

FAO: Parents

Independent Chair: John Goldup

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Dear Parent

COVID-19 and Changes to Child Protection Conferences

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to cause uncertainty, our focus is on the safety of our families, staff and agencies involved in the safeguarding and protection of our children and young people. Following the latest Government guidance, we have made several decisions about the best way to protect all involved, whilst continuing to ensure that we meet our statutory requirements for safeguarding children and young people.

After careful consideration of the updated guidance, which advises against non-essential face-to-face meetings or travel, we have taken the reluctant decision to move towards virtual meetings for Child Protection Conferences. When you receive an invitation to your child's Conference, this will include information on how to join the virtual meeting. Please be assured that multi-agency professionals who know your child will also be invited, along with an interpreter if required, and the meeting will be conducted by a Conference Chair as per the existing procedure.

Initial Child Protection Conferences: all information available will be considered and a decision will be made as to whether or not threshold is met and a Child Protection Plan is needed. A recommended Child Protection Plan will be agreed and distributed. Should it not be possible, due to unforeseen circumstances, to have a representative from all the agencies involved available at the time of the virtual meeting the Conference Chair will contact agencies not available to ensure that their decision making and views are obtained and noted in the minutes.

Review Child Protection Conferences will be conducted in the same manner as Initial Child Protection Conferences. Should it not be possible to contact any agency involved with the child / young person or the family there will be a review of the current risk by the Conference Chair and available agencies upon which a decision will be made as to the continuation of the Child Protection Plan and to consider any recommendations for the plan. In cases where it is not possible to obtain suitable representation, the will be maintained and the Child Protection Plan will continue with the view to organise a review of the plan as soon as possible.

If you have any concerns, please speak to your child's Social Worker. For general guidance on Child Protection Conferences, please refer to the [RSCP website](#) which has a specific page for parents and a link to a short film.

Best wishes



Mariana Graham
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