## **4.9 Child Only Conferences**

**Guidance on Child Only Conferences**

**Purpose and aim:**

* To help the child / young person to be actively involved in the process
* To try to understand what is happening for the child / young person
* To involve the child / young person and enable them to formulate their own Plan.

**Considerations**

* Recommended age of child / young person 8-17 years however this is flexible depending on the specific needs and wishes of the child/ young person.
* A **Child / young person Only Conference** should be considered for all children and young people and discussion should take place between the allocated social worker and the Child Protection Chair to ensure it will be beneficial for the child.
* Final decision as whether it will be in the best interests of the child or young person lies with the Child Protection Chair who ensure this is explained to the child / young person.

**Before the conference:**

Planning should start as early as possible and ideally around a month before the Child / young person Only Conference and include:

* Discussion with the child or young person about the conference and who they would like to support them at the meeting e.g., a teacher, advocate, social worker
* Discussion with parents and carers to explain the Child Only Conference process and to gain parental consent (for younger children)
* Consideration to where and when it is best for the meeting to take place and who will support the child or young person afterwards.
* Child / young person given the opportunity to share their views for the meeting by their social worker/advocate

**Child / young person Only Conference:**

**Who attends?**

Child Protection Chair, social worker, child / young person and their chosen support person

* No other professionals are invited

**What happens?**

* The Child Protection Chair will support the child / young person to identify strengths and worries for their family, for themselves and what they would like in their plan.
* The Child Protection Chair will use scaling questions, a safety scale to help understand how a child / young person feels about their situation.
* The child / young person will decide with the Child Protection Chair what can be shared with everyone who attends the main Child Protection Conference
* The Child Protection Chair will agree with the child / young person who will feedback to the child / young person after the main Child Protection Conference.

**After the Child / young person Only Conference:**

* Child / young person’s views are shared with the main Child Protection Conference
* The Child Protection Chair will ensure feedback is given to the child / young person
* Child Protection Chair writes to the child about their participation & child / young person’s feedback is sought

**Resources:**

* [Video clip explaining child protection conferences](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvimeo.com%2F504356810%2Ffb0bd0d8a7&data=04%7C01%7CJulie.Maguire2%40kent.gov.uk%7Ccbadca402abf4333a2e208d8c159623f%7C3253a20dc7354bfea8b73e6ab37f5f90%7C0%7C0%7C637471936932499937%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=4AXimMOHKJaoOUKNYBctmwekNYs%2FU5yzzrd8E2P9bNs%3D&reserved=0)
* [CP Conference Info Leaflet aged 7-11yrs](https://www.proceduresonline.com/kent/childcare/user_controlled_lcms_area/uploaded_files/CP%20Conference_info%20leaflet_7-11.pdf)
* [CP Conference Info Leaflet aged 11yrs +](https://www.proceduresonline.com/kent/childcare/user_controlled_lcms_area/uploaded_files/CP%20Conference_info%20leaflet_11%20plus.pdf)
* Online feedback forms for conferences for young people [Here](https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPage.aspx?lang=en-GB&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start#FormId=DaJTMjXH_kuotz5qs39fkJkxsy41YX5Ep4gk6jpspJFUQzVMU0s4TEo5VUMzOEVSME1aN1QxRk04Ry4u&FlexPane=SendForm)