

Practitioner Guide to Risk Outside the Home (ROTH)

Child Protection processes



This guidance has been written to assist in practice for working with situations where children and young people are at risk of significant harm due to factors outside of their family home. It is informed by:

- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101311/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2023-statutory-guidance.pdf)
- [The Contextual Safeguarding Network](https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org/)
- [County Lines | Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership \(leedsscp.org.uk\)](https://www.leedsscp.org.uk/)
- [West Yorkshire Consortium Inter Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures](https://www.wy.gov.uk/inter-agency-safeguarding-and-child-protection-procedures)
- [Risk Assessment and Planning for Placement \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://www.trixonline.co.uk/risk-assessment-and-planning-for-placement)

What is this pathway for?

The Risk Outside of the Home (ROTH) pathway is being developed as part of Section 47-based pathways and plans for young people who are felt to be at significant risk of harm beyond their families.

Leeds has been one of four geographical areas who have developed and tested a ROTH pathway. This work is supported by the Contextual Safeguarding research programme at Durham University, who oversaw the development of the first ROTH pathway in Wiltshire in 2022. The pilot phase of the work has been funded by the Department for Education.

During adolescence, young people may experience harm, including that which is significant, in contexts and relationships beyond their families. This harm often requires a different response to that which is used when young people are at risk of harm within their families.

The Risk Outside of the Home (ROTH) ICPC (Initial Child Protection Conference) pathway is a pathway for young people who are felt to be at significant risk of harm beyond their families. The pathway has been developed to consider contextual approaches to safeguarding, the parents as protective partner agencies and bringing in non-traditional partner agencies.

Contextual Strategy Discussions/Meetings

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the statutory procedures for Strategy Meetings and undertaking Section 47 Enquiries. Please see: [strategy-discussion-.pdf \(trixonline.co.uk\)](#)

Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm there should be a strategy discussion involving the Local Authority Children's Social Work Services, the police, health Services (including the residential or fostering service, if the child is looked-after), education and other bodies such as the referring agency. This might take the form of a multi-agency meeting and more than one discussion may be necessary. A strategy discussion can take place following a referral or at any other time, including during the assessment process and when new information is received on an already open case.

A Strategy Meeting should be held to decide whether to initiate child protection enquiries under Section 47 of The Children Act (1989). This includes where the risks to the child are identified as being out of the home or extra-familial and maybe because of a single event, or an accumulation of events.

Please note, that where a child is assessed as being high risk of exploitation or missing, or where a referral/information has come from the British Transport Police or Police suggesting that a child is victim of trafficking (such as County Lines), then a strategy discussion must be convened.

Who should attend the strategy meeting?

The Strategy Meeting should be led by a Team Manager. If the strategy meeting is looking at children from more than one family consideration should be given to this being chaired by a Service Delivery Manager. As a minimum Police, Health and Children's Social Work Service need to be part of the discussion; and for incidents of serious youth violence, we would recommend inviting the Youth Justice Service who will allocate a duty manager to attend. Please also give consideration as to whether there are any other key professionals/stakeholders involved in supporting and safeguarding the child and/or their family (such as Education, The Safe Project, Youth Service, MST (Multi Systemic Therapy), TSWT (Therapeutic Social Work Team), Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Teams (LASBT), or relevant 3rd sector organisations. All agencies involved with the child/young person should be given the opportunity to attend the meeting and share their information.

What should be included?

In addition to the usual requirements of a Strategy Meeting, the following should be considered:

- Share relevant information held by each agency, including relevant intelligence about the child, their peers (age-appropriate friends) as well as any adult associations including those who are a source of safety as well as a source of risk, any known geographical locations and/or addresses, any known risk factors (such as weapon carrying)
- Consideration should be given to the needs of the young person's siblings – this should include an assessment of their contact with the child who has been harmed (as this can be a route into harm for others) and exploration of emotional impact for them
- Consideration should be given to the peer group of the child that has been harmed and any other children in contact with the alleged abuser(s) or the location or an identified group.
- Agree who will see the child and when. Discuss whether any factors such as the child's race, ethnicity, language, disability, or any other special needs should be considered and whether an interpreter will be required for the child and/or the family.
- Ensuring that it is clearly agreed how parents will be worked with based on them being protective partners
- Consider whether there are any immediate safeguarding needs relating to serious youth violence and/or gangs that may need a further GANG Strategy Meeting convening.
- Agree what action is required immediately and in the short term to safeguard the child including whether the child needs to be in a place of safety - this includes ensuring that any intelligence shared that the police are not aware of is shared with the Police via the West Yorkshire Police Intelligence Portal (PIP): [Partnership Intelligence Portal - Account Request Form | West Yorkshire Police](#)

In determining which professionals should be involved in a child protection Section 47 Enquiry, consideration could include who are the family most likely to be comfortable working with. In all cases where there are concerns relating to serious youth violence and/or links to serious organised crime, consideration should be given to the strategy to be adopted, with Police advice or assistance if appropriate, about how to reduce the risks before any visits take place.

Contextual Section 47 enquiries

Where the Strategy Meeting identifies that a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm and the risk is out of the home, a Section 47 Enquiry should be carried out in line with West Yorkshire Consortium Inter Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures but also considering contextual factors. These should include:

Seeing the child who is the subject of concern to ascertain their wishes and feelings, assess their understanding of the push and pull factors, and the weighting of risks associated to different contexts of their lives. It is important to ensure that the child's voice and views are sought with regards to locations of both safety and concern

Speaking to parents and/or caregivers and determine the wider social and environmental factors that might impact on them and their child, which includes their understanding of the push and pull factors, and the weighting of risks associating to different contexts of their child's lives.

