



Minimum Quality Standards for Child Protection Reports

This document provides guidance for professionals on producing high quality reports for Child Protection Conferences. It details a series of minimum standards which report authors and their supervisors, where appropriate, can use to quality assure reports produced.

1. Introduction

Good quality reports are vital to the assessment of risk to individual children and the quality of the decision making based on available information. Ultimately this impacts on the quality of the Child Protection Plan and therefore the overall safeguarding of children and young people in Barnsley.

Child Protection Conferences are making momentous decisions about children's lives. It is therefore incumbent on all professionals involved to ensure that they provide the highest quality, up to date and detailed information available to make sure that decisions are soundly based. To support achievement of this objective minimum quality standards against which all agencies should audit their reports to ensure compliance are detailed below.

These minimum quality standards have been approved by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) and apply to all agencies represented at child protection conferences.

The audit tools at the end of the standards are provided for agencies to monitor compliance with the standards set and report to the BSCB Quality Assurance and Performance management Sub-Group as required.

Reports should use plain language and be written in a way that enables parents / carers / young people to understand as fully as possible. This requirement is specifically stressed in a number of key areas where it is essential that parents / carers understand what the issues are and what changes are required to ensure the safety of the child/ren. It is vital that reports are shared and a copy given to parents / carers / young people at least two days in advance of conference so that they can fully understand the content of the report and be prepared to make their contribution to conference.

2. Initial Child Protection Conference Reports

2.1 Details of Conference - Provide full details in the report.

Standard - All details of conference included:

- Subject of report - name and date of birth;
- Date and time;
- Author of report;
- Designation of Author;
- Date of report.

2.2 History of agency involvement - Detailed chronology of agency involvement.

Standard - Social Care Reports to provide chronology detailing agency involvement, and outcomes where appropriate. To include all historical information not just information relating to author's current involvement.

All agencies to provide a detailed account of their involvement with the child and family, its duration, the key events, and interventions including outcomes where appropriate.

2.3 Issues/presenting problems that have brought the child to conference - Detail the circumstances surrounding the need for the child protection conference.

Standard - Children's Social Care to detail the issues that necessitated the child protection conference to be convened.

All agencies to detail their knowledge of issues that have led to conference and any concerns the agency has had to date about the child and family. Problems identified clearly in plain language that can be understood by the service user.

2.4 Knowledge of other agencies involved - Provide details all known agencies involved with the child and family.

Standard -Details of other agencies known to be involved with the child / family identified in the report.

2.5 Family Composition - Identify family members individually (including an expected birth), dates of birth or ages, relationship to subject, occupation, ethnic origin, school / nursery attended and address.

Standard - Genogram / family tree or full description of family structure to be provided by Children's Social Care. All agencies to provide a family structure of all known adults and siblings.

2.6 Legal status of child/ren - Are they subject to any order; are they accommodated? Who holds Parental Responsibility for the child?

Standard - Full details provided by Children's Social Care. All agencies to record knowledge of any legal orders.

2.7 Child / young person's developmental needs - Using the Child and Young Person's Assessment detail all known information about how the child is growing and developing.

Standard - Child and Young Person Assessment considers all dimensions providing a professional assessment of the child's needs. All agencies provide a professional assessment of the child's development based on the type of engagement with the child and the services specific focus and expertise.

N.B. For Adult services detail any observations from seeing the child and provide an analysis of the impact of the parent's difficulties on the child and meeting of the child's needs.

2.8 Parenting capacity - Using the Child and Young Person's Assessment, detail assessment of basic care, ensuring safety, emotional warmth, stimulation, guidance and boundaries, and stability.

Standard - Child and Young Person Assessment considers all dimensions providing a professional assessment of parenting capacity. All agencies provide a professional assessment of the parent's capacity to provide for the child's needs based on the type of engagement with the child and family, and the services specific focus and expertise.

NB. For Adult services to provide an analysis of the impact of the parents difficulties on their parenting capacity and ability to meet the child's needs.

2.9 Family and environmental factors - Using the Child and Young Person Assessment provide a detailed assessment of the child's wider world to include family history and functioning, housing, employment, income, family's social integration and community resources.

Standard - Child and Young Person Assessment considers all dimensions providing a professional assessment of family and environmental factors.

