

## CALDERDALE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE.

### Procedure for the Review of Children on a Child Protection Plan 15 months plus

#### 1. The Context: Working to the Child's Timetable.

- 1.1. Children deemed to be at risk of continuing significant harm following a risk assessment and an inter-agency decision making process require a supportive and protective inter-agency intervention delivered through a formal *Child Protection Plan*. (**See: *Working Together to Safeguard Children & the West Yorkshire Consortium Safeguarding Procedures for full details***)
- 1.2. The Child Protection (CP) Plan is designed around the safeguarding and protection of the child in a way that continues to ensure the child's developmental (physical and emotional) needs are met. The CP plan also articulates the risk factors, what needs to be done, by whom and in what timescale in order to make the transition to risk reduction and create a safe environment for the child. The child's timetable is central to informing the timescale and pace of the plan's progression.
- 1.3. Where a child's situation within the care of his/her family setting is not improving or evidencing sufficient pace of change against the CP Plan objectives and in line with the child's development needs, it is imperative to review the circumstances and make judgements to inform decisions about the child's long term future.
- 1.4. Every child's circumstances and timetable is unique to the assessed needs of that child but, by any reasonable margin, a child should not be subject to a CP Plan for more than 2 years unless there is a robust rationale for it to continue. This timescale is an outer limit and will not necessarily fit with every child's timetable therefore each case must be evaluated and judged independently.
- 1.5. Having established the 2 year point as an outer limit for a child to be subject to a CP Plan it is feasible to also establish an earlier 'trigger point' to bring the case under greater scrutiny prior to reaching the 2 year point. This Governance Protocol provides operational guidance to practitioners and managers with a responsibility for promoting the best interests of a child in circumstances where the CP Plan is making little or no progress by the third review point (max. 15 months).

## 2. Operational Guidance: Strengthening the CP Plan Review and Scrutiny Processes

- 2.1. The West Yorkshire Consortium Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Procedures embody the statutory guidance located in Working Together to Safeguard Children in relation to the operation of an inter-agency child protection system. More specifically the procedures have intrinsic review points – Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPC) - for the scrutiny and oversight of children subject to Child Protection Plans. This involves evaluating progress against the CP Plan and risk reduction.
- 2.2. This operational guidance seeks to strengthen the RCPC process by introducing a ‘trigger point’ that automatically ensures that a child protection case with the potential to drift past the 2 year outer limit is subject to senior management oversight.
- 2.3. Where it becomes apparent that a CP Plan has made insufficient or no progress in the context of reducing the risk factor(s) by the third RCPC (approx. 15 months) the Child Protection Conference Chair (CPCC) will advise the membership and parents/carers that their will be a review by a senior manager. **(NB. This point is the maximum point that a case can progress without being subject to Senior Management Case Review. This does not mean that a CPCC should not consider invoking the protocol at an earlier stage should it be abundantly evident that progress will not be made following the second RCPC. Where the protocol is invoked at an earlier stage the judgement and rationale for the decision needs to be clearly recorded and presented to the Team Manager and Service Manager, Safeguarding and QA service, to endorse, or not, the decision to instigate the protocol).**
- 2.4. Following the third RCPC and subsequent reviews, the CASS system will automatically send a trigger to the Social Worker, CPCC, Team Manager of the Social Work team and Reviewing Service, the Service Manager for Safeguarding and QA and Service Manager of the Social Work Team.
- 2.5. The Service Manager, Safeguarding and QA Service, will liaise with the Social Worker and CPCC and consider the information provided. If it is deemed appropriate, a Case Review meeting will be scheduled with the relevant professionals – social worker, practice supervisor, team manager and any other involved professional as deemed appropriate. An integral part of the case information review will be the CPCC case perspective which will be used as an agenda for the discussion.

A recent Single Assessment completed no more than 2 months previously will also be submitted and will be factored into the case review discussions.

2.6. The Case Review meeting will explore the dimensions of the case in the context of what is blocking or inhibiting progress against the CP Plan. The primary function of the Case Review meeting is to make a judgement about what needs to happen to move the case forward and agree the necessary actions designed, where practicable, to avoid the CP Plan progressing past the 2 year point.

2.7. Once a CP case has been subject to review under the protocol it is crucial to monitor the agreed actions and set a review point. The Service Manager, Safeguarding and QA Service, is pivotal in this process therefore, the Service Manager will need to diary in key case update points. Where delays are encountered, either through non-compliance and/or quality of practice, the Service Manager will liaise with the Service Manager, Child Protection Services, in an effort to move the case forward. Where case drift and delay continues the Service Manager, Safeguarding and QA Service, will invoke the formal Practice Dispute Resolution Process (PDRP).

2.8. The Service Manager, Safeguarding and QA Service will produce a bi-annual report covering CP Case Review activity and outcomes, also, lessons learnt from the review process. The report will go to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) for consideration and comment. The report will also provide a reference point for inspection which will give an evidence base for effective governance and management oversight in respect of children at risk cases. The report will be shared with Calderdale SCP to provide an update on the management of children at risk cases and evidence of children being safeguarded in the child protection system.