Your Child Protection Conference

What parents and carers can expect

Why have I been invited?

An Initial Child Protection Conference is being held because there are concerns that your child may be at risk of significant harm. We know this can feel worrying or daunting. The conference brings together you, your family where appropriate, and the people who know and work with your child to understand the strengths in your family, where there may be worries or risks for your family, and what needs to happen next.

What is a Child Protection Conference?

It is a meeting focused on your child's safety, wellbeing and day-to-day experience. It brings together the information held by your family and the people working with you so that the conference can decide whether your child needs a Child Protection Plan.

Who will be there?

- You and your child's other parent or carers
- Your social worker
- The Child Protection Chair, who leads the meeting
- People from school or nursery where relevant
- Health professionals
- Police
- Other people who know or support your child and family

We will tell you who has been invited and why. You can talk with us beforehand about having an advocate, family member or another person you trust to support you.

Who can support me?

You may wish to have a family member, friend, support worker or advocate with you. Speak to your social worker or Child Protection Chair before the meeting so they can explain what is possible and how that person can support you.

What is the Child Protection Chair's role?

The Child Protection Chair leads the conference. Their role is to keep the meeting focused on your child, make sure different views are heard, help everyone understand the worries and strengths, and make sure any plan is clear about what needs to happen.



What will we talk about?

- **What are we worried about?**
  - What has happened, or could happen that may affect your child's safety?
- **What is working well?**
  - What strengths and safety can we build on?
- **What does your child think?**
  - What is life like form your child's point of view?
- **What needs to happen?**
  - What needs to change so your child is safer?
- **Who can help?**
  - What will family, friends, and professionals do?
- **How will we know?**
  - What changes will show that life is safer for your child?

Will I be able to speak?

Yes. Your participation matters. You can share your views, respond to worries, tell us what is going well, correct information you believe is wrong, comment on reports, identify people who could help, suggest support, ask questions and say when you disagree.

Will I receive reports before the conference?

Reports should be shared with you before the conference wherever possible, so you have time to read them and ask questions. If there is information you disagree with or believe is inaccurate, you can discuss this before or during the meeting.

How will my child be involved?

Children and young people can be involved in different ways depending on their age, wishes and understanding. They might talk with their social worker, meet the Child Protection Chair, attend some or all of the meeting, write or draw something, record their views, or have support from an advocate.

Want to see what a Child Protection Conference is like?

Cheshire East worked with children and young people to make a short animation explaining what happens at a Child Protection Conference. You can watch it yourself or watch it together with your child.

Watch the animation



What decisions can be made?

The conference will decide whether your child needs a Child Protection Plan. If a plan is not needed, there may still be help or support agreed with your family. If a child protection plan is needed, it should be clear about the worries, what is already helping, what needs to change, what everyone will do and how progress will be recognised.

People who care about your child matter

Grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, family friends and other trusted adults can often help children stay safe and well supported. The conference should think with you about who is already important to your child and who could safely help.

A plan is not simply a list of things your family must do.

Professionals should also be clear about the help and actions they have agreed to provide.

What if I disagree?

You can say that you disagree and explain why. Your views should be heard and recorded. The Child Protection Chair should help you understand the decision, the reasons for it, what needs to change and how you can raise concerns about the process.

- **Helpful words:**
  - Social worker — works with children and families.
    Child Protection Chair — leads Child Protection Conferences.
    Child Protection Plan — the plan agreed to help keep a child safe.
    Core Group — a smaller group of family members and professionals who meet regularly to make sure the Child Protection Plan is happening and helping the child.



Who can I talk to?

Questions about a child protection enquiry

Child Protection Chairs
01606 288040
Safeguardingchildprotection@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Independent advocacy - Coram Voice

An advocate can help a child or young person understand their rights, share their views and be heard. Scan the QR code to find out more about advocacy and how to ask for support.
Freephone: 0808 800 5792
Text or WhatsApp: 07758 670369
Email: help@coramvoice.org.uk

Advocacy

If you are unhappy with Children's Services

You can talk to your social worker or their manager. You can also contact Children's Social Care Complaints.
Telephone: 0300 123 5038
Email: socialcarecomplaintsmanager@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Complaints

If you need this information in another language or format, or need help understanding it, please tell your social worker or Child Protection Chair

! If a child is in immediate danger

Call 999. For an urgent social care concern outside normal working hours, call 0300 123 5022 (Option 3).

Your key contacts

Social worker: _____

Phone number: _____

Next meeting / review date: _____