All agencies provide a professional assessment of the child's wider world based on the type of engagement with the child and family, and the services specific expertise.

NB. For Adult services consider family and environmental factors (i.e. in probation OASYS information).

2.10 Analysis of current situation - Identify the main focus of concerns from your agency's perception. Include an analysis of historical information if relevant to current concerns.

Standard - Concerns identified. Historical information analysed in the context of current situation. Problems identified clearly in plain language that can be understood by the service user.

2.11. Changes required - Child and Young Person Assessment to identify what needs to change to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child/ren. All agencies to identify outstanding needs and what action is required to address those needs.

Standard - Changes identified clearly in plain language that can be understood by the service user.

2. 12. Factors helping change - Identify what factors support the desired changes detailed in section above.

Standard - Helping factors identified clearly in plain language that can be understood by the service user.

2.13. Factors blocking change -Identify what factors block the desired changes detailed in section above.

Standard -Blocks to changes identified clearly in plain language that can be understood by the service user.

2.14. Recommendations to conference - Provide professional opinion on the information available at current time based. NB. Opinion can be changed at conference when full information is available.

Standard -Recommendation made.

2.15. Views of parent / carer and child if appropriate -Include the views of the parents / carers (and child if appropriate) after reading and / or discussing the report.

Standard - Views of parent / carer and child if appropriate clearly recorded. The report has been written in a way that was clearly understood by parents / carers / young person.

2. 16. Agency signatures -Author's signature & date. Countersigned by supervisor to assure quality if required by agency & date.

Standard - Report signed by author and countersigned if appropriate.

2. 17. Parent / carer signatures - Report shared with parents / carer / child at least two days in advance of the conference:

- Face to face - This is best practice and enables full discussion/understanding;
- By telephone - This should only be undertaken as a last resort where face to face sharing cannot be achieved and when the parent/carer has a hard copy of the report in front of them to facilitate the discussion;
- Not shared (If not state why not).

Signed by parent / carer & date.

Standard - Report shared with parent. Report signed by parent.

2.18. Report sent to Safeguarding Children's Unit at least 2 days in advance of child protection conference. Record of date sent & receipt by Safeguarding Children's Unit.

Standard - Report received by Safeguarding Children's Unit at least 2 days in advance.

3. Child Protection Review Conference Reports

3.1. Details of Conference - Provide all details regarding the conference.

Standard - All details of conference included:

- Subject of report;
- Date and time;
- Designation of author;
- Date of report.

3.2. Child Protection Plan - Outline of the problems that brought the child to the initial conference and the child protection plan.

Standard - Problems identified clearly in plain Language that can be understood by the service user. Child protection plan identifies changes required. All agencies identify their tasks and contribution to the Child Protection Plan.

3.3. Core groups - Detail core groups held and agency participation in the Core Groups. Outline of issues discussed and decisions made.

Standard - Record of core groups and attendance. Summary of issues discussed and decisions made.

3.4. Progress against the plan -Detail all progress made towards achieving planned outcomes. Highlight any other issues or information that changes the situation and may have an impact on the child protection plan.

Standard -Clear information about progress made against the plan. Other factors identified are analysed in relation to the plan and the possible impact on the child.

3.5 Recommendation - Continue / discontinue child protection plan. Changes to child protection plan if applicable.

Standard - Recommendation made.

3.6. Views of parent / carer and child if appropriate -Include the views of the parents / carers (and child if appropriate) after reading and / or discussing the report.

Standard -Views of parent / carer and child if appropriate clearly recorded. The report has been written in a way that was clearly understood by parents / carers / young person.

3.7. Agency signatures - Author's signature and date. Countersigned by supervisor to assure quality if required by agency and date.

Standard - Report signed by author and countersigned if appropriate.

3.8. Parent / carer signatures - Report shared with parents / carer / child at least two days in advance of the conference:

- Face to face - This is best practice and enables full discussion/understanding;
- By telephone - This should only be undertaken as a last resort where face to face sharing cannot be achieved and when the parent/carer has a hard copy of the report in front of them to facilitate the discussion;
- Not shared (If not state why not).

3.9. Report sent to Safeguarding Children's Unit at least 2 days in advance of child protection conference - Record of date sent.

Standard - Report received by Safeguarding Children's Unit at least 2 days in advance.