01 OVERVIEW

Child protection in England is a complex multi-agency system with many different organisations and individuals playing their part. Reflecting on how well that system is working is critical for ongoing improvement and collective response to children and their families.

Sometimes a child suffers a serious injury or death as a result of child abuse or neglect. Understanding not only what happened, but also why things happened as they did can help to improve the response in future. Understanding the impact of the actions from different organisations and agencies had on the child's life and their family, and if different approaches or actions may have resulted in a different outcome, is essential to improve our collective knowledge. It is in this way that good judgments can be made about what may need to change at a local or national level.

02 PURPOSE OF CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS (CSPR'S)

These were formally referred to as 'Serious Case Reviews'. The purpose for a review of a serious child safeguarding case, at both local and national level, is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Learning is relevant locally, but also has a wider importance for all practitioners working with children, families and for the government and policymakers. Understanding whether there are systemic issues, and whether and how policy and practice need to change, is critical to the system being dynamic and self-improving.

Reviews should seek to prevent or reduce the risk of recurrence of similar incidents. They are not conducted to hold individuals, organisations or agencies to account.

03 WHAT IS A LOCAL CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW?

When a child dies or is seriously harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, a review may be conducted to identify ways that professionals and organisations can improve the way they work together to safeguard children and prevent similar incidents from occurring. The criteria which the local safeguarding partners must take into account include whether the case:

- highlights improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- highlights recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children
- highlights concerns agencies working together effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- is one which the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel concluded that a local review may be more appropriate.

04 CASES THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR A CSPR

The local authority must notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group if:

- a child has died or been seriously harmed
- and abuse or neglect of the child is known or suspected

This may include cases where a child has caused serious harm to someone else.

Serious harm includes, but is not limited to, serious and/or long-term impairment of a child's mental or physical health or intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. When making decisions, judgment should be exercised in cases where impairment is likely to be long-term, even if this is not immediately certain. Even if a child recovers, including from a one-off incident, serious harm may still have occurred.

05 THE REFERRAL PROCESS FOR A CSPR

An initial discussion should be had with the agency safeguarding lead to share any concerns about a case. If it is agreed the case should be considered for a CSPR, then the following process should be followed:

- To discuss a **BCP child**, call the Head of Performance and Partnerships: 01202 127465. Following that discussion please return your completed form to **pandorsetsafeguardingchildrenpartnership@bcpcouncil.gov.uk**
- To discuss a **Dorset child** call the Head of Quality Assurance and Partnerships: 01305 221196. Following that discussion please return your form to **pan-dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk**

The local authority must notify the National Panel of any event that meets the criteria within 5 working days of becoming aware of an incident occurring. The duty to notify serious child safeguarding events to the National Panel rests with the local authority.

06 NEXT STEPS FOLLOWING A REFERRAL TO CONSIDER A CASE FOR A CSPR

After the local authority notifies the National Panel of a serious child safeguarding case, also known as a Serious Incident Notification (SIN), then a Rapid Review will then take place. The aim of this Rapid Review is to enable safeguarding partners to:

- Gather the facts about the case
- Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning
- Consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard & promote the welfare of children.
- Decide next steps, including whether to undertake a CSPR.

The Rapid Review is a 15 working day process. The decision making is recorded on the Rapid Review Record which will include any immediate action needed and whether a CSPR is recommended. The record will be presented to the Executive Partners for their consideration and final decision before being shared with the National Panel for their views.

07 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the outcome of the Rapid Review determines the case meets the criteria to conduct a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP) will appoint an Independent Reviewer who will create outcome focussed recommendations. The Reviewer will clarify and differentiate between new learning as well as learning around assurance that existing policy and procedure is adhered to, or recommend that the statutory partners seek and provide assurance that existing policy and procedure is fit for purpose/robust and or if needs developing where required.
Families are notified when a CSPR has been commissioned with an explanation of the process and offered the opportunity to speak directly with the Independent Reviewer. Children and/or siblings will be communicated with via their support networks or their allocated social worker.
When the final draft has been signed off, the report will be published on the Pan-Dorset website. Please click on this link to view our existing published CSPR reports Child Safeguarding Practice Review (previously known as Serious Case Reviews) - Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (pdscp.co.uk)

Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

Dorset Council · BCP Council · Dorset Police · NHS Dorset