

**Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP)**

**Practice Review Guidance**

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# **How to refer a case for consideration**

**Day 0 Serious Child Safeguarding Case Notification to OSCP**

#### **Referral Form:**



This form allows a partner agency to outline the case and what is it about this incident that makes it serious and why it is thought that the case meets the criteria for Rapid Review.

This form is submitted to the OSCP Business Manager via[**OSCP.Group@oldham.gov.uk**](mailto:OSCP.Group@oldham.gov.uk)

It is expected that each individual agency reviews its own referrals before they are submitted. This is to ensure that all referrals have been sufficiently considered by a senior manager.

# **The Virtual Panel**

**DAY 1 - Virtual Panel determine if criteria is met for Rapid Review**

## ***What is the purpose of the Virtual Panel?***

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership has developed a core virtual panel for the purpose of swiftly reviewing cases that are referred to the Partnership for consideration for Rapid Review.

## ***Who is the panel?***

The Panel is made up primarily of Senior Leads from the three statutory partners:

* Designated Nurse/Head of Safeguarding – NHS ICB Oldham
* Assistant Director for Safeguarding/Quality Assurance
* Superintendent/Detective Chief Inspector – GMP

## ***What does the do Panel?***

When a referral is received by the partnership, the Virtual Panel will determine whether or not the specific criteria for a Serious Child Safeguarding Case has been met and whether a Rapid Review should be undertaken. The Panel will consider whether a serious incident notification needs to be made to National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

In order to reach a decision, the Virtual Panel members will:

1. Review the referral.
2. Identify if their own agency holds further information to inform the decision making.
3. Consider whether or not the criteria for Serious Incident Notification has been met and so warrants a notification to the National Child Safeguarding Review Panel.
4. Consider whether a Rapid Review is required.
5. Ensure a clear rationale for the decision is documented.

## ***What are the criteria for a Serious Child Safeguarding Case?***

Serious Child Safeguarding cases are those in which - abuse or neglect is known or suspected and

- the child has died or been seriously harmed.

**“Serious harm”** This term is defined as:

*“… serious and/or long-term impairment of a child’s mental health or intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development. It should also cover impairment of physical health…judgment should be exercised in cases where impairment is likely to be long-term, even if this is not immediately certain. Even if a child recovers, including from a one-off incident, serious harm may still have occurred.”*

Panel members should reflect on how the case referred is distinct from other Child Protection cases as a result of the level of harm being seen.

## ***Notification of a Serious Safeguarding Incident***

There is a duty on local authorities to notify serious incidents to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

A decision about whether an incident is serious should be made using the definition set out in Working Together 2018:

*16C (1) of the Children Act 2004(as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) states:*

*Where a local authority in England knows or suspects that a child has been abused or neglected, the local authority must notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel if:*

1. *The child dies or is seriously harmed in the local authority’s area, or*
2. *While normally resident in the local authority’s area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside England.*

Whilst it is the Local Authority that carries this duty to report, partners are under a duty to inform the safeguarding partners of any incident that they think may meet this criteria. The OSCP Business Manager will then ensure the statutory partners determine if the incident is notifiable. The online report will be made via [The National Panel Online Form](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-child-safeguarding-incident) It will be made within 5 working days of the incident being notified. This notification will then be shared by the National panel to the Secretary of State, Department for Education and Ofsted as required.

## ***Range of responses following a referral***

A referral to the OSCP can trigger a range of different responses. The information below aims to help clarify which pathway may be used and when.

**1. No Further Action**

In some cases, it may be appropriate to take no further action with a case referral. In this case the OSCP business manager will give a clear rationale for this decision to the referrer.

**2. Progression to Rapid Review**

As outlined in the Rapid review process.

**3. Practice Learning Review**

A practice review maybe considered if the Rapid Review criteria is not met but potential for lessons about how we work together locally have been identified. The form of this type of non statutory review will be determined based on the individual case needs and proportionate for the learning involved. ***See Appendix B: Methodology Options***

**4. Escalation**

In some instances, it may become apparent that the issues being raised relate to operational decision making and require a response in a very short time frame. Therefore, the Business Manager will refer these into the escalation process for a swift response.

