TOGETHER for Children and Young People

Together we will make Cheshire East a great place to be **young**

Multi-Agency Child Protection Team
Practitioner Quick Reference Guide



Cheshire East Council

1 PURPOSE

1.1 The Multi-Agency Child Protection Team (MACPT) provides multi-agency child protection leadership, oversight, challenge and independent scrutiny to strengthen safeguarding decision-making and improve outcomes for children.

1.2 The MACPT supports effective child protection practice through consultation, information sharing, professional challenge, conference leadership, oversight and quality assurance activity.

1.3 The MACPT is not a case-holding service. Responsibility for direct work, statutory intervention, assessment and case management remains with the allocated practitioner and operational service.

1.4 This guide provides a practical summary of the MACPT operating model and should be read alongside the MACPT Operational Procedures, Practice Standards, Supervision Operating Arrangements and the MACPT Quality Assurance, Learning and Improvement Framework.

2 KEY FUNCTIONS OF MACPT

The MACPT provides:

- ✅ Safeguarding consultation and advice
- ✅ Multi-agency strategy discussion coordination
- ✅ Independent Child Protection Conference leadership
- ✅ Child Protection Plan oversight and scrutiny
- ✅ Professional challenge and escalation
- ✅ Information-sharing leadership
- ✅ Quality assurance, learning and improvement activity
- ✅ Multi-agency safeguarding expertise

The MACPT does **not**:

- ❌ Hold statutory case responsibility
- ❌ Undertake direct casework
- ❌ Complete Section 47 enquiries
- ❌ Replace operational management oversight
- ❌ Assume responsibility for partner agency actions

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3. CASE ACCOUNTABILITY

Activity	Responsible Service
Initial safeguarding referral	Integrated Front Door (IFD)
Assessment	Family Help and Protection Service (FHLP)
Section 47 enquiry	Allocated Social Worker
Child in Need planning	Allocated Team
Child Protection Plan implementation	Core agencies and allocated practitioners
Court work and care proceedings	Allocated Team and Legal Services
Direct work with children and families	Allocated Practitioner
Child Protection Conference chairing	MACPT
Child Protection Plan oversight	MACPT
Professional challenge and escalation	Shared responsibility across agencies with MACPT oversight

3.1 **Key principle:** MACPT provides leadership, challenge, oversight and scrutiny. Operational services retain responsibility for statutory casework and direct intervention.

4. WHICH ROUTE SHOULD I USE?

New safeguarding concerns

Contact the Integrated Front Door (IFD)

Use the normal referral pathways for all new safeguarding concerns.

The MACPT does not receive or process new referrals.

Child already allocated to a social worker

Discuss with the allocated manager and social worker first.

Where child protection concerns require escalation, consultation or multi-agency consideration, engage with the MACPT through the agreed processes.

Child subject to Child Protection Processes

Engage with MACPT through existing child protection arrangements.

This may include:

- Strategy discussions.

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- Child Protection Conferences.
- Child Protection Plan review activity.
- Professional challenge and escalation processes.
- Safeguarding consultation.

Urgent safeguarding concerns

Follow normal safeguarding and emergency response procedures.

The MACPT does not replace emergency safeguarding arrangements or statutory decision-making responsibilities.

5 STRATEGY DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Purpose

5.1.1 Strategy discussions bring together relevant agencies to:

- Share information.
- Analyse risk and protective factors.
- Consider the child's lived experience.
- Determine whether Section 47 enquiries are required.
- Agree immediate safeguarding actions.
- Promote timely and coordinated safeguarding responses.

5.2` Good Practice Reminders

✓ Ensure all relevant agencies are represented.

✓ Focus on analysis, not simply information exchange.

✓ Consider the child's lived experience and daily realities.

✓ Record decisions and professional rationale clearly.

✓ Ensure actions are specific, timebound and clearly allocated.

✓ Identify accountable practitioners and agencies for each action.

✓ Address professional disagreement through constructive challenge.

✓ Escalate unresolved concerns appropriately.

6. CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

6.1 MACPT Role

6.1.1 The MACPT provides independent chairing and oversight of Child Protection Conferences.

Conference leadership should:

- Promote meaningful participation.
- Support balanced and evidence-informed discussion.

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- Facilitate constructive professional challenge.
- Maintain focus on risk, safety and outcomes.
- Support clear and defensible decision-making.

6.2 Good Practice Reminders

✓ Focus on what life is like for the child.

✓ Consider progress against outcomes, not tasks alone.

✓ Ensure plans are specific and measurable.

✓ Clearly identify risks, strengths and protective factors.

✓ Ensure all agencies understand their responsibilities.

✓ Record dissenting professional views appropriately.

7. CHILD PROTECTION PLAN OVERSIGHT

7.1 The MACPT provides independent scrutiny and oversight of Child Protection Plans.

7.2 Oversight should focus on:

- Progress against identified risks.
- The effectiveness of multi-agency intervention.
- The child's lived experience.
- Emerging concerns or escalating risk.
- Evidence of change for the child and family.
- Drift or delay in implementation.

7.3 Key Question

Is the child's day-to-day experience improving because of the plan?

Completion of actions alone is not sufficient evidence of progress.

8. PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE

8.1 Professional challenge is an expected and valued part of MACPT practice.

8.2 Differences in professional opinion can strengthen safeguarding decision-making when explored constructively and respectfully.

8.3 Practitioners should:

- Raise concerns where they believe risk is not being adequately addressed.
- Use evidence to support challenge.
- Focus on outcomes for children.
- Seek resolution through professional discussion in the first instance.
- Follow agreed escalation processes where concerns remain unresolved.

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8.4 Professional challenge should be timely, proportionate and child-centred.

9. INFORMATION SHARING

9.1 Effective safeguarding depends upon timely and appropriate information sharing.

9.2 Practitioners should:

- Share relevant information lawfully and proportionately.
- Ensure information is accurate and up to date.
- Record information-sharing decisions appropriately.
- Seek advice where uncertainty exists.
- Consider how information contributes to multi-agency risk analysis and safeguarding planning.

9.3 Good information sharing supports better decision-making and improved outcomes for children.

10. LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

10.1 All practitioners have a role in promoting learning and continuous improvement.

10.2 Learning may arise from:

- Strategy discussions.
- Child Protection Conferences.
- Supervision.
- Reflective case discussions.
- Quality assurance activity.
- Family and practitioner feedback.
- Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Complaints and compliments.

10.3 Practitioners should contribute to a culture that promotes reflection, learning, curiosity and continuous improvement.

11. TRANSITION AND STEP-DOWN ARRANGEMENTS

Situation	Case Accountability
Child Protection Plan ends	Receiving service assumes ongoing responsibility in line with agreed plan
Child becomes Child in Need	Allocated Child in Need Team
Public Law Outline (PLO)	Allocated Team with Legal Services
Care Proceedings issued	Allocated Team

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Final Care Order	Relevant Care Planning Team
Reunification planning	Allocated Team with relevant oversight arrangements
Transition to Adult Services	Children's and Adult Services working in accordance with transition arrangements

10.1 MACPT oversight concludes in line with agreed safeguarding processes and transfer arrangements.

Key Principles to Remember

- ✅ Keep the child's lived experience at the centre of decision-making.
- ✅ Focus on outcomes, not process compliance.
- ✅ Use professional curiosity and critical thinking.
- ✅ Share information effectively.
- ✅ Value different professional perspectives.
- ✅ Provide respectful challenge where required.
- ✅ Escalate unresolved concerns.
- ✅ Promote meaningful participation by children and families.
- ✅ Maintain clear accountability.
- ✅ Contribute to learning and continuous improvement.

Need Further Guidance?

Refer to:

- MACPT Operational Procedures
- MACPT Practice Standards
- MACPT Supervision Operating Arrangements
- MACPT Quality Assurance, Learning and Improvement Framework
- Cheshire East Safeguarding Children procedures and guidance

Where there is any discrepancy, the approved operational procedures and statutory guidance remain authoritative.

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