concerns to: Assistant Director, Education, Skills, Culture and Heritage, Learning and Opportunities

**Accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their nominated deputies Touch point:** They are kept informed and report shared with them.

**CRG:** Prepare publication and media planning prior to publication involving relevant senior managers in agencies affected and Communications colleagues as appropriate – to keep accountable officers of the statutory safeguarding partners or their deputies and Independent Chair informed.

**CRG:** Publish report and disseminate learning via CRG, DSCP, and workforce development and any other relevant sub-groups and partnerships. Prepare and disseminate briefings.

Within 6 months of decision - complete the Review