## ***Do you need to involve families in the rapid review?***

There is no expectation to involve families in the rapid review; to do so is normally neither feasible nor appropriate within the timescales. On concluding the rapid review, consideration should be given as to whether any learning/recommendations arising from the rapid review should be shared with the family.

# **Rapid Review Process & Timeline**

If the Virtual Panel determine that a Rapid Review is required, then the safeguarding partners should promptly undertake a Rapid Review of the case.

The review should aim to:

* Gather the facts about the case as far as they can be readily established at the time.
* Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children’s safety and share learning appropriately.
* Consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
* Decide what steps they should take next, including whether to undertake a Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

All partners/agencies who had knowledge of the child will be required to contribute to a Rapid Review. **See Appendix E – Fact Sheet Rapid Reviews. Appendix C – Rapid Review Timeline**

**Day 2 Agency Summaries Requested**

**Single agency summary template:**



A single agency summary template will be sent out for completion by agency safeguarding leads in identified agencies.

***See Appendix D - Chronolator – Training***

All agencies should secure all records/files in relation to the case through safeguarding leads/managers in their service area to ensure access is appropriate to those professionals involved in ongoing service delivery to the child/carers.

**Day 7 Agency Summaries to be Submitted.**

Agencies should return the completed template via [OSCP.Group@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:OSCP.Group@oldham.gov.uk) within **5 working days.**

**Day 8 -9 Collation of Information**

OSCP Business Coordinator collates the information onto a combined multi agency chronology and circulates to the Panel Chair/Author and Business Manager. The collated agencies returns will be sent to the panel at least one day prior to the Rapid Review Panel meeting.

The OSCP Business Co-ordinator starts to populate the rapid review report template with information from the single agency summaries submitted.

**Day 10-11 Rapid Review Meeting Takes Place**

**Rapid Review Meeting:**

A Rapid Review meeting occurs, following the agreed agenda/case discussion tool.

The Rapid Review Panel will utilise the review criteria laid out in the National Panel guidance to consider the case and identify if the need for a review is evident. The meeting will be structured to ensure all the relevant criteria is considered.

**Standard Agenda:**



**Day 11-13 Rapid Review Report Produced**

**Blank Report Template:**



After the meeting the Business Co-ordinator will add the notes taken during the rapid review meeting to the report template.

The Rapid Review report is then produced and finalised by the panel Chair/ Author and Business Manager and sent to Rapid Review panel for comments and sign-off off.

**Day 13-14 Statutory Partners Sign-off**

Draft Rapid Review Report and it is then sent to the three Statutory Partners for final sign of.

Statutory Partners sign off Rapid Review (Minimum of 2 out of 3 Partners or appropriate deputy to sign off)

**Day 15 Report submitted to national panel.**

OSCP Business Manager sends final report to the National Panel by 4.00pm on Day 15.

## **Follow up actions.**

**Child Safeguarding Practice Review Lesson Log**

This template is to be used by all agencies to document cascading of information and lessons as a result of the Rapid Review. Agencies are also asked to document, where possible, any actions undertaken and the outcomes and returned to [oscp.group@Oldham.gov.uk](mailto:oscp.group@Oldham.gov.uk) within 2 weeks following the rapid review meeting.



## **Role and responsibility of the Chair/ Author of the Rapid review**

The Virtual Panel will appoint a Chair/Author from the pool of the lead professional group. The Virtual Panel will ensure that the Rapid Review Chair/ Author has a suitable skill set for the review and does not have any conflict of interest with the case.

The business team in preparation for the Review will ensure the Chair/Author receives all the relevant paperwork in time for the review.

The Chair/ Author is responsible for reading and digesting the chronological summary of events and the single agency summary reports.

The Chair/ Author will Chair the Rapid Review meeting.

The Business Co-ordinator will pull together and pre-populate the report template with basic information provided in the single agency report and forward the notes taken at the rapid review meeting will be forwarded to the Chair/Author.

The Chair/Author will then complete the report for the National Panel.

# **Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review**

Following a Rapid Review, a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) may be appropriate where:

* highlights or may highlight improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including where those improvements have been previously identified.
* highlights or may highlight recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children.
* highlights or may highlight concerns regarding two or more organisations or agencies working together effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
* the National Panel have considered and concluded a local review may be more appropriate.
* the safeguarding partners have cause for concern about the actions of a single agency.
* there has been no agency involvement, and this gives safeguarding partners cause for concern.
* more than one LA, police area or ICB is involved, including where families have moved around.
* the case may raise issues relating to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of children in institutional settings.

