



Halton Safeguarding Children Board

Escalation Policy Resolution Pathways

**(For professional disagreements when
determining levels of need when working with
Children and Families)**

Revised September 2013

Escalation Policy

1. Context

- 1.1 This policy has been developed in line with the guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013. This policy is to ensure partner agencies have a quick and straightforward means of resolving professional differences in view of specific cases, in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. The policy should be read in conjunction with your own organisation's escalation procedure.
- 1.2 Effective working together depends on resolving disagreements to the satisfaction of workers and agencies, and a belief in a genuine partnership and joint working to safeguard children.
- 1.3 Problem resolution is an integral part of professional cooperation and joint working to safeguard children. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion.
- 1.4 Every agency should have their own procedures in place for how to deal with concerns within their own setting. On those occasions where concerns need to be raised with another agency, workers should ensure this happens as soon as possible and that discussions are clearly recorded. If resolution cannot be reached worker to worker, then this will be progressed to line managers.
- 1.5 **WHEN ANY PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERS A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM, THEN THE INDIVIDUAL MUST ENSURE THEIR CONCERNS ARE ESCALATED ON THE SAME WORKING DAY USING ESTABLISHED SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES.**
- 1.6 At no time must professional disagreement detract from ensuring a child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain paramount throughout.
- 1.7 Attempts at problem resolution may leave one worker/agency believing that a child/children may be at risk of significant harm. This person/agency has responsibility for communicating such concerns through agreed child protection procedures.
- 1.8 Disagreements could arise in a number of areas, but are most likely to arise around determining levels of need, roles and responsibilities, and the need for action and communication.

2. Resolving Disagreements

- 2.1 Initial attempts should be taken to resolve the problem; the aim should be to resolve difficulties at practitioner/case worker level between agencies.

- 2.2 When there is recognition that there is a disagreement over a significant issue, which impacts on the safety and welfare of a child, the respective workers must identify explicitly what the problem is and have absolute clarity about the nature of the disagreement and what the respective workers aim to achieve.
- 2.3 It should be recognised that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this unsupported.
- 2.4 If unresolved, the problem should be referred by each worker to their respective line manager, for school staff this will be the designated person, who in turn is expected to discuss with their opposite number in the other agency.

Some examples below:

- Social Worker - Line Manager
- Health Visitor - Family Health Co coordinator
- Community Midwife – Manager or Matron
- GP- CCG Named Doctor for Safeguarding
- Paediatric Staff - Sister
- Hospital Consultant - Named Doctor for Safeguarding
- Community Mental Health Team - Line manager.
- Staff in schools - Designated Person in school with Safeguarding Responsibility

A clear line of accountability with contact details is available at Appendix A. This is not an exhaustive list; it is meant to be used as a guide should you need to escalate concerns with an organisation not identified on the list.

- 2.5 A clear record must be kept at all stages, by all parties, in particular this must include written confirmation between the parties about an agreed outcome of the disagreements and how any outstanding issues will be pursued.

3. Where professional disagreements remain

- 3.1 If professional disagreements remain unresolved following discussions between respective managers .The matter must be referred to the HSCB representative for each agency involved for resolution.
- 3.2 In the unlikely event that the steps described above do not resolve the issue and /or the discussion has raised significant policy issues, it should be referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Children’s Unit Manager, who will offer mediation and determine a course of action. This will include reporting to the HSCB Chair, as per the flow chart.

4. Following the use of the Escalation Policy

- 4.1 It may be useful for individuals to debrief following some disputes in order to promote continuing good working relationships.

4.2 When the issue is resolved, any general issues should be identified and referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Children's Unit for consideration to inform future learning.

HALTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

**ESCALATION POLICY
FOR RESOLUTION OF PROFESSIONAL DISAGREEMENTS WHEN
DETERMINING LEVELS OF NEED WHEN WORKING WITH
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

****WHEN ANY PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERS A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM, THEN THE INDIVIDUAL MUST ENSURE THEIR CONCERNS ARE ESCALATED ON THE SAME WORKING DAY USING ESTABLISHED SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES.***

When a professional disagrees with a decision or response from any agency regarding determining the levels of need for a child, initial attempts should be made between the workers to resolve the issues. When such steps have failed the next stage must be instigated.

The respected professionals must refer the disagreement to their own designated professional in their organisation, who has responsibilities for safeguarding.

The Manager/Named Professional with responsibilities for Safeguarding should discuss the concerns/response with their opposite manager in the other agency.

When respective managers are unable to resolve the disagreements the matter should be referred up to the HSCB representative for each agency involved.

Where HSCB representatives are unable to resolve the matter the issue should be referred to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children's Unit Manager, who will determine a course of action; this will include reporting to the HSCB Chair.

