

# Understanding What's Going On

Initial Child Protection Conference, Information Sharing  
and the Child Protection Register.



## Being Involved in the Child Protection System

We know being involved in the child protection system can be a stressful time for families. It's important you have an understanding of what is going on and what is happening at every stage and why and also know where you can get independent help and support.

Sometimes as part of a child protection investigation, we will need to have a meeting involving you and those working with you to discuss what has been happening and ensure plans are in place to help to protect your child and meet any identified needs. This meeting will also consider whether or not there is the need to place your child's name on the Child Protection Register.

These meetings are known as **Initial Child Protection Conferences**. The meeting's purpose is to allow people to share information about a child for whom there are child protection concerns; jointly assess that information and the risk to the child; and determine whether there is a likelihood of significant harm through abuse or neglect that needs to be addressed through a multi-agency Child Protection Plan.

The meeting will be chaired by a senior person experienced in child protection. Also attending the meeting will be key professionals who have knowledge of your child and family. These may include:

- Social workers
- School staff
- Housing staff
- Health visitor or school nurse
- Nursery staff
- GP
- Police
- Worker from a voluntary organisation.

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You will be invited to attend the meeting. Where it is considered age appropriate your child will be invited to the meeting. In every case we will ensure that the meeting includes either your child's views or observations from people who know and have been working with them.

At the discretion of the Chair, you can bring someone to support you, such as a family member, friend, or an advocacy worker. Your contribution is very important to this meeting and your views will be listened to. You may be given a form to complete to help record your views and help to complete this if required.

At the meeting there will also be a full discussion about what has happened and why there was a need for a child protection investigation. During the meeting, the professionals attending will usually provide a written report about their knowledge of and involvement with you and your family. Everyone, including you, will have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion and ask any questions.

When everyone has had an opportunity to contribute, decisions will be made about what should happen next. Your child's wellbeing will always be at the centre of any decisions made.

The main priority is to make sure your child is safe and will be properly cared for. It's also important that, if you need help to do this, appropriate support is made available.

At the Initial Child Protection Conference, one of the things that will be considered is whether or not your child's name should be placed on the **Child Protection Register**. The Child Protection Register is held by Social Work Services. It has no legal status and is merely a way of identifying children for whom there are serious concerns about their safety. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe or suspect that your child has suffered or will suffer significant harm from abuse or neglect, and that a Child Protection Plan is needed to protect and support them, their details will be placed on the Child Protection Register.

### **Information Sharing**

Access to the Child Protection Register is strictly controlled. However, information will be shared with other agencies involved with you and your child, such as health, education, nurseries etc.

Information shared is strictly on a 'need to know' basis. You can ask that the Lead Professional supporting you to give you this information or view it in the website shown at bottom of page.

If your child's name is placed on the Child Protection Register, a Child Protection Plan will be agreed. The plan sets out what needs to be done to reduce the risk of future harm and offers support to you and your child. The plan will be managed by a small group known as the Core Group and you will be involved. You will be given more information about this. After three months, there will be a review of the decision to place your child's name on the register.

If your child's name is not placed on the Child Protection Register but you need help or support in the care of your child, this can be arranged.

**Your rights at an Initial Child Protection Conference** - You have the right to disagree with any decision made at an Initial Child Protection Conference and to have your disagreement noted. If you disagree with the decision to place your child's name on the Child Protection Register or not to place your child's name on the Child Protection Register you have the right to appeal and request a review of this decision by writing to the Head of Social Work Services.

The request for a review should be made, in writing, within five working days of the original decision. Where necessary, your social worker or other worker can advise and support you.

You should contact:

NAME:

TELEPHONE:

If at any time you feel that you need legal advice on what you or your child's rights are you can contact:

- A solicitor (Legal Aid may be available) [www.slac.org.uk](http://www.slac.org.uk)
- The Scottish Child Law Centre [www.sclc.org.uk](http://www.sclc.org.uk)



All our information for families can be translated by request.

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[www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/ercpc](http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/ercpc)