

**Resolving Professional Disagreements/ Escalation Policy**

All practitioners should be familiar with and follow the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedure for [‘Resolving Professional Disagreements/Escalation Policy’](https://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_resolv_prof_dis.html?zoom_highlight=professional+disagreement).

The Policy recognises that “problem resolution is an integral part of professional cooperation and joint working to safeguard children. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion. Due to the nature of the work undertaken it is inevitable that there will be disagreements from time to time. Multi-agency debate and respectful challenge should be encouraged to impact positive outcomes for children.”

It also highlights that it is every professional’s responsibility to ‘problem solve’. Communication is extremely important and is the key to resolving professional misunderstandings or disagreements.

The flowchart below shows the 4 stages of escalation that should be followed if agreement between practitioners cannot be reached. All agreed outcomes at stages 1 and 2 must be recorded and shared via email to ensure decision making is captured on each agencies electronic recording system.

The template in Appendix A should be used to formally record and report all stage 3 and 4 escalations and agreed outcomes. TSCP should be copied into all stage 3 escalations by the Assistant Director of the organisation that is escalating the case via [TSCP@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:TSCP@tameside.gov.uk). This is for monitoring purposes so that the partnership can stay alert to any emerging trends or themes.

**Escalation Flowchart**

**Stage 1:** Direct discussion should be held between the relevant team managers or agency equivalent as a first option to try to resolve any dispute. This should be held through either telephone or face to face discussion as a priority and key points confirmed in writing.

**Stage 2:** If through direct discussion between team managers, either through telephone or face to face discussion, a resolution or agreement cannot be reached, then contact will need to be established between allocated senior manager or head of service within **5 working days**. Key points should be confirmed in writing.

**Stage 3:** If within **10 working days**, a resolution has not been achieved then responsibility will transfer to the responsible Assistant Director/Senior Manager to seek direct discussion in order to achieve resolution. Focus again will remain consistent on direct discussion first and foremost but the template in Appendix A should also be used to report and record the escalation formally.

**Stage 4:** If at any point risk escalates or resolution cannot be achieved, contact with Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership [TSCP@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:TSCP@tameside.gov.uk) should be used to support resolution. The template in Appendix A should again be used to report and record the escalation formally.

**N.B. if a child is at immediate risk of harm there is an expectation that the timescales will be shorter than the 10 days**

**APPENDIX A**

**Stage 3/4 Professional Challenge & Outcome Resolution Notice – Only complete this form if there has been no resolution at stage 1 & 2**

**THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE SENT/STORED SECURELY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date of Notification** |  |
| **Name of Child/Young Person** |  |
| **D.O.B** |  |
| **NHS Number/ P Number** |  |
| **Outcome Resolution Notice Completed by:** | |
| **Name** |  |
| **Role** |  |
| **Agency/Team** |  |
| **Contact Details** |  |
| **Notification has been sent to:** | 1.  2. cc’d in [TSCP@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:TSCP@tameside.gov.uk) |
| **Summary of disagreement** | |
|  | |
| **Evidence of the informal challenge that has taken place at stages 1-2 and the outcome of this challenge including details of who have you spoken to and at what level?** | |
|  | |
| **Desired outcome for the child and / or family. Please include details of what it is you are requesting happens as a result of this challenge** | |
|  | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Date Outcome Resolved** | **Supporting Evidence**  Embed written confirmation between parties about the agreed outcome |
| **Stage 3** |  |  |
| **Stage 4** |  |  |