



Hounslow Safeguarding Children Board

INTER-AGENCY ESCALATION POLICY

The Resolution of Inter-Agency Disagreements about Safeguarding Children

Introduction

Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the actions, inaction, or decisions of another agency do not adequately safeguard a child. Disagreements are most likely to arise around:

- Levels of need/thresholds
- Roles and responsibilities
- Progressing plans
- Communication

Professionals should attempt to resolve differences through discussion within ONE WORKING WEEK or a timescale that protects the child from harm (whichever is shortest)

Stage One – involving your line manager

Any worker who feels that a decision is not safe or is inappropriate should initially consult a supervisor/manager to clarify their thinking in order to identify the problem, to be specific as to what the disagreement is about, and to identify the desired outcome.

Stage Two – involving the worker from other agency/service

The people who disagree have a discussion to resolve the problem. This discussion must take place as soon as possible and could be a telephone conversation or a face to face meeting. There may be instances where disparity in perceived status or experience may inhibit the ability of some workers to resolve the disagreement without support.

Stage Three – escalate line manager to line manager

If the problem is not resolved at stage two the worker should contact their supervisor/manager within their own agency who should have a discussion with the equivalent supervisor/ manager in the other agency.

Stage Four – escalate to named/designated safeguarding leads or senior operational manager

If the problem is not resolved at stage three the supervisor/manager reports to their respective operations manager or named/designated safeguarding representative.

These two managers must attempt to resolve the professional differences through discussion.

Stage Five – resolution by Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB) Chaired meeting

Operational issues must be resolved by the agencies identified directly involved in the case. When a resolution has not been achieved at stage four, the Chair of the LSCB should be approached to identify a Board member from an uninvolved agency to chair a meeting of the most senior managers with operational responsibility for the case. This meeting will review the issues at hand and provide a final opportunity for the involved agencies to ensure that there is a full understanding of the issues before the decision is finalised.

The Chair of this meeting will then report on issues arising from this process to the Serious Case Review Sub Committee of the LSCB.

All professionals have a duty to act assertively and proactively to ensure that a child's welfare is the paramount consideration in all professional activity. Therefore, all professionals must challenge the practice of other professionals where they are concerned that this practice is placing children at risk of harm.

Resolution should be sought within the shortest timescale possible to ensure the child is protected. Disagreements should be resolved at the lowest possible stage however.

If a child is thought to be at risk of immediate harm the designated safeguarding lead in your agency should be informed immediately. The designated safeguarding lead will inform Hounslow Head of Safeguarding of the concerns.

Important additional notes:

At all stages of the process, actions and decisions must be recorded in writing and shared with relevant personnel, to include the worker who raised the initial concern.

This must include written confirmation between the parties about an agreed outcome of the disagreement and how any outstanding issues will be pursued.

If the process highlights gaps in policies and procedures this must be brought to the attention of the chair of the LSCB.

Appendix

Key Contacts

Hounslow Social Care

Social Work Team Managers

020 8583 4529 Intake East
020 8583 2548 Intake West
020 8583 3285 Safeguarding East
020 8583 3286 Safeguarding West
020 8321 2576 West Middlesex Hospital Paediatric Social Work Team
020 8583 3438 Adoption and Permanency Team
020 8583 3123 Children in Care-East
020 8583 3296 Children in Care-West
020 8583 3449 Fostering Team
020 8583 3661 Family Placements
020 8583 6482 Children with Disabilities Team
020 8583 3341 Pathways
020 8583 6512 Special Intensive Support Programme
Heads of Service
020 8583 6554 Head of Safeguarding
020 8583 3369 Cooperate Parenting (Adoption and Permanency, Children in Care, Participations)
020 8583 3446 Head of Operational Child Protection and Safeguarding (WMUH, Intake Teams, SISP and Safeguarding)
020 8583 3317 Head of Placements and Leaving Care Service (Fostering, Placements Team, Residential unit-The Ride)
020 8583 6363 Head of Youth Offending
020 8583 2788 Head of Children with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs
020 8583 3057 Head of Performance and Projects
020 8583 2762 Head of Early Interventions

NHS Hounslow CCG

020 8 630 3344 Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children
020 8 630 3287 Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children
07904 056517 Named GP Safeguarding Children

Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust

020 8 630 3279 Named Nurse Safeguarding Children
020 8 614 7350 Named Doctor for Safeguarding
020 8 630 3281 Specialist Nurse Safeguarding Children

West Middlesex University Hospital

020 8 321 5361 Named Nurse Safeguarding Children
020 8 321 5743 Named Doctor Safeguarding Children
020 8 321 2580 Named Midwife Safeguarding Children
020 8 321 6333 Safeguarding Midwife

West London Mental Health Trust

020 8354 8861 Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children
020 8354 8160 Director of Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults
(Named Doctor)
020 8354 8390 Safeguarding Children Trainer & Practice Development Lead
020 8354 8861 PA to Safeguarding Team
020 8354 8409 Safeguarding Children Data Officer & Training Administrator
020 8630 3237 Lead Doctor for Hounslow Children & Adolescent Mental Health
Services (CAMHS)

Addiction Services

020 8538 1150 I-Hear Partnership Area Borough Safeguarding Lead (Adults)
020 8583 6520 Visions (Children)

Metropolitan Police

Child Abuse Investigation Team
020 8246 0862 Detective Chief Inspector
Hounslow Borough Command
020 8 Detective Inspector Public Protection
020 8 Detective Chief Inspector
020 8247 6526 Detective Inspector Sapphire
Date of Review: