

Terms that may be used at a Conference

Key Worker – the Social Worker who will be the main point of contact and who should visit you regularly whilst your child/ren's names are on the Child Protection Register.

Case Manager – a named social worker for your family, where there is no child protection registration.

Core Group – a group of people identified at the Conference who have the most involvement with your family day to day e.g. the Health Visitor, Teacher, Social Worker etc, together with yourselves. The group will meet regularly to talk about what progress is being made and you will be able to give your point of view.

The Core Group is a Team Around the Child (TAC)

Protection Plan – if your child/ren's name(s) are placed on the Child Protection Register a plan is made which will say what each person involved is going to do. You will be involved in preparing this plan

This information can be made available in community languages, large print or on audiotape if required

Child Protection Conferences & Protection Plans

Leaflet for Parents and Carers



What is a Child Protection Conference?

This is a meeting where parents, children's services and other professionals meet to share information about you and your children and to decide whether the child/ren need a protection plan. This meeting will last around 1 ½ hours.

Who will be there?

Other people who are involved with your family will also be invited. They might include, for example a teacher from your child's school or your Health Visitor.

Some people are invited because they have a particular responsibility to protect children, such as the Police.

If you feel that you will need support at the Conference you can bring some with you, such as a friend or relative. You may find it helpful to prepare what you wish to say at the Conference beforehand.

Who will know?

The information shared is confidential to the Conference and will not be discussed with others, unless this is necessary to protect your child/ren.

How will I remember what is said?

Soon after the Conference a brief letter reminding you of the decisions and the recommendations for action will be sent to you.

Notes of the Conference will be taken by a minute taker and all those invited to the meeting will receive a copy of the minutes in due course. Your supporter will not receive a copy of the minutes – it is up to you to share these with them if you wish.

You have the right to comment and complaint

If you feel that you have been unfairly treated during the meeting you have the right to say so. After the Conference discuss this with your Social Worker and the Chairperson who will try to explain why decisions were made. If you are still not satisfied you can follow the Safeguarding Children Board complaints procedure.

If you have any further questions regarding Child Protection Conferences you can ask the Social Worker or the Conference Chairperson, who is based at the Safeguarding Advisory Service, 30 West Road, Wellington, Telford TF1 2BB. The telephone number is 01952 385678.

What happens at the Conference?

At the beginning of the Conference everyone will say who they are and why they are present.

The Social Worker will have prepared a report which you should have already seen and everyone will get the chance to read it.

Other professionals will then give their reports and the Chairperson will ask for your views about what you have heard.

What about language and specific needs

If your first language is not English, speak with your Social Worker who will arrange for an interpreter to be present or will discuss what you need for effective communication.

If you are disabled, or if you have any difficulties relating to access or communication, please tell the Social Worker beforehand. Every effort will be made to make sure you can take part in the meeting.

Please speak to your Social Worker before the Conference date if you have any transport or childminding problems.

What if I cannot attend?

It is important that you come to the Conference if you possibly can because it is about you and your child/ren. If you are unable to attend, please tell your Social Worker or telephone the Safeguarding Advisory Service on 01952 385678.

The Child Protection Plan

At the conference it may be decided that your child/ren needs a Protection Plan. This may be as a result of concern regarding physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or neglect.

If so, a named Social Worker will become involved (if they are not already).

The Conference will draw up the plan including actions to prevent harm to your child/ren in the future. This may include the involvement of schools, Health Visitors and others working together to help and support you where possible.

The Conference may decide, having considered what has been said, that there does not need to be a Protection Plan, but may still consider support for the family.

How long will they have a Child Protection Plan?

If a child has a Protection Plan, it does not mean that it will need one forever. When it is felt that the child is no longer at risk, the plan will end..

To make sure that the plan is reviewed, further Conferences will be held to consider whether it is still necessary

Will my child remain in my care?

Most children with a Protection Plan remain with their parents/family.

If it is felt that your child/ren is at serious risk of harm, a recommendation might be made that they are cared for by someone else. This could be someone in the family or carers arranged by the Local Authority. If you do not agree with this plan, then the local authority will have to ask the court to decide.

The role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson is independent from the Social Work Team and s/he manages the meeting.

The Chairperson will meet you prior to the Conference to explain the process. You will be able to ask any questions at this point.

If you have any worries about speaking in the Conference tell your Social Worker or mention this to the Chairperson who will ensure that your views are included in the meeting.

Alternatively, you could ask your supporter or Social Worker to speak on your behalf.

The Chairperson is responsible for making sure that the Conference runs smoothly and everyone gets a chance to speak and to have their views taken seriously.

The Chairperson will expect everyone to treat each other with respect.

Occasionally, you may not be able to stay in for the whole Conference, for example, if the Chairperson needs legal advice, or if the Chairperson has agreed that someone can give information in your absence. If this is necessary the Chairperson will explain why