At all stages actions/decisions must be recorded in writing and shared with relevant personnel.

APPENDIX A – AGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

AGENCY	Manager/Named Professional Safeguarding	Next Level Management	HSCB Representative for Agency
Bridgewater Community NHS Trust	Marie Fairbrother – Named Nurse Safeguarding Children Tel No: 0151 511 5844 Email: marie.fairbrother@bridgewater.nhs.uk Madeleine Ashcroft - Safeguarding Nurse Tel No: 0151 511 5844 Email: madeleine.ashcroft@bridgewater.nhs.uk Sarah Wilson - Safeguarding Nurse Tel No: 0151 511 5844 Email: sarah.wilson@bridgewater.nhs.uk	Jean Sampson - Head of Safeguarding Children & Adults Tel No: 07867780407 Email: Jean.Sampson@bridgewater.nhs.uk	Michelle Bradshaw, Assistant Director Child & Family Health Services Tel No: 01744 621827 Mob No: 07833236759 Email: Michelle.bradshaw@hsthpcct.nhs.uk
Children's Social Care - Runcorn	Joy Hughes - Principal Manager Tel No: 0151 511 7315 Email: Joy.Hughes@halton.gov.uk Lisa Storey - Principal Manager Tel No: 0151 511 6978 Email: Lisa.Storey@halton.gov.uk	Tracey Overs, Divisional Manager Mob No: 07867161686 Email: Tracey.Overs@halton.gov.uk	Tracey Coffey, Operational Director Tel No: 0151 511 6790 Mob No: 07771805122 Email: Tracey.Coffey@halton.gov.uk
Children's Social Care - Widnes	Jill Evans - Principal Manager Tel No: 0151 511 8047 Email: Jill.Evans@halton.gov.uk Zoe Fearon - Principal Manager Tel No: 0151 511 7289 Email: Zoe.Fearon@halton.gov.uk	Tracey Overs, Divisional Manager Mob No: 07867161686 Email: Tracey.Overs@halton.gov.uk	Tracey Coffey, Operational Director Tel No: 0151 511 6790 Mob No: 07771805122 Email: Tracey.Coffey@halton.gov.uk
CRI	Becky Norton Tel No: 0151 422 1400 Email: becky.norton@cri.org.uk	John Williams Tel No: 01928 592 405 Email john.williams@halton.gov.uk	

5 Boroughs Partnership	Karen Dobson, Advanced Nurse Practitioner Safeguarding Children Tel No: 0151 2444581 Mob No: 07747536091 Email: Karen.dobson@5bp.nhs.uk	Tania Few, Named Nurse Tel No: 0151 244 3332 Mob No: 07795452085 Email: Tania.few@5BP.nhs.uk	Linda Kellie Tel No: 01925 664183 Email: Linda.Kellie@5bp.nhs.uk
Police PPU	Det/Sgt Paul Hughes Tel No: 01606 363954 Email: paul.hughes@cheshire.pnn.police.uk	DI Mark Bradley Tel No: 01606 364955 Email: mark.bradley@cheshire.pnn.police.uk	Supt Martin Cleworth Tel No: 01606 364876 Mob No: 07810182332 Email: martin.cleworth@cheshire.pnn.police.uk
Warrington Hospital	Shanaz Loftus, Specialist Nurse Safeguarding Tel No: 01925 662766 Email: shanazkhan1@nhs.net	Matron (Paeds -Jane Scott, Maternity - Yvonne Erickson or Bernie Halliday, A&E - Kelly Burns) Named Safeguarding Nurse -Nicki Richardson Tel No: 01925 662766, Email: nicolarichardson@nhs.uk or nicola.richardson@whh.nhs.uk	Melanie Hudson or Karen Dawber, Director of Nursing & OD Email: Karen.Dawber@whh.nhs.uk
Whiston Hospital	Anne Montieth, Specialist Nurse Safeguarding Tel No: 0151 676 5298 Email: anne.monteith@sthk.nhs.uk	Hayley McCulloch, Named Nurse Safeguarding Tel No: 0151 430 1781 Email: Hayley.McCulloch@sthk.nhs.uk	Phil Dearden, Head of Safeguarding Tel No: 0151 430 1552 Email: Philip.Dearden@sthk.nhs.uk
YOS	Lisa Broome - Team Manager Tel No: 0151 511 6622 Mob No: 0797949691 Email: lisa.broome@halton.gov.uk Andy Griffiths - Team Manager Tel No: 0151 511 8139 Email: Andy.Griffiths@halton.gov.uk	Pauline Burke, Operations Manager Tel No: 0151 511 6622 Email: pauline.burke@halton.gov.uk	Gareth Jones, Head of Service Tel No: 0151 511 7499 Email: Gareth.Jones@halton.gov.uk