

Serious Incidents, Local Serious Child Safeguarding Practice and other Learning Reviews:

A Guide for Staff and Managers across KSCP

Introduction

The death or serious harm of a child is a distressing event for everyone. When this then leads to inquiries being made about the work of professionals who were providing services to the child and family it can lead to staff understandably feeling very anxious. That is why it is important that all staff involved have a clear understanding about why the review has been requested, understand the process and what is expected of their organisation.

In order to support the wider understanding of the KSCP processes undertaken following the identification of a serious incident this guidance document will outline the following:

- Key definitions
- Partner responsibilities
- KSCP Serious Incident and Rapid Review Process
- KSCP Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review Process including progression to publication
- Available support
- Statutory timescales

What is a Serious Incident that requires KSCP Notification?

A **notifiable incident** is an incident involving the care of a child which meets any of the following criteria:

- A child has died (including cases of suspected suicide), **and** abuse or neglect is known **or suspected**;
- A child has been 'seriously harmed' **and** abuse or neglect is known **or suspected**
- A looked after child has died (including cases where abuse or neglect **is not known** or suspected); or
- A child in a regulated setting or service has died (including cases where abuse or neglect is **not known** or suspected)

'**Seriously harmed**' in the context of the above includes, but is not limited to, cases where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect, any or all of the following:

- A potentially life-threatening injury.
- Serious and/or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.
- This definition is not exhaustive. In addition, even if a child recovers, this does not mean that serious harm cannot have occurred. The KSCP will ensure that its considerations on whether serious harm has occurred are informed by available research evidence.

Responsibilities of an organisation where a notifiable serious incident occurs

Where a serious child safeguarding incident occurs which meets the definition of a 'notifiable incident' as outlined above, the first step for any organisation is to take appropriate action to ensure the immediate safety of the child or minimise the impact of any serious harm.

In all circumstances staff should initially consult with their own Safeguarding Lead/Senior Manager. The Safeguarding Lead/Senior Manager or any member of staff can contact the Local Authority and the KSCP Business Manager to identify whether the criteria for notification to the KSCP has been met.

The organisation should also have its own internal processes to ensure that:

- Where a child has suffered serious harm, the organisation will make a referral to the Local Authority (via Children's Social Care Duty and advice team)
- The organisation's Safeguarding Lead is informed of the incident/s and agrees with a Senior Manager within the organisation that the criteria has been met
- Staff within the organisation are aware of their responsibilities to complete the [KSCP Serious Incident Notification form](#) for cases that meet the criteria
- Where the child has died (whether this is expected or unexpected), the correct procedures are followed, as outlined in the [CDOP procedures](#)

A step by step outline of the KSCP Serious Incident and Rapid Review process can be accessed [here](#).

What is a Rapid review Meeting?

A rapid review is where safeguarding partners promptly undertake a rapid review of a case. The aim being to:

- gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time
- for the Local Authority to decide and communicate to KSCP Business Unit on cases where notification to Ofsted and the National Panel is required. (Representatives from Police and Health support this decision making)
- discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately
- consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- decide what steps they should take next, including whether or not to undertake a child safeguarding practice review

Responsibilities of organisations' in contributing to a Rapid Review:

Where a request is made by the KSCP Business unit for this purpose organisations have a duty to respond within the timescale outlined in the request. Working Together (2018) outlines that organisations and agencies must provide information which will assist the safeguarding partners to perform their functions when considering if a safeguarding review is warranted; individual organisations' internal processes should highlight this responsibility.

Staff and organisations can contact the [KSCP Business unit](#) if they have any questions regarding requests made.

What is a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review?

It is a multi-agency review of a 'case' or 'cases' where further review is deemed necessary as part of the decision making reached at the Rapid Review.

The criteria for a local child safeguarding practice review must take into account the following points:

- If it highlights that improvements are needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- If it highlights recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children
- If it highlights concerns regarding two or more organisations/agencies working together effectively
- If it is one which the National Panel have considered and concluded a local review may be more appropriate

To note: Meeting the above criteria does not mean that KSCP must automatically carry out a local child safeguarding practice review – it is for the 'key partners' to consider at the Rapid Review and determine whether a local review will support improvements to practice

Decision on whether to undertake a review will have been transparently communicated to wider KSCP Partners and the National Panel following the Rapid Review meeting.

Local reviews can take the form a variation of methodologies for example: a tradition case authored review, a thematic review, a multi-agency audit, a learning event. The views from practitioners (staff) and families should be sort where appropriate and should build on the content of information yielded at the Rapid Review.

