



Practice Resolution Protocol

Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Service

Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO), Child Protection

Chairs (CPC) and Partner Agencies

Introduction

One of the key functions of the IRO/CPC is to challenge the Local Authority and partner agencies about the care of individual children if the IRO/CPC believes the child's needs are not being properly met or safeguarded.

The Local Authority in partnership with partner agencies are required to have a practice resolution procedure to enable challenges to be made in a systematic and timely way. These matters are covered in ***Chapter 6 of the IRO Handbook***.

The individual IRO/CPC is personally responsible for activating the Practice Resolution Protocol and does not require permission, although consultation and discussion should take place with their manager.

This process should take no more than 20 working days to be resolved with the IRO/CPC ensuring they monitor the progress of the practice resolution as identified below.

If the matter is not resolved to the IRO's satisfaction at level 4 then as stated in the IRO Handbook a referral to Cafcass should be considered. After discussion with the IRO's Service Manager and the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.

For CPC's if they are not satisfied the matter has been resolved they are to discuss their next actions with the CPC's Service Manager and the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.

The protocol has 5 levels escalating through management levels in the Department or partner agencies. However, **'the IRO may bypass any level and progress the resolution to the level s/he considers most appropriate' (IRO Handbook 6.2).**

Additionally, the CPC's may bypass any level and progress the practice resolution to the level s/he considers most appropriate should they have safeguarding concerns.

Below is how the Practice Resolution Protocol will work within Nottingham City Council's Children's Integrated Services and with partner agencies.

Level 1

The IRO/CPC will complete a Practice Resolution Document in the child's electronic file (Liquid Logic) and add a case note that the process has been started and sent to the relevant manager.

The Team Manager (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to level 2 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

If the matter is not resolved within the 5 working days, then the IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document and then automatically send to the next level of management.

Level 2

The IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document the last response or lack of response was deemed unsatisfactory for the IRO/CPC. Also, the IRO/CPC will add a case note that the process has been escalated to the next level and sent to the relevant manager.

The Service Manager (or equivalent in our partner agency) is then required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to level 3 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

If the matter is not resolved within the 5 working days, then the IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document and then automatically send to the next level of management.

Level 3

The IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document the last response or lack of response was deemed unsatisfactory for the IRO/CPC. Also, the IRO/CPC will add a case note that the process has been escalated to the next level and sent to the relevant manager.

The Head of Service (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to level 4 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

If the matter is not resolved within the 5 working days, then the IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document and then automatically send to the next level of management.

Level 4

The IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document the last response or lack of response was deemed unsatisfactory for the IRO/CPC. Also, the IRO/CPC will add a case note that the process has been escalated to the next level and sent to the relevant manager.

The Director of Children's Integrated Services (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to level 5 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

If the matter is not resolved within the 5 working days, then the IRO/CPC should state why on the Practice Resolution Protocol document and then discuss level 5 with their management.

Level 5

If all the responses to level 1-4 do not resolve the matter satisfactorily, the IRO will identify the reasons and consider escalating to stage 5 which is a referral to Cafcass. However, before any external referral is made the IRO is to seek legal advice and have had discussions with the Service Manager and Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service (***IRO Handbook 8.11 & 8.12***).

For CPC's they are to discuss their next actions with their Service Manager and Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service. They should then plan their response to the unresolved Practice Resolution matter.

Practice Resolution Protocol Flowchart 20 working days

Level 1

IRO/CPC to contact the Team Manager (or equivalent in our partner agency) with concerns to be addressed

5 working day response needs to be given at every stage



Level 2

IRO/CPC to escalate to the relevant Service Manager (or equivalent in our partner agency)

(5 days)



Level 3

IRO/CPC to escalate to the relevant Head of Service (or equivalent in our partner agency)

(5 days)



Level 4

IRO/CPC to escalate to the Director of Children's Integrated Services (or equivalent in our partner agency)

(5 days)



IRO to take legal advice to consider referral to Cafcass

CPC to take advice from Service Manager & Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service about next action

Nottingham City Council - Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service

Practice Resolution Protocol LEVEL 1

The Team Manager (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to the progression to level 2 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE - LEVEL 1

Date issue raised	
Name of Child & ID	
What's not working well?	
What needs to happen?	

TEAM MANAGER TO COMPLETE (or equivalent in our partner agency)

Response to what's not working well?	
Date returned to IRO/CPC	
Name of responding Team Manager	

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE

Matter Resolved	Yes	No
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If the response does not resolve the matter satisfactorily, the IRO/CPC will identify the reasons and progress to level 2

Practice Resolution Protocol LEVEL 2

The Service Manager (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to the progression to level 3 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE - LEVEL 2

Date	
Reasons why level 1 response is unsatisfactory?	
Desired outcome	

SERVICE MANAGER TO COMPLETE (or equivalent in our partner agency)

Response to what's not working well	
Date returned to IRO/CPC	
Name of responding Service Manager	

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE

Matter Resolved	Yes	No
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If the response does not resolve the matter satisfactorily, the IRO/CPC will identify the reasons and progress to level 3

Practice Resolution Protocol LEVEL 3

The Head of Service (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to the progression to level 4 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE - LEVEL 3

Date	
Reasons why level 2 response is unsatisfactory?	
Desired outcome	

HEAD OF SERVICE TO COMPLETE (or equivalent in our partner agency)

Response to what's not working well	
Date returned to IRO/CPC	
Name of responding Head of Service	

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE

Matter Resolved	Yes	No
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If the response does not resolve the matter satisfactorily the IRO/CPC will identify the reasons and progress to level 4

Practice Resolution Protocol LEVEL 4

The Head of Service (or equivalent in our partner agency) is required to respond to this practice resolution matter within 5 working days. Failure to respond will lead automatically to the progression to level 5 of the Practice Resolution Protocol.

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE - LEVEL 4

Date	
Reasons why level 3 response is unsatisfactory?	
Desired outcome	

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES TO COMPLETE (or equivalent in our partner agency)

Response to what's not working well	
Date returned to IRO/CPC	
Name of responding Director	

IRO/CPC TO COMPLETE

Matter Resolved	Yes	No
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If the response does not resolve the matter satisfactorily, the IRO will identify the reasons and progress to level 5 which is referral to Cafcass after seeking legal advice and discussions with the Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service.

For CPC's they are to discuss their next actions with their Service Manager and Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service. They should then plan their response to the unresolved Practice Resolution matter.