

Child Protection Case Conference

Information for
Parents and Families



Fife Child Protection
Committee



"child protection is everyone's job...it's our job"

www.fifechildprotection.org.uk

Fife Partnership...Strengthening Fife's Future



What are Child Protection Case Conferences about?


Fife Child Protection Committee work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure all children are kept safe and looked after properly.

This leaflet will help to answer questions you may have about the case conference and the child protection register.

Answer This is a meeting to share information about you and your family and to discuss your child's safety. This can be worrying and cause anxiety but you should have had a chance to discuss with your social worker what is likely to be said at the conference. The meeting is arranged following a child protection investigation or where there are some serious concerns about your child. All the children in your care will be considered at this conference.



What is a child protection case conference?



What does the conference do?

Answer All agencies with relevant knowledge about children must meet to share information and may make a plan to protect children. Your social worker will write a report, which they will share with you before the conference. Other professionals will also write reports and you should see these before the conference takes place.

- After all the information has been shared and discussed, the conference will consider the risks that there may be to children in your care and agree what needs to be done to keep them safe. Everyone at the conference will then decide:
- Whether your child is at risk of harm and agree a plan about what type of support and protection is needed.
- Whether your child's name should be placed on the child protection register.
- Whether to pass information about your child to the Children's Reporter.
- Whether your child needs emergency protection.



**What if
your child's name
is placed on the
register?**

Answer If your child's name is placed on the child protection register, then a plan will be made. This will detail everything that needs to change, to make your child safe.

Answer Yes. You can attend and we welcome parents' attendance at conferences. It is very rare that a parent will not be invited. This would apply if there was a risk of violence or other exceptional circumstances.




**Can I
attend?**

We want to make the best decisions for children in your care so your attendance is very important. You will be able to hear what others have to say, give information and correct any information which you think is wrong.

Answer We understand that you may find it difficult to attend, instead you could write something down. Your social worker can help you to do this if you want. Someone who has attended the conference will always let you know what happened as soon as possible. The person chairing the conference will also write to you to let you know the decision and plan.



What if I don't attend?



Can I bring someone to support me?

Answer Yes. Before the conference you must try to let your social worker or the chair of the conference know who is coming to support you. The chair of the conference will decide whether the person you want to bring can take part in the conference. They can speak for you at the conference.

If you would like help from an advocacy service, please contact one of the following:

• **Advocacy in Fife**

01592 753383

info.fife@circlesnetwork.org.uk

Adults with mental health problems or dementia

• **Circles Network Fife**

01592 753383

info.fife@circlesnetwork.org.uk

Older people

• **Fife Elderly Forum**

01592 643743

info@fife-elderly.org.uk

Adults with learning difficulties

• **People First**

01592 223871

peoplefirstfife@hotmail.co.uk

• **Dunfermline Advocacy**

(West Fife Area)

01383 624382

enquiries@dunfermlineadvocacy.org

• **Equal Voice** (Central Fife Area)

01592 223875

equalvoiceincentralfife@yahoo.co.uk

• **includeME** (North East Fife Area)

01334 656242

contact@includeme.org.uk

Answer Yes. Children and young people do sometimes attend conferences if it is felt that they are old enough to understand what is happening and will not be upset by attending the meeting. Your social worker will discuss this with you and your child before the conference to help you decide what is best. It is very important that your child's views of his or her situation are known to those attending the meeting. If he or she does not attend, then the social worker, child's advocate or one of the other professionals involved with your child can ask them if they want to write something down for the chair of the meeting. If they don't want to, then they can tell the social worker or other professional to say something on their behalf.



Will my child(ren) attend?




Who else will attend?

Answer Your social worker will always attend. Other professionals working with you and your family will be invited such as your child's teacher, health visitor, school nurse, your GP.

There may also be some people who you do not know, but who have important information for the conference e.g. the police. You will be told who these people are and introduced to them.

Answer A written record of the conference, called the 'minutes' will be sent to you with the agreed child protection plan, within 15 days of the conference.



What records of the conference are there?



What is a child protection plan?


Answer The child protection plan is the main document which shows what needs to be done by everyone including you. The aim is to reduce the risks to your child. Everyone involved should work to the child protection plan. It will be used to review progress towards achieving the changes that are necessary.

Answer This is a list of all the children and young people in Fife who are assessed to be at risk of harm. The register does not change the rights and responsibilities of a parent with 'paternal responsibility' for a child. Although the register is highly confidential, any professional who is concerned about a child can check to see if a child is either on the register or has been in the past.

Your child's legal name, the name they are known by, their date of birth and their address will be recorded, as will the concerns about your child.



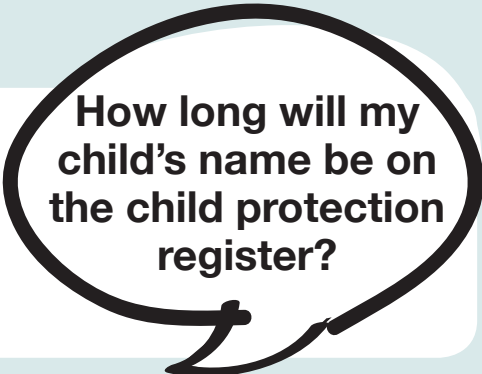
What is the child protection register?




Who will know that my child's name is on the child protection register?

Answer Conferences are confidential. This means that information about your family will only be shared with people working with you, if this is in your child's best interest.

Answer The decision about whether your child's name stays on the register is considered at every review conference. The first review conference is always within 3 months of the initial conference.



How long will my child's name be on the child protection register?




What will the review case conference discuss?

Answer The progress made by everyone involved, including you, in carrying out the tasks agreed in the child protection plan. The conference will discuss whether or not the situation has improved enough for your child's name to be removed from the child protection register. They will also discuss the need for any ongoing support and how this can be provided.

Answer All agencies want to work with you, but they must consider your child's best interests. Sometimes this will be different from what you think. It is however, very important that everyone listens to your views.

The Child Protection Register is a way of alerting services that children have been identified as being at risk. The register does not have a legal basis and is, therefore, not open to formal appeal. However, if you are unhappy with the way the meeting was held, the decision, or the way staff behaved, you may take your complaint to the Chair of the Case Conference in the first instance. The Chair will advise you how to progress your complaint.



What if I don't agree with the decision of the conference?

Contact details

Social Work Contact Centre
Tel. 03451 55 15 03

Out of Office Hours – If you need to speak to someone urgently out of hours then please call 03451 550099.

If there is anything you do not understand about child protection meetings or the child protection register please ask any of the workers involved with your child and family and they will try to answer your questions.

If you need more information about child protection then please visit the Fife Child Protection website at:
www.fifechildprotection.org.uk

Your Child's Support Team

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Your Child's Social Worker

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Your Child's Teacher

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Other workers

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Chair of the meeting

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Thanks to Falkirk Child Protection Committee in the development of this leaflet.



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