## **Different type of learning reviews**

Working Together 2023 is clear that, where the potential for further learning is identified, then this should be through the commissioning of a proportionate LCSPR. When a further review is warranted, that should always be labelled as an LCSPR regardless of the approach taken to complete it.

LCSPRs are to be published. This is of crucial importance for transparency and openness into the safeguarding system, so other partnerships and the National Panel are able to benefit from the contents and the learning.

## **The Purpose of a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR)**

The key aim of any review remains as set out in the following legislation/guidance:

* Working Together 2023[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: Practice Guidance 2019[[2]](#footnote-2)

For a LCSPR to be effective and in line with the above guidance it should be conducted in a way which:

* Recognises the complex circumstances in which professionals work together to safeguard children.
* Seeks to understand precisely who did what and the underlying reasons that led individuals and organisations to act as they did.
* Seeks to understand practice from the viewpoint of the individuals and organisations involved at the time rather than using hindsight.
* Is transparent about the way data is collected and analysed.
* Makes use of relevant research and case evidence to inform the findings.

The purpose of reviews of serious child safeguarding cases, at both local and national level, is to identify improvements to be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Therefore, the focus will be on understanding practice and not to hold individuals or organisations to account. There are other processes that exist to undertake that role, such as employment law and disciplinary procedures, and these should be used when that is sought. These processes can be run in parallel or subsequent to one another and decisions regarding the appropriate timetabling will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The Safeguarding Review and Learning Hub will moderate the work of the LCSPR panel as the review progresses and will ratify the final report before presentation to the Oldham Strategic Safeguarding Children Partnership

Working Together 2023 and the National Panel Guidance[[3]](#footnote-3) offer clear guidance on expectations for reviews and timescales. The expectation of the OSCP is that this report and learning is available no later than 6 months after the decision to initiate a review is made. This is to ensure that all learning remains relevant to current practice. Therefore, the partnership will endeavour to produce a concluded review within 6 months. There may be challenges to this, such as criminal proceedings and Coronial processes. Should these impact on the review process, then steps will be taken to share information and continue the review as far as is possible without damaging these other processes nor limiting the review itself. Any early identified actions will be commenced to avoid delay where service / multi agency working practices can be improved.

## **Conducting the Review**

A panel of partners may be convened to undertake a specific LCSPR. Its membership will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The Safeguarding review and learning hub will have delegate authority to oversee the progress of the review.

Once a decision has been made to conduct a review, the chair and members of the panel group are responsible for preparing the draft Terms of Reference (ToR), which should be proportionate to the circumstances of the case. ToR should be agreed at the first meeting of the panel. The ToR may, however, need to be revisited as the review progresses and as new information is identified. The review panel chair should as far as possibly ensure that the review process is a learning exercise for all those involved in the case.

## **Independent Chair/Author**

Working Together 2023 does not specify the need for an independent chair for a LCSPR so this will depend on the complexity of the case, the review model selected and other local considerations. If an independent chair/author is appointed their name/s should be shared with the National Panel.

The independent chair/author should be an appropriately experienced individual who is not directly associated with any of the agencies involved in the LCSPR. They will be responsible for effectively leading and coordinating the LCSPR and for quality assurance of the final report.

## **Method of Approach**

The LCSPR panel should agree with their reviewers the method by which the review should be conducted, considering the principles of the systems methodology. The methodology should provide a way of looking at and analysing frontline practice as well as organisational structures and learning. The methodology should be able to reach recommendations that will improve outcomes for children. All reviews should reflect the child’s perspective and the family context.

The Panel chair will establish an agreed timetable of review panel meetings in accordance with the required timescales of the review and set specific parameters, including timescales for the completion of chronologies, conversations and any other Practitioner events which includes further exploration of practitioners’ views.

Where there is an on-going criminal investigation, the panel chair/author will ensure that early and regular contact is made with the senior investigating officer to ensure appropriate processes are being followed. This relates particularly to any planned interviews with family members, practitioners and managers and must consider that any one of these people may be a potential witness or even defendants in a future criminal trial.

