

Making an Appeal

Details of your appeal should be sent to: **Directorate Safeguarding Manager. Po Box 61. County Hall, Preston PR1 8RJ**

Who will consider your appeal

The appeal will be considered by the Directorate Safeguarding Manager and a member of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board. Following consideration of your appeal a decision will be made whether to:

- Uphold your appeal and reconvene the Child Protection Conference to reconsider the decision made.
- Not uphold your appeal. In which case the original recommendations of the Child Protection Conference will stand.



For more information
about this service visit
[www.lancashire.gov.uk/
safeguardingchildrenboard](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard)

Any Further Questions

We hope this leaflet has explained how professionals and families work together to ensure that children and young people are kept safe.

If you have any further questions, please speak to your social worker.

If you need this information in another language we will arrange a translation. Information can also be made available in an easy read format for people who have a learning disability and large braille or audiotape.

Child Protection Conferences

Information for Parents/Carers

This booklet aims to help you understand how the child protection system works in Lancashire



The Child Protection Conference

A Child Protection Conference is a meeting to discuss concerns that have been raised about the safety and welfare of your child(ren).

The meeting will decide whether your child(ren) are at continuing risk of significant harm and whether your family needs any additional support/ services. The meeting should last no more than 2 hours but can sometimes take longer.



Everything that is said
at the meeting is
confidential

Who will be at the conference?

Parents and children will be invited to attend. Other family members may also be invited if this is appropriate.

Sometimes family members may be excluded from all or part of the meeting if it is considered that it is not in the best interests of the child(ren). If you have concerns about any family member attending you should speak to your social worker.

There will be a chairperson, social worker, police officer, health and educational representatives and anyone else who may be working with you or your family. There will also be somebody there to take notes of the conference. You will receive a copy of these following the meeting.

Before the meeting

You can write down your own views for the meeting

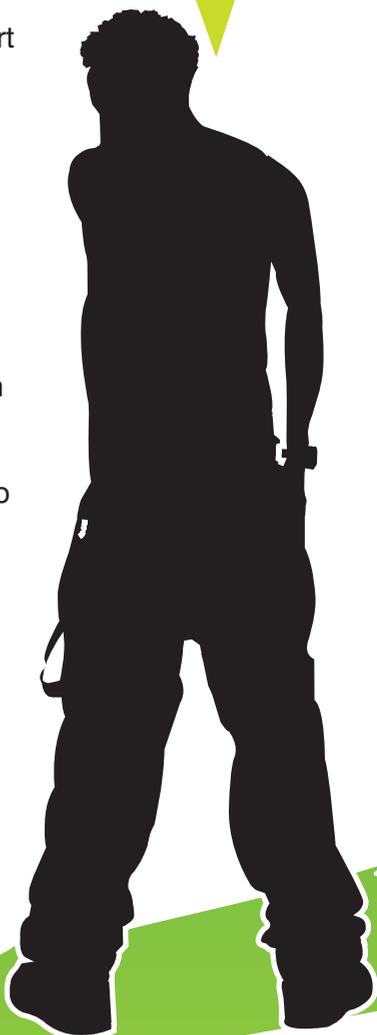
You will get a letter confirming the date, time and place of the meeting. If you have any problems attending or need child care support please speak to your social worker.

The social worker will write a report explaining the reason for the conference and their assessment. They will include information about your family and any previous concerns. They will also include your views about what has happened and your child(rens) wishes and feelings.

Their report will also make a recommendation as to whether a **Child Protection Plan** is required. The social worker should meet with you at least two days before the conference to go through the report.

Other professionals will also have written reports about their involvement with your family. They should also have discussed their report with you.

Your views are important and you should attend the conference. You can write down your views for the meeting. If you need help with this please ask your social worker. They will discuss with your child how their views will be presented to the meeting. There are separate leaflets for children and young people about Child Protection Conferences to support them to participate.



What if I need help to take part in the conference?

You can bring a friend, legal representative, advocate or supporter to the meeting.