Gathering information about:

- Any known or suspected perpetrators
- Any known or suspected associates
- Any known addresses and/or locations of concern
- Any known or suspected links to Urban Street Gangs (USGs) or Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs)
- Any known or suspected additional risk factors, such as carrying weapons.
- Any other relevant contexts, e.g., if your context of concern is a park you may require a chronology of concerns related to the park, or of a school in which a child might feel unsafe.

Any further intelligence gathered should be shared with the Police via the West Yorkshire Police Intelligence Portal (PIP).

The social worker, when conducting a Section 47 Enquiry, must assess the potential needs and safety of any other child in the household of the child in question. In addition, Section 47 Enquiries may be required concerning any children in other households with whom the alleged perpetrator of the exploitation and/or abuser may have contact. If a decision is made that a sibling is not at the same level of risk as the primary child, the rationale for this should be included within the Section 47 enquiry.

Context Weighting

Within the Section 47 Enquiry, the Social Worker should analyse the contextual factors and context which have the greatest influence over the young person. Consider: 'what context (or contextual factors) needs to change first for safety to increase for that child, family or peer group?'

In weighing up the relevant contexts the following questions should be considered as part of the Section 47 Enquiry:

- What are the strengths, risks and vulnerabilities identified for each context in question? This includes consideration of what the key push and pull factors are within each context, the strength of those factors and the impact of them on the child.
- Which of these contexts is most strongly associated to the behaviours/incident in question?

Which contexts most inform the behaviour of the young people in question? Does this change by day/night? Considering the above three questions:

- What is the nature of the most influential contexts?
- Which context is likely to enable/hinder the most change?
- This will then support your decision-making as to which is the most appropriate pathway to provide support to the child and their family.

Outcomes

The possible outcomes for the Section 47 enquiry are:

- Concerns not substantiated
- Concern substantiated, but the child / young person is not judged to be at risk of significant harm
- Concern substantiated, and the child / young person is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm

If the concerns are substantiated and the child / young person is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm which is primarily outside of the home, the ROTH ICPC pathway should be considered.

The model of ROTH ICPCs (Initial Child Protection Conference) is based on an understanding that the young person's parents are protective partners and are broadly accepting of the concerns and willing to work with

agencies. For situations where there is also a risk of significant harm within the home, or where we are unable to meaningfully engage the parents, the ROTH pathway would not be suitable.

ROTH ICPC

If a ROTH ICPC is requested this will need to:

- Take place within 15 working days of the initial Strategy Discussion.
- The request is for a ROTH ICPC within the Section 47 workflow prior to sending this to the Integrated Safeguarding Unit.
- Within the invite list, consideration should be given as to whether any professionals with specialist knowledge should be invited to participate. These may include non-traditional safeguarding partners such as Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team (LASBT), Police Children Vulnerable to Exploitation Team (CVET), Neighbourhood Policing Team(s) (NPT), Youth Justice Services, Licensing, Housing, Youth Services, Return Interview Team, Community Leaders, for example. The ISU (Integrated Safeguarding Unit) will notify the Safe Project of any forthcoming ROTH ICPCs by sending the screening form to the Safe Project email address. The Safe Project will not automatically attend ROTH ICPCs, unless they are working directly with the family.

Unlike a standard Initial Child Protection Conference, there is no assumption that all children within the household must be considered within a ROTH ICPC, however consideration of the needs of any siblings/other children must be detailed within the Section 47 Enquiry, and a rationale given as to why they are/are not being included recorded.

The Social Worker should also:

- Ensure that the child and their parents understand the purpose of the Initial Child Protection Conference and who will attend, where it will take place and if any practical support is needed to attend.
- Help prepare the child if he or she is attending or making representations through a third party to the meeting; give information about advocacy services: [Leeds Children's Rights - Advocacy Children In Need | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/leeds-childrens-rights-advocacy) and explain that the family may bring an advocate, friend, or supporter.
- Seek parents' consent for a Family Practitioner from [The Safe Project \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/the-safe-project) to be allocated to support them in completing their protective partner report.
- Arrange any interpreting services required.

The Social Worker will need to complete the ROTH Social Work Report a minimum of three days before the meeting, and to have shared this with the family. This replaces the need for the Child and Family Assessment to be completed for the Initial Child Protection Conference, however a holistic assessment may also be required, particularly if this is a young person who has only recently been referred to CSWS (Children Social Work Services).



ROTH CP Social
Work Initial Report v4



ROTH CP Social
Work Review Report v

The professionals and parents attending the ROTH ICPC will be asked to complete the Protective Partner report.



ROTH VRMP
Protective Partner Rep

If the ROTH ICPC pathway is being initiated, there is no necessity to undertake separate Vulnerability and Risk Management Meetings once a ROTH CP (Child Protection) Plan is in place, as the relevant contextual issues will be discussed within the ROTH Core Group Meetings. These should take place in line with the assessed level of risk for the young person, i.e., every four weeks if a young person is considered at high risk of harm.

The Child Exploitation Risk Toolkit on mosaic must continue to be completed at the current time.

For the detailed procedure in relation to Child Protection Conferences, see the West Yorkshire Consortium Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

About the Document			
Title	Practitioner Guide for Managing Risk Outside the Home (ROTH)		
Purpose	This guidance has been written to assist in practice for working with situations where children and young people are at risk outside of their family home		
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