

North Wales Safeguarding Childrens Board



Information for:



Parents/Carers and Young People about Child Protection Conference Complaints

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
- A person acting on behalf of a parent, carer or person with parental responsibility or a child provided as long as they agree and understand

** Parental Responsibility (PR) means all mothers and most fathers have legal rights and responsibilities as a parent*

What Can You Complain About?

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

- 1) You don't think the proper process was followed;
- 2) You don't agree with the decision to put a child on the child protection register, or take them off the register;
- 3) 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 up to 14 working days after you receive the minutes.

What Happens Once I Have Complained?

- The Conference Chair will arrange to meet with you as soon as possible to talk about your complaint. They will try and sort things out. **This is Stage 1 – Informal Resolution.**
- If the Conference Chair has not been able to help and you are still unhappy, you and the Chair must agree about what you are still unhappy about and you will need to confirm this in writing. This will be the basis of your complaint.
- You will need to sign this complaint and this will be the start of the Formal Complaint process. **This is Stage 2 - Formal Complaint.**
- **Please note:** You should contact the NWSCB Business Unit once you have received your acknowledgment letter; if contact is not made within the 22 day timescale you will lose your right to appeal.

An Independent Panel will meet to look at your complaint. This is called an Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel. **The Panel Meeting will take place within 22 working days of your letter being signed.**

Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel

- The Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel is made up of people from different agencies, for example, the Police, the Health Service and the NSPCC. No one will have been involved in your case.
- You will receive an invitation to Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel, with all the details but you do not have to attend if you do not want to.
- The Inter-Agency Conference Complaint Panel will be held the same locality as the Conference.

If you do come to the Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel, 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 or a legal representative.
- You can bring witnesses along to support your complaint.

If you do not come to the Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel:

- You can still send evidence to support your complaint.

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 guidance called the 'All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008'
- 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 Inter-Agency Conference Complaints Panel?

- The panel will let you know, in writing, 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, in writing
- The decision of the independent complaint panel will be made within 25 days of the date you signed your complaint

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 of the Panel decision.

If You Are Still Not Satisfied:

In the case of North Wales Protocol for the Management of Complaints Relating to Child Protection Conferences, the decision of the panel is final and there are no further avenues for appeal.



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