

Practitioner Guide to Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC)



This guidance has been written to assist in the undertaking of Initial Child Protection Conferences. It is informed by:

- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Strategy Discussions / Meetings \(Partnership Tri X\)](#)
- [Child Protection Enquiries \(Section 47\) \(trixonline.co.uk\)](#)
- [Children Act 1989 \(Partnership Tri X\)](#)
- [Initial Child Protection Conferences \(Partnership Tri X\)](#)

The key aims of the guidance are to ensure that:

- ICPCs are organised to take place within the statutory timescale
- The ICPC brings together family members, the child (when appropriate), supporters/advocates and those professionals most involved with the child and family to share information, assess risks and to formulate an agreed plan of management and services, with the child's safety and welfare as its paramount aim

Best Practice

The welfare of the child is paramount. Once it has been determined that an Initial Child Protection Conference is required, a safety plan should be implemented prior to the meeting to confirm the child's safety.

Strategy Discussion The strategy discussion is chaired by the team manager and must have health and police colleagues attend as a minimum. The purpose of this meeting is to develop a multi-agency strategy to protect the child/ren.

Completion of Section 47 Enquiry (within 4 working days) Children's Social Work Service is the lead agency for Section 47 Enquiries (Children Act 1989) and the team manager has responsibility for authorising a Section 47 Enquiry following a Strategy Discussion/Meeting. The Section 47 Enquiry must be led by a qualified social worker who will be responsible for its coordination and completion. The social worker must consult with other agencies involved with the child and family to obtain a fuller picture of the circumstances. The family should be consulted as part of the Enquiry unless there was reason to believe that this would cause harm. The rationale for who is consulted as part of the enquiry needs to be recorded clearly on the electronic file. This must be completed within four working days of the Strategy Discussion.

Team Manager outcomes to ICPC if risk of significant harm remains

Before the ICPC: If, at completion of the Section 47 Enquiry, the outcome is an ICPC, then the invite list on the Section 47 Mosaic form must be completed for each child and sent to the ISU to book the conference. The child's parents, involved professionals and allocated Social Worker need to be included as a minimum including full contact details. This needs to be done with **urgency** as the ISU need to book the conference and send invites.

All agencies need to write reports and share with family 3 working days prior to the conference.

The Child and Family Assessment is the social work report for conference. It is imperative for social workers to share Child and Family Assessments at least 3 working days prior to the conference with parents.

Children’s views should always be obtained prior to the meeting and shared during the meeting. For some children, advocacy is appropriate. The ISU will send information around advocacy for children when an ICPC is booked.

It is important that social workers discuss attending the meeting with parents in advance, and consider issues such as childcare, travel arrangements/costs and interpreters. Their attendance is needed and we should support this in any way we can.

The ISU will contact the social worker and team manager to book the meeting. The social worker presenting at the ICPC should be suitably experienced and confident to do so. Social workers who are less experienced, or in cases which are particularly complex, may require the support of an Advanced Practitioner or Team Manager. Some exceptions might be a highly experienced social worker or AP is the case holder and the manager is unable to attend with them.

The conference has to be booked within **15 working days**. This cannot change due to social work availability. The team manager needs to ensure they still attend if the social worker is unable. Meetings should only be cancelled in exceptional circumstances where parents cannot attend.

Initial Child Protection Case Conference (ICPC) within 15 working days

During the ICPC: The chair will meet with the parents on the day of the conference, before the meeting starts. This is to explain the process of the meeting, ensure they have seen all reports and understand the concerns. During the meeting each agency will be asked to give an overview. CP chairs will facilitate a discussion using the Strengthening Families Model to ensure everyone understands the impact on the child and a clear plan is developed to improve outcomes. Each person will be asked for a view on whether a child protection plan is needed. An outline plan is agreed at the meeting.

Initial Core Group within 10 working days

After the ICPC: At the end of the ICPC if a child protection plan is the outcome, then a date will be arranged by the social worker and team manager for an initial core group meeting. This initial core group meeting needs to be chaired by the team manager.

It is important to establish which agencies need to be part of the core group. The purpose of the initial core group is to develop the outline plan into a detailed child protection plan and ensure that all members of the core group have a clear sense of purpose and tasks.

About the Document			
Title	Practitioner Guidance for ICPC’s		
Purpose	To provide guidance on the ICPC process for Social Work Team Managers and practitioners		
Author & Role	Nicole Woodward, SDM - Integrated Safeguarding Unit		
Approved by	Donna Williams	Date approved	11/04/2024
Frequency of Review	Annual		

Distribution	All Social Workers, Social Work Team Managers and Integrated Safeguarding Unit
--------------	--