Responsibilities of organisations' in contributing to a Local Review:

Where a request is made by the KSCP Business unit for this purpose organisations' have a duty to respond within the timescale outlined in the request. Working Together (2018) outlines that organisations' must provide information which will

assist the safeguarding partners to perform their functions; individual organisations' internal processes should highlight this responsibility.

A step by step guide to KSCPs Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review process can be accessed [here](#), this also details the steps to publication.

What is a National Child Safeguarding Practice Review?

It is a multi-agency review of a 'case' or 'cases' which following receipt of information from the Rapid review meeting the National Panel has considered it is appropriate to commission a national review. The National Panel consider the following criteria to support this decision making:

- highlights or may highlight improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including where those improvements have been previously identified
- raises or may raise issues requiring legislative change or changes to guidance issued under or further to any enactment
- highlights or may highlight recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children
- Are issues that are considered to be of 'national significance'

The principles and framework for the management of **national child safeguarding practice reviews** are set out in Chapter 4 of the HM Government document Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018

An external reviewer set by the National Panel will be appointed and the process of participating in a national child safeguarding practice review will be much the same as that of a local child safeguarding practice review.

What is the purpose and function of child safeguarding practice reviews?

The purpose of reviews at both local and national level, is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Reviews are an opportunity to understand relevant local learning and influence how practitioners work together. It is also an opportunity to influence government and policy makers and understand whether there are any systemic issues and what policy, or practice needs to change to assist improvements. Reviews are critical to the system being dynamic and self-improving.

Any review undertaken is not about looking for or apportioning blame. Reviews should always be an open and transparent opportunity to learn from practice, in order to improve multi-agency working and outcomes for children.

In Kirklees the KSCP have a Child Safeguarding Practice Review sub-group (CSPR). This oversees all arrangements for reviews and associated practitioner learning events, with support from KSCP Business Unit. The group comprises of senior representatives from

children's social work, education, health, police, public health, the Business Manager of the KSCP and other relevant partner agencies as outlined in the sub-group's ToR.

Final reports are agreed in this group then progressed to the Executive KSCP group for final agreement and decision-making regarding publication. The template used to support progression to the Executive KSCP group can be seen here.



FINAL KSCP
Publication sign off

Published reports remain on the KSCP website for 6 months, thereafter they are available on request to the KSCP Business Unit.

Available support:

It is very important that staff feel supported during a review process. The usual confidentiality rules apply with regard to not discussing the details of a case outside of work. If there is a police investigation there may be further restrictions, please seek advice from the KSCP Business Manager. However, staff are encouraged to discuss the case with their team and manager and other colleagues and professionals involved in the case.

Staff should receive support from their line managers and their individual organisation/agency throughout the process. Most agencies have supervision processes, support/counselling services available that staff are encouraged to access.

Staff should be kept informed of the progress of the review through their sub-group representative within the KSCP. On completion of the review staff will be made aware of its contents and recommendations.

At the conclusion of all reviews key findings will be communicated to the KSCP Learning and Development Subgroup to ensure this group discharges its responsibility to disseminate key learning across the wider multi-agency areas.

Throughout the process the KSCP Business unit are a contact point for any questions – they will then appropriately sign post staff to the right person to address any questions raised.

Summary of timescales:

<p>Serious incident Notification to KSCP using the eCase form</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of all partnership colleagues (across any agency) to complete a Serious Incident eCase Form if they have concerns that an incident has occurred that meets the threshold for partnership notification and consideration – this form should be completed within 24 hours of the incident being known.</p>
<p>Serious incident Notification to the National Panel</p>	<p>The LA must notify the National Panel of serious incidents within 5 working days of the LA becoming aware of the incident. (In Kirklees the Business unit support the LA to communicate this notification).</p>
<p>Rapid Review</p>	<p>The completed Rapid Review template should be submitted to the National Panel within 15 working days of the serious incident being recognised. (In Kirklees the Business unit support this communication to the National Panel).</p>
<p>Local Child Safeguarding Practice reviews</p>	<p>Local child safeguarding practice reviews should be published within 6 months of initiation. Safeguarding Partners should inform the National Panel of the reasons for any delay in meeting this timescale.</p> <p>Full reports should be sent to the National Panel 7 working days in advance of the publication date.</p> <p>(In Kirklees the Business unit support this communication to the National Panel).</p>

If you would like any further information about the child safeguarding practice review process contact the KSCP Business Manager at KSCP.Admin@kirklees.gov.uk.