



Inter-Agency Escalation Policy: The Resolution of Professional Inter-Agency Disagreements about Safeguarding Children

Introduction

In order to safeguard children and young people it is important that there is close collaboration by all partner agencies working with the child/young person and their family. As partners by building relationships, we generally resolve issues at a personal / local level, however, there are times when we need to escalate. Occasionally concerns or disagreements arise over another professional's actions, lack of action, or decisions in relation to safeguarding a child. Disagreements may arise around:

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- Referrals
- Access to Services
- Levels of Need
- Assessments
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Progressing Plans
- Communication

This Policy aims to resolve professionals' differences in line with the [London Safeguarding Children Procedures](#). All professionals have a duty to act assertively and proactively to ensure that a child's welfare is kept the paramount consideration in all professional activity to ensure their needs are met appropriately.

All agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent and supported to escalate appropriately inter-agency concerns and disagreements about a child's wellbeing.

Professionals should attempt to resolve difference through discussion and / or meeting within a working week or a timescale that protects the child from harm (whichever is less). However, if a child is thought to be at risk of immediate harm the designated safeguarding lead in your agency should be informed immediately who will need to inform Wandsworth Head of Safeguarding Standards of the concerns. Consideration to be given to refer the case to MASH.

Keeping Records

At all stages of the process, actions and decisions must be recorded in writing and shared with relevant officers including the worker who raised the initial concern. A written confirmation of the agreed outcome of the disagreement and what action to be taken to be shared. If gaps are identified in policies and procedures, this must be reported to WSCP.

Stages of the Policy

Stage 1: Involving Your Line Manager / Designated Safeguarding Lead / Named Safeguarding Children Nurse / Doctor

Any worker who feels that a decision is not safe or is inappropriate should initially consult their first line manager as above 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. Individuals may wish to refer to the Escalation Policy for their



organisation. The first line manager should seek advice from their agency's designated safeguarding children professional.

Stage 2: 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 3: 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. If the case involves a Child Looked After or child subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP), the IRO/CP coordinator should be informed.

Stage 4: Escalate to named / designated safeguarding leads or senior manager

If agreement cannot be reached following discussions between first line managers within a further working week or a timescale that protects the child from harm (whichever is the less), the issue must be referred without delay through the line management to the equivalent of service manager/ detective inspector / head teacher / designated named safeguarding nurse / doctor or other designated or named safeguarding children senior professional. These two managers must attempt to resolve the professional differences through discussion.

Stage 5: Escalate to members of WSCP Executive / Assistant Directors / Directors

If the problem is not resolved at stage four the senior manager or named / designated safeguarding representative reports to their respective Head of Service / Assistant Director / Member of the WSCP Executive who must attempt to resolve the professional differences through discussion.

Stage 6: Resolution by Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) though a chaired meeting

When a resolution has not been achieved at stage five, the Chair of WSCP should be approached to identify a Board member from an uninvolved agency to chair a meeting that include 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 final decision is made. The Chair of this meeting will then report issues arising from this process to the Safeguarding & Continuous Learning (SCL) subcommittee of the WSCP.

Requesting a Child Protection Conference

A Child Protection Conference should be convened if requested by a professional, supported by a senior manager / named or designated professional. If the disagreement about the decision to hold the conference between agencies continue, the matter should be referred to the WSCP. Please refer to [London Safeguarding Children Procedures](#) for more information.

For further advice or information please contact us or visit our website

**[Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
WSCP@wandsworth.gov.uk**

☎ 0208 871 7401

**Wandsworth Council, Town Hall Extension, Wandsworth High Street,
SW18 2PU**



Inter-Agency Escalation Policy

Contact Details

Name	Telephone Number
Wandsworth Childrens Services	
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	020 8871 6622
Out of Hours	020 8871 6000
Safeguarding Standards Service	020 8871 7317
LADO	020 8871 7440
Safeguarding Leads	
Education	079 2986 2210
Early Years' Service	020 8871 8799
Adult Services	020 8871 7707
Metropolitan Police	
CAIT	020 7232 6358
Other Useful Contacts	
NSPCC Helpline	202 8800 5000
ChildLine	080 011 11
Central London Community Health (CLCH)	
CLCH 0 – 19 Services	033 0058 1679
Mental Health Trust (incl. CAMHS)	
Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children	020 3513 6848 / 079 5941 3718
Named Doctor	020 3513 5000

Name	Telephone Number
St Georges University Hospital	
Interim Group Director of Safeguarding (Adults and Children)	020 8725 0840 / 07825 144243
Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children	020 8725 1716 / 07717 291241
Named Nurse for Looked after Children	07500 835735 / 0208 725 1962
Named Doctor for Safeguarding Children	020 8725 3483
Named Midwife	020 8725 0700 or 07795 824186
Named Professional for Adult Safeguarding	020 8725 1624
Safeguarding Teams St Georges University Hospital	
Safeguarding Children's Team	safeguardingchildren@stgeorges.nhs.uk 0208 725 1717
Safeguarding Adults Team	Safeguarding.AdultsTeam@stgeorges.nhs.uk 020 8725 1624
Maternity Safeguarding Team	maternitysafeguardingteam@stgeorges.nhs.uk 020 8725 1984
Looked After Children's Team	LAC.CNS@stgeorges.nhs.uk 0208 725 1962
SWL London Integrated Care Board (ICB)	
Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children	079 5158 7607
Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children	078 8053 4306
Named GP for Safeguarding Children	077 3607 0327