**Dispute Resolution Protocol Practice Guidance**

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| **STAGE** | **CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE CHAIR** | **SOCIAL CARE** | **NOTES** |
| **Informal****2 Days** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to have a verbal discussion with the Social Worker outlining the concern identified, action required and timescale for completion. The above to be followed by email communication confirming the discussion.
* Child Protection Conference Chair to record the informal dispute as a case note on the child’s electronic record.
 | * Respond to email and the points raised.
* Agree timescale for completion of work and resolution of concern.
 | Disputes will not be classed as informal, if similar concerns were previously raised but remained unresolved.*If dispute is resolved, Child Protection Conference Chair and Team Manager to continue monitoring the situation.*A record of all communications to placed on the child’s electronic file. |
| **Formal****Stage 1****Within 4 days** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to telephone the Team Manager explaining the escalation.
* Child Protection Conference Chair to set out actions required to resolve the concern.
* Dispute Resolution Form to be completed and emailed to Team Manager (cc. Social Worker)
* Formal dispute to be recorded in case note of child’s file.
 | * Team Manager to respond in writing detailing the actions already taken or proposed to resolve the concern.
* Response to be written on the Dispute Resolution Form and emailed to Child Protection Conference Chair.
 | *If dispute is resolved Child Protection Conference Chair to save copy of Dispute Resolution Form on child’s file and continue to monitor in line with their role.*Team Manager to be copied into all communications within the Formal Dispute stages.**Dispute Resolution Form to be saved locally (not on child’s file) until the dispute is resolved.**If dispute remains unresolved Child Protection Conference Chair to consult with their line Manager regarding escalation to the next stage. |
| **Stage 2** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to request resolutions meeting to be held within 4 working days. Request to be made via telephone and followed up with an email.
* Copy of email to be placed on the child’s electronic record.
 | * Team Manager and Social Worker to respond to request for meeting within the agreed timescale. Response to be in writing and copied to child’s file.
 | *If dispute is resolved Child Protection Conference Chair to save copy of Dispute Resolution Form on child’s file and continue to monitor in line with their role.*If meeting request is rejected or not held within timescale Child Protection Conference Chair to consult with line Manager and Head of Service for Safeguarding to escalate to next level |
| **Stage 3** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to alert Head of Service to the escalation via email attaching copy of the completed Dispute Resolution Form. (Form to be updated to show what steps have already been taken to resolve the concern).
* Email and Form to be cc. to Team Manager, Social Worker and Manager of the Child Protection Conference Team.
* Case note to be added to the child’s electronic file.
 | * Jointly agreed response from Team Manager and Head of Service to be recorded in Dispute Resolution Form and emailed to Child Protection Conference Chair.
 | *If dispute is resolved Child Protection Conference Chair to save copy of Dispute Resolution Form on child’s file and continue to monitor in line with their role.*From Stage 3 Head of Service for Safeguarding to be copied into all communications.If unresolved, matter to be discussed with Safeguarding Head of Service with a view to referring the matter to Assistant Director for Children’s Service. |
| **Stage 4** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to alert Assistant Director via email attaching copy of the updated Dispute Resolution Form.
* Child Protection Conference Chair to ensure that they record the concern identified and what attempts have been made to resolve the concern.
* Case note to be added to the child’s electronic file.
 | * Assistant Director to review completed Dispute Resolution Form prior to taking action to try and resolve the concern.
* *Assistant Director to decide whether further Resolution meeting would be beneficial to resolve the concern*.
* Assistant Director to respond to Child Protection Conference Chair in writing.
 | *If dispute is resolved Child Protection Conference Chair to save copy of Dispute Resolution Form on child’s file and continue to monitor in line with their role.*If unresolved matter to be discussed with Safeguarding Head of Service with a view to referring the matter to Director for Children’s Service. |
| **Stage 5** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to alert Director of Children’s Services via email attaching copy of the completed Dispute Resolution Form.
* Case note to be added to the child’s electronic file.
 | * Director to review completed Dispute Resolution Form prior to taking action to try and resolve the concern.
* *Director to decide whether further Resolution meeting would be beneficial to resolve the concern*.
* Completed Dispute Resolution Form to be updated and emailed to Child Protection Conference Chair.
 | *If dispute is resolved Child Protection Conference Chair to save copy of Dispute Resolution Form on child’s file and continue to monitor in line with their role.*If unresolved matter to be discussed with Safeguarding Head of Service with a view to referring the matter to the Chief Executive Officer. |
| **Stage 6** | * Child Protection Conference Chair to alert Chief Executive for the Council via email attaching copy of the completed Dispute Resolution Form.
* Child Protection Conference Chair to save the Dispute Resolution Form on the child’s electronic file.
 | * Chief Executive Officer to review all documentation and determine whether it is necessary to meet with any of the parties.
* Chief Executive Officer to communicate decision regarding the resolution of the concern and communicate the outcome in writing to Child Protection Conference Chair and all parties.
 | Chief Executive Officer to determine resolution of dispute having reviewed Dispute Resolution Form and record decision on the document. |