



**Cheshire East Safeguarding
Children's Partnership**

Cheshire East
Safeguarding Children's Partnership
Rapid Review Process

How to refer a case for consideration

To support all partners to recognise and refer cases the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) has developed a case referral form. This form allows a partner to outline the case and should be submitted on the day that a potential notifiable case is identified. There is also a flowchart outlining the process in [appendix a](#).

It is expected that each individual agency reviews its own referrals before they are submitted to the CESCP team. This is to ensure that all referrals have been sufficiently considered by a senior manager before the learning review pathway is triggered.

The completed form should be submitted to the CESCP Business Manager (via cescp@cheshireeast.gov.uk) who, within 1 day of the referral, will consult with the 3 Statutory Partners who will consider if the child safeguarding incident is notifiable and determine if a Rapid Review will be triggered. If the child safeguarding incident is notifiable, a serious incident notification (SIN) (via IDAMs) will be made to the National Panel within 5 days of the notification.

This decision will be based on guidance and definitions provided by Working Together 2018 16C (1) of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) that state: *Where a local authority in England knows or suspects that a child has been abused or neglected, the local authority must notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel if –*

- *(a) The child dies or is seriously harmed in the local authority's area, or*
- *(b) While normally resident in the local authority's area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside England.*

The Statutory Partners will also confirm who will chair the Rapid Review, this will normally be the local authorities Safeguarding Manager.

The National Panel request Rapid Review reports 15 full working days from Safeguarding Partnerships. This period starts the next full working day following receipt of a serious incident notification (SIN). However, if they are unable to request on the same day, they will always allow 15 full working days from the date of their request. Additionally, the safeguarding partnership may request an extension from the Panel to submit its rapid review slightly later than the deadline providing there is good justifiable reasons for doing so.¹

The Rapid Reviews report should be submitted to the Panel secretariat at: Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk.

¹ The SCP sought confirmation of this in August 2023 and received a written response which informs this paragraph.

Notification of a Serious Safeguarding Incident

There is a duty on local authorities to notify serious incidents to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

Notification must always be made if abuse or neglect is a cause of, or a contributory factor to, the serious incident or where it is suspected. Whilst it is the Local Authority that carries this duty to report, partners are under a duty to inform the safeguarding partners of any incident that they think may meet these criteria.

Notification to the National Panel will be made via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-child-safeguarding-incident> It will be made by the SCP Business Manager within 5 working days of the CЕСCP being notified of a serious incident and following agreement from the 3 Statutory Partners.

Rapid Review

If the 3 Statutory Partners determine that a Rapid Review is required a Rapid Review Meeting of the case must be completed before day 10 after the notification to the National Panel. The review should aim to:

- Gather the facts about the case as far as they can be readily established at the time.
- Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share 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 to undertake a Safeguarding Practice Review.

All partners/agencies who have knowledge of the child will be required to contribute to a Rapid Review Meeting.

A Rapid Review Analysis/identified learning and Chronology will be sent out to designated Safeguarding Leads in identified agencies immediately after the Statutory Partners decide to hold a Rapid Review. All agencies should secure all records/files in relation to the case through Safeguarding Leads/Managers in their service area and a process agreed to ensure access is appropriate to those professionals involved in ongoing service delivery to the child/carers.

Agencies should return the completed Rapid Review Analysis/identified learning and Chronology to the CЕСCP Business Team within 3 working days. This will enable the Rapid Review Panel Chair to review and construct an overview of the case for the panel.

The CESC Business Team will circulate a collation of all the template submissions one day prior to the Rapid Review Panel meeting. Members of the panel will include:

- Cheshire Police
- Cheshire East Council Children's Services
- NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board
- Health Providers as appropriate

The Rapid Review Meeting may wish to invite managers and practitioners involved with the case to the meeting if this is considered useful and it is thought that a discussion with those that know the family would be beneficial to decision making. Those attendees will respectfully be asked to leave prior to the discussion about threshold and next steps.

The Rapid Review meeting will use the review criteria laid out in the National Panel guidance to consider the case and identify if the need for a review is evident. It will:

- Highlight improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including where those improvements have been previously identified.
- Highlight recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children.
- Highlight two or more organisations or agencies working together effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding partners should also have regard to the following circumstances:

- Where the safeguarding partners have cause for concern about actions of a single agency.
- Where there has been no agency involvement, and this gives the safeguarding partners cause for concern.
- Where more than one local authority, police force, or clinical commissioning group is involved, including in cases where families have moved around.
- Where cases may raise issues relating to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of children in institutional settings.

The Rapid Review meeting will be structured to ensure all the relevant criteria is considered.

Meeting the criteria does not mean that Safeguarding Partners must automatically conduct a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. If the learning identified is already known about and changes in practice are in progress, then Safeguarding Partners may decide not to conduct a

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. Other options include no further action or that learning has been identified through the Rapid Review Meeting and this will be disseminated throughout the partnership.

If the Rapid Review Panel determine that a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review is required, then they will propose the membership of the group to take this review forward.

What a completed Rapid Review Report should include

On completion of the Rapid Review, the 3 Statutory Partners and SCP Business Manager should sign off a Rapid Review report and share with the National Panel their decision on whether a Local Child Safeguarding Practice is appropriate. If this is the case, consideration will be given to appropriateness and arrangements for commissioning an independent chair and/or author.

Within this report there will be reference to:

- Immediate safeguarding arrangements of any children involved.
- A concise summary of the facts, as far as they can be ascertained, about the serious incident and relevant context. This should give sufficient detail to underpin the analysis against the Working Together criteria but does not require lengthy detailed chronologies of agency involvement that can obscure the pertinent facts.
- A clear decision as to whether the criteria for a SPR has been met and on what grounds, and if not, why not, clear reasons are required.
- A recommendation on whether a National Review would be considered necessary, and if so, why.
- Any immediate learning already established and plans for their dissemination.
- Potential for additional learning.
- If the decision is taken not to proceed with a SPR, a summary of why it is thought there is no further learning to be gained.
- Which agencies have been involved in the Rapid Review, explaining any agency omission whose involvement would be usually expected?
- Who has been involved in the decision-making process?
- Relevant identifying details of the child and family.

Under Working Together (2018), the criteria for local child safeguarding practice reviews offers greater flexibility for partners to consider how learning is best generated within a new safeguarding arrangement. External scrutiny of this decision making is offered by the National Panel through the submission of Rapid Review Reports.

The National Panel may recommend a local panel reconsider their view. They may also choose to take forward a national review using a local case as there are national trends emerging that they are best placed to review. In these circumstances the Statutory Partners should reconvene a meeting to consider the National Panel’s decision and reconsider their local decision.

Appendix A

Notification flowchart