## **Involvement of family members, friends, and other support networks**

Within the LCSPR process there is the expectation to give consideration on how families, and, where appropriate, children, can be involved in and contribute to the review.

Family members can offer a unique perspective into how the delivery of services and involvement of agencies were viewed and responded to. It is essential that the review panel have opportunities to listen to family experiences and perspectives and that these contribute meaningfully to the final report.

**Family Information Leaflet**



## **The final report**

The LCSPR report brings together the learning and themes identified from the review and will analyse and comment on the effectiveness of practice and the systems used to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child and/or adult.

The report should:

* Provide a brief overview of what happened and the key circumstances, background, and context of the case. This should be concise but enough to understand the context of the learning and recommendations.
* An analysis of any systemic or underlying reasons why actions were taken or not in respect of matters covered by the report.
* A critique of how agencies worked together and any shortcomings in this.
* Whether shortcomings identified are features of practice in general
* What would need to be done differently to prevent harm occurring to a child in similar circumstances?
* Be written in a succinct and focused manner with the emphasis on recognising and sustaining good practice as well as identifying how and where practice can be improved in the future.
* Identify action that agencies or services have already undertaken in response to learning and what else needs to happen to ensure learning is embedded.
* Form a conclusion as to the effectiveness of local practice to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child/and or adult.
* Have clearly framed questions that the review seeks to answer.
* Have an executive summary.
* State clearly learning points and steps for learning.
* Be written in such a way that it can be published with minimal redaction.
* A timeline for publication of the report should be developed and where possible a date identified.
* Practitioners who contributed to the review and learning event should have been briefed about the content of the final report and should already be aware of the findings, as the process of the review is an important element of learning which will be more effective if those involved are partners in the process.

It is the responsibility of the panel to work with Safeguarding review and Learning hub subgroup to develop an action plan which takes account of the wider learning improvement cycle.

It will be the responsibility of the Safeguarding review and learning hub subgroup to identify and agree how practice challenges or recommendations from the LCSPR will be responded to and what action is needed by individual agencies or from a multi-agency perspective.

## **Communication/Media Strategy**

The chair of the Strategic Safeguarding Children partnership in consultation with the independent author and strategic partners, will consider appropriate publication of the report on a case-by-case basis. Discussions about publication will be held with the individual(s), their family, or carers (where appropriate). The OSCP Business Manager will inform the partnership when the report is uploaded onto the OSCP website.

Since the Local Authority is the lead agency, media and communication issues will usually be co-ordinated by the council’s communications team. This will be done in collaboration with the communications teams of the other agencies involved.

## **Links to Other processes that may affect LCPR’s.**

There may be a criminal investigation, a coroner’s investigation and/or professional body disciplinary procedures running alongside a local or national review. The panel and local safeguarding partners will agree a clear process of how they will work with other processes including Domestic Homicide Reviews or Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

When running a LCSPR all relevant areas that need to be addressed should be established at the outset to reduce potential for duplication for families and staff.

Any LCSPR will need to take account of a coronial enquiry and/or any criminal investigation related to the case, including disclosure issues, to ensure that relevant information can be shared without incurring significant delay in the review process.

# **Learning**

The value of LCSPR’s is in the learning derived from them. As much effort should be spent on acting on recommendations as on conducting the actual review. Recommendations should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timed.

Learning and actions plans will be reviewed regularly by the Safeguarding Review and Learning Hub.

* Agencies will be invited to a moderation meeting 3-6 months following the review to provide narrative updates and evidence to show that the actions have been completed and progressed with evidence of actual impact on outcomes.
* Where there is repeat learning (i.e., same issues and learning arising), consideration will be given to why the actions were not effective last time and what would be done differently this time. This may include consideration of whether whole system change is needed.
* Look at events that make the learning relevant for frontline staff and managers and how this will be supported.
* Ensure that ‘systems,’ including policy/procedures are considered in terms of changes required as a result of the learning as well as workforce.
* Specific training courses arranged by OSCP and learning incorporated into existing courses.
* 7-minute briefings created
* Newsletters and other publications including lessons learned.
* The safeguarding and learning will share the lessons learnt, and practice impact with the wider workforce in Oldham.
* The findings from any LCSPR should be reported in the OSCP Annual Report and what actions it has taken or intends to take in relation to those findings.

