

# Child Protection Conference Professional Dissent Process

## Confidentiality

Any information discussed or shared in a conference is covered by the Data Protection Act and is confidential. Information shared in conference and reports and minutes received should not be placed in the public arena including internet sites or forums. Information should not be shared outside of conference unless by not doing so puts a child at risk. Reports can be shared with a Parental Responsibility holder's legal representative to assist with representation. It may not be used in legal proceedings with the exception of child care proceedings or where permission from the chair of conference has been obtained.

Child Protection Conferences bring together professionals who know children and families who we may be worried about.

It is important that everyone has their say and is able to talk about the things that work well for the child as well as the things people are worried about.

The objective of the meeting is to then make a really good plan based on what everyone agrees needs to be in place to help make things better to ensure children are safe and protected from harm.

There may be times that professionals strongly disagree with the outcome of a conference, (whether the child has or has not been made subject to a Child Protection Plan) despite having all the information and hearing what everyone has to say. You may believe that threshold has or has not been reached (see reverse of the Agenda for Conference).

It is important that dissents are properly considered. Therefore there is a process to escalate your concerns. It is always preferable that you raise your concerns in the Conference so that the issues can be properly explored. You will be encouraged to formally dissent should you continue to disagree.

So that the process can be effective it is helpful that you keep delay to a minimum; you must discuss the issues with, and seek your line manager / Safeguarding Leads agreement to put forward the reasons for your dissent.

This must be in writing using the form provided by the Child Protection Team upon request and sent to the Team and Head of Service, Child Protection as soon as possible but no later than 5 days of the conference being held.

**[CS.Safeguarding@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:CS.Safeguarding@derbyshire.gov.uk)**

The referral will then be passed onto nominated representatives of the Quality Assurance Sub Group which includes representatives from core agencies where a decision will be made to uphold the dissent, confirm the Conference outcome or request the Conference be reheld. You will receive a response in writing no later than 28 days of the Sub Group considering the referral.

In all cases it is important that we work together to be effective in protecting children. There may be occasions you do not feel that the matter meets threshold for formal dissent, but that you have concerns. Please raise the issues you have with your manager / Safeguarding Lead as this creates an opportunity for identification of common or reoccurring themes. Your disagreement will also be noted in the minutes.

## Dissent Process Flowchart