Their only role in the meeting will be to support you. They cannot give their own views or ask questions unless you want them to.

If your first language is not English, your social worker can arrange for an Interpreter to come to the meeting. If you have any speech or hearing difficulties, or any other additional needs, your social worker will make sure you get the support you need to participate in the meeting.



At the meeting

The conference will have a **Chairperson who makes sure that the meeting is properly managed** and that everyone has the opportunity to give their views and ask questions. The County Council employs independent people whose job it is to chair Child Protection Conferences. They are called Independent Reviewing Officers.

On the day of the conference you will be invited to meet with the Chairperson 15 minutes before the meeting. They will explain what will happen in the conference and how you can take part.

At the beginning of the conference the Chairperson will introduce everyone and check with the family that the details such as names, addresses and dates of birth are correct.

Confidentiality

The Chairperson reminds everyone that the meeting is confidential. The conference then discusses the reports. The Chairperson will give you the opportunity to respond to the reports and give your views to the meeting about what has happened. You can do this verbally or write them in a report which you or your advocate can read out.

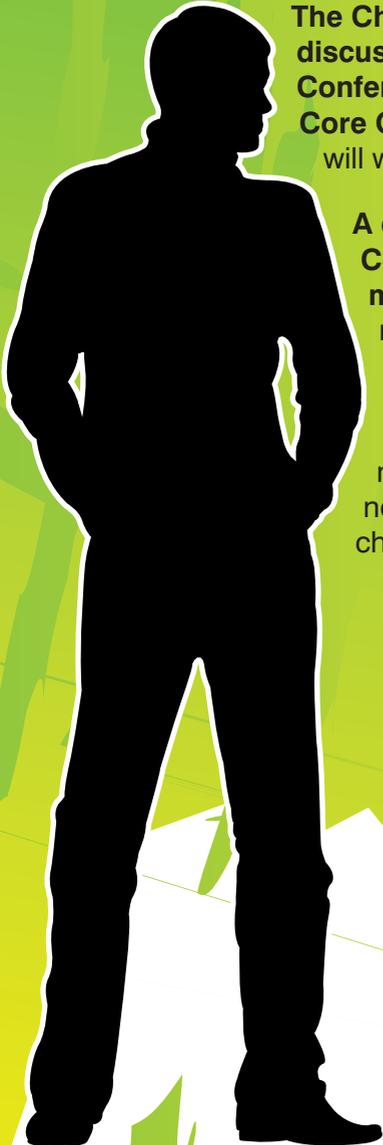
What decision will be made?

The Chairperson will then ask everyone's opinion about whether your child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and needs a Child Protection Plan. They will also identify the main area of concern (which may be neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse or sexual abuse).



The Child Protection Plan

The purpose of the Child Protection Plan is to ensure that your child is safe from harm and to promote their welfare. In most circumstances this will be done by supporting you as a family to care for your child(ren).



The Child Protection Plan will be discussed at the Child Protection Conference and reviewed at regular Core Group Meetings. The professionals will work together with you as a family.

A date for a Review Child Protection Conference will be made within 3 months of the Initial Conference to review the Child Protection Plan and check the progress being made. After that, conferences will be held every 5 months until a decision is made that a Child Protection Plan is no longer required to safeguard your child(ren).

What to do if you disagree with what is decided at the conference

You can appeal against the decision of the conference. You can make an appeal yourself or ask someone to make it on your behalf. An appeal must be lodged within 21 days of the Child Protection Conference.

You can appeal about the following:

Process of the conference

That it has not been run properly in accordance with the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Procedures

That the wrong decision has been made in deciding to make your child(ren) subject to a Child Protection Plan

That the plans made at the Child Protection Conference are not in the best interests of your child(ren)

For more information ask the Chairperson for a copy of the Appeals Procedure. This will be explained at the start of every Child Protection Conference.

We welcome feedback about the services we provide. At the end of the Child Protection Conference you will be asked to complete a parent/carers questionnaire.

We will use the information to help improve the service so we can achieve the best outcomes for your child(ren).