# **Complaints & Escalation Procedure**

Where a professional is unsatisfied with decisions or processes in relation to reviews then they should utilise the [Dispute Resolution Pathway](https://www.olscb.org/professionals/policies/) or the GM Escalation process which can be accessed via the

[GM Safeguarding Procedures](https://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_resolv_prof_dis.html?zoom_highlight=escalation)

Where a complaint is received from a member of the public, about a decision or review of the OSCP this will initially be responded to by the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Business Manager in consultation with the relevant Head of Service, with a written response within 28 days of receipt. All written complaint responses will include details of how to contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Manager will ensure that a record is kept of complaints received, responded to and those referred to partner agencies. Complaints and copies of responses will be securely retained in accordance with the principles of data protection legislation and the OSCP retention policy.

# **Appendix A: Process Overview**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Professional identifies a potentially notifiable case or case which they believe identifies particular learning.  Case discussed with manager and manager submits Case Referral form to OSCP Partnership Manager via - [OSCP.Group@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:lsb@stockport.gov.uk) | | | | | | | | |
|  |  | **Virtual Panel determine if criteria is met** | | | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | | |  |  |
| 1  No Further Action |  | **2**  **Potential Rapid Review** |  | **3**  **Local Learning Review** | | |  | **4**  **Escalation** |
|  |  |  |  |  | | |  |  |
| NFA  This may be appropriate if the themes identified have already been identified in other reviews and actions in process of being developed *OR* the case issues do not warrant multi-agency practice review *OR* the case is being reviewed under another process that can incorporate OSCP needs e.g., DHR / SAR |  | **DAY 0** - OSCP Partnership Manager reviews referral and requests any further information needed for Virtual Panel |  | **DAY 1-5** - OSCP Partnership Manager reviews and requests any additional information to support Safeguarding review and learning hub discussion | | |  | **DAY 1 -** OSCP Business Manager reviews information with referrer to ascertain if stages of conflict resolution have been followed |
|  | **DAY 1 -** Virtual Panel (3 statutory partners’ minimum) determine if criteria of notifiable incident is met.  **NO** |  |  |
|  | **YES**  **Referred to process 3 OR 4 for response.** |  | **WEEK 1-4-** Case added to next Hub Agenda for discussion (dependent on next scheduled meeting) | | |  |
|  | **DAY 1 –** OSCP Partnership Manager report Notifiable Incident to National panel [**here**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-child-safeguarding-incident) |  | **WEEK 4** – Hub meeting determine suitability & priority for multi-agency practice review based on current reviews in progress & criteria for multi-agency vs. single agency review | | |  |
|  | **DAY 2 -** OSCP Business co-ordinator sends information request to relevant agencies |  |  | **DAY 2-3 -** 3 statutory partners to virtually meet & review case and propose resolution |
|  | **DAY 7 -** Relevant agencies return information template for Rapid Review Panel |  | **OR**  **OR** | | |  |
|  | **DAY 8 -** OSCP review summaries submitted and circulate reports and multi agency chronology to the Rapid Review Panel. |  | **NFA** | **Multi-Agency Review** T&F established to lead suitable learning process | **Single Agency process** & time frame to be utilised – monitored by CPR |  | **DAY 4-5** - Independent Chair to review partners’ information and decision making and offer mediation |
|  | **DAY 10-11-** Rapid Review Panel Meeting Occurs |  |  |
|  | **DAY 11 -14 -** Rapid Review Report draft circulated for comment & finalised |  |  | **DAY 7-** If parties remain unsatisfied then complaints process may be triggered |
|  | **DAY 15 -** Report submitted to national panel -[**Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk**](mailto:Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk) |  |  | Report submitted for scrutiny within 6 weeks of initial decision | |  |
| **NEXT STEPS COULD BE**:   1. LSCPR progressed by OSCP. 2. A National Review – the National Panel may determine they wish to review and OSCP team will support national reviewers to organise local input. 3. **No further review** |
|  |  |  | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | | |  |  |

## **Appendix B: Practice Learning Review - Methodology Options**



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## **Appendix C – Rapid Review Timeline**

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## **Appendix D - Chronolator – Training**

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## **Appendix E – Fact Sheet Rapid Reviews**

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# **Contact