



Pan Bedfordshire Guide Disagreement and Escalation

1. What is an escalation?

If you feel that a practitioner or an agency is not acting in the best interests of the child, young person or family, you have a responsibility to respectfully challenge the practitioner or agency and escalate your concerns.

2. When would you escalate?

When working with practitioners from other agencies there will at times be differences of opinion or concerns about professional practice in relation to a child, young person or family. The new Pan Bedfordshire procedure outlines the escalation process including timescales and principles for resolution. There are 4 key stages to resolving multi-agency escalations.

3. Stage 1

- Most disagreements can be resolved between practitioners by having a conversation about the reasons for the difference of opinions and forego the need to implement this formal procedure. Good practice and positive communications between professionals/agencies underpin an effective working relationship and it is anticipated that attempts to resolve disagreements will be pursued in the first instance.
- If resolution cannot be achieved professionals must escalate to their safeguarding lead and/or team manager.
- Take Action Within 24 Hours of Concern.
- Record the escalation.
- Notify the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership.

4. Stage 2

- The Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead should discuss the concerns/response with their opposite manager in the other agency.
- If resolution cannot be achieved professionals must notify their Senior Managers (or in the case of schools the Chair of Governors alongside the Head)
- Relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership notified if resolved.

5. Stage 3

- The Senior Manager will escalate to the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership Partner Representative who will arrange a meeting to seek resolution.

- If agreement cannot be achieved, the matter should be brought to the attention of the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership who will refer the matter to their Safeguarding Partners

6. Stage 4

- The relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership's Partners will seek written representation and may request a meeting with those involved.
- The relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership's Partners will make a recommendation on the most appropriate way to proceed and communicate this within 5 days of notification.

7. Record Keeping

- Agencies should record their use of the Escalation Procedure (stages 1-3) and be able to report outcomes of escalations to the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The child's record should be updated.
- The relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership will keep a record of all escalations and outcomes at Stage 4 and may request information about the outcomes of escalations at Stage 2 and 3.

8. Good Practice

- Ensure that this procedure is promoted and embedded within your agency and compliance is internally monitored.
- Ensure that the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership is notified about escalations within agreed timescales and informed of resolutions.
- Ensure that the child's record is kept up to date with escalations and their outcomes.
- Ensure that each agency has a recording system that can demonstrate use of the Escalation Procedure from Stages 1-3.
- Ensure that action is taken within 24 hours of identifying the concern.

9. Key contacts and more information

To make a referral contact the relevant Children's Services;

Bedford Borough – 01234 718700

Central Bedfordshire – 0300 300 8585

Luton - 01582 537653

To make contact with your relevant Safeguarding Children Board;

Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership – 01234 276346 – LSCB@bedford.gov.uk

Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership – 0300 300 6455 - cbscb@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Luton Safeguarding Children Partnership - 01582 547624 or 01582 547590 - Lutonlscb@luton.gov.uk