

# Information for parents and carers about Child Protection Conferences

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board and its partner agencies are committed to working alongside parents and carers to ensure that all children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend are safe from harm.

This information leaflet will explain:

- Why a Child Protection Conference is taking place
- Who will be there
- What will happen in the Conference
- What decisions the meeting can and cannot make about your child.

## 1. Why is a Child Protection Conference taking place?

An Initial Child Protection Conference is held when agencies have concerns that a child is experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm.

This could be physical harm, sexual harm, neglect, emotional harm or financial abuse.



## 2. Who will be at the Conference?

We want parents/carers to attend so that they understand what agencies are worried about and are part of the plan to keep their child safe.

Agencies supporting you and your family will be there, for example:

- The health visitor
- The social worker
- The head teacher

Sometimes people you don't know will be there, because they have specialist roles. For example, a Police Officer from the Public Protection Unit.

## 4. What will happen in the Conference?

The Chair will introduce everyone then they will ask the social worker why we have come to conference. We will discuss the views your child/children have shared, or they can attend all or part of the conference meeting (if appropriate).

Each agency will present their reports and each time the Chair will give you (and your children if they are present) the opportunity to express your views about what has been said or ask any questions.

Once all of the information has been shared, the Chair will summarise what agencies are worried about, what they think the family's strengths are and what needs to change in order for your child to be safe.

## 5. Decision making

If an agency is recommending that your child's name should be added to the Child Protection Register, they will also be asked about the category of registration they think it should be. This could be physical harm, sexual harm, neglect, emotional harm or financial abuse.

The Child Protection Register is a confidential list of children's names held by the Local Authority. Each child whose name is on the Register will have a Care and Support Protection Plan in place that aims to reduce the risk of harm and increase safety for the child.

Sometimes agencies will all agree that a child's name should be added to the Register but if there are differences of opinion the decision will be based on the majority or if agreement cannot be achieved, it will be decided by the Chair.

## 3. What will happen before the Conference?

Your social worker and others will have written reports for the Conference. These should be shared with you at least a day before the Conference so you can go through it and express your views about the information.

You will be asked to come to the Conference 30 minutes before anyone else so the Chair of the Conference can answer any questions you have, explain the process of the meeting again (as your social worker should have also explained this to you) and explain how you can complain if you wish to.

Attending a meeting like a Conference can make people feel nervous so you can bring someone to support you if you want to. Make sure this is someone you trust as they will hear all of the information being shared.

## 6. What is a Care and Support Protection Plan?

In the social worker's report, there will be what is called an 'outline' plan. It will only have the beginning of a plan so at the end of the Conference you and agencies will be asked what actions need to be taken to keep your child safe, who they need to be taken by (this includes actions for you) and when they need to be taken by.

This is your family's plan and therefore what you think is really important; don't be afraid to say what you really think as the plan will not work if you are not on board with it.

## 7. What is a Core Group?

This is a meeting with your social worker and other people who are supporting you and your family.

These meetings will take place every 4 – 6 weeks. The social worker is responsible for arranging them.

The Care and Support Protection Plan is checked each time to see if positive changes are happening and your child is safer.

If positive changes are not happening, the core group will need to talk about the reasons behind this. They may need to take different actions because change has not taken place.

You will always be made aware of what action this will be.

## 8. How long will my child's name be on the Child Protection Register?

3 months after the Initial Conference a Review Conference will take place.

This meeting will review the Care and Support Protection Plan and make any changes that might be required.

After this, Conferences will take place every 6 months until your child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register.

## 11. Making a Complaint

You can complain about the decision conference has made, the category of registration or if you feel procedures have not been followed properly.

You will be provided with a leaflet explaining this process.

Complaints about individual agencies will need to be directed to their complaints department.



## 10. What we will expect of you

Attend Conferences and core group meetings. You are the most important people in your children's lives.

Be open and honest with us about any difficulties and challenges you are facing so we can support you and your family in the best way.

## 9. What you can expect from us?

We will treat you and your children with respect and listen to what you have to say (if the children are old enough).

We know you are the expert about your child.

We will be honest and open, and you will always know what is happening.

We will support you and your children (if appropriate) to fully take part in Conferences and core group meetings.

## 12. Confidentiality

Personal information about you and your child will be shared at the meeting. This information will not be shared outside of the meeting without the express permission of the Chair and the author of the report.

## 13. Will my child/children be removed from my care because they are on the Child Protection Register?

**No.** Conference is not a legal meeting and has no powers to remove children. However, Conference can recommend the Local Authority discuss the situation with their legal representative.

***We always want to work in partnership with families to keep children at home as long as it is safe to do so. The purpose of the Care and Support Protection Plan is to support you to keep your children safe in your care.***

You can find the Complaints Leaflet on the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board website along with other information for parents and carers [Safeguarding Board - Cwm Taf Morgannwg](#) | [Safeguarding, Cwm Taf Morgannwg](#)