

Complaints about Child Protection Conferences Information for Parents/Carers and Young People

This leaflet lets you know:

- Who can complain
- What you can complain about
- How to complain
- What to expect if you do complain

Who can complain?

- Any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility* has a right to complain
- Any child or young person who has attended a child protection case conference and is able to understand what is happening has a right to complain
- Other adults who are directly affected by the case, for example, grandparents, may complain but only if the conference chair thinks it is in the child's best interests, and agrees to accept the complaint

* Parental Responsibility means All mothers and [most fathers](#) have legal rights and responsibilities as a parent - known as 'parental responsibility'.

If you have parental responsibility, your most important roles are to:

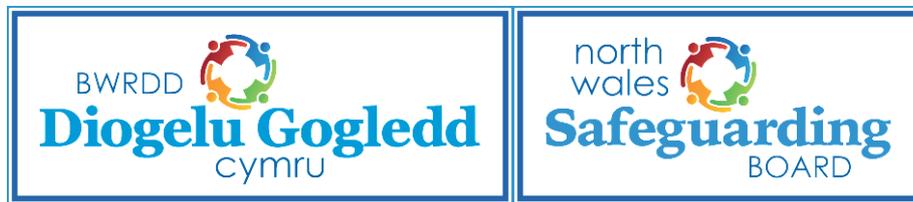
- provide a home for the child
- protect and maintain the child

If you have parental responsibility for a child you don't live with, you don't necessarily have a right to contact with them - but the other parent still needs to keep you updated about their well-being and progress.

What can you complain about?

You can complain for 3 reasons, and **only** these reasons:

- You don't think the proper process was followed
- You don't agree with the decision to put a child on the child protection register, or take them off the register
- You don't agree with the reason the child was registered. This is known as the 'category of registration'



Other complaints

You may be unhappy about something else that has happened or not happened. If so, the Local Authority's Complaints Department will be able to help.

How do you make a Complaint?

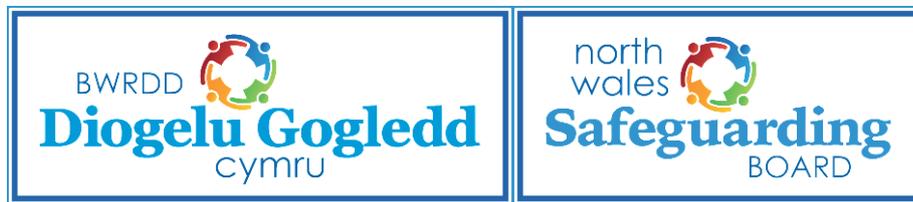
- Contact the Conference Chair within 10 working days of the conference. The Conference Chair is an independent person whose job is to make sure that child protection conferences are run in a fair and open manner.
- You can complain later than 10 days after the conference. The conference chair can decide not to accept a late complaint if they think it is not in the child's best interests

What happens once I have complained?

- The Conference Chair will arrange to meet with you to talk about your complaint. They will try and sort things out.
- If the Conference Chair has not been able to help and you are still unhappy, they will help you put your complaint in writing.
- You will need to sign your complaint and get it to the Conference Chair as soon as possible.
- An Independent Panel will meet to look at your complaint. The meeting will take place within 22 days of your letter being received.

The Independent Complaint Panel

- The Independent Panel is made up of people from different agencies, for example, the Police, the Health Service, the NSPCC. No one will have been involved in your case.
- You will be invited to the complaint panel meeting, but you do not have to attend if you do not want to.
- **If you do come** to the complaints panel meeting, you can:
 - Give evidence to support your complaint. You can do this in writing, or you can just tell the panel why you are unhappy
 - You can bring someone with you to support you, for example a friend or family member
 - You can bring legal support



- You can bring witnesses along to support your complaint
- **If you do not come** to the complaints panel meeting:
 - You can still send evidence to support your complaint
 - You can send a legal representative

Please let the Panel Chair know at least 5 days before the meeting if you want anyone else to come along, so that we can make sure the room is suitable, and so that we can plan the meeting properly.

- The panel will consider:
 - Whether the conference process followed the correct procedure. The procedure is set out in a book called the 'All Wales Child Protection Procedures'
 - Whether the decision that is being complained about follows reasonably from the proper observation of the procedures
 - Whether the decision that is being complained about follows reasonably from the information available to the original conference

What happens after the independent complaint panel?

- The panel will let you know whether they think you have reason to complain or not. If they think you have reason to complain, they will 'uphold' your complaint, and tell you why.
- If the panel thinks you do not have reason to complain, they will not uphold your complaint, and will tell you why.
- You will hear from the panel within a week of the panel meeting.

What the panel CANNOT do

The panel CANNOT remove a child's name from the child protection register; this can only be done at a Child Protection Case Conference.

What the panel CAN do

If your complaint is upheld the panel will ask for a new Child Protection Conference to meet to reconsider the registration decision and category. This new Child Protection Conference should take place within 15 working days.

If you are still not satisfied

In the case of North Wales Child Protection Conference Complaints, the decision of the panel is final and there are no further avenues for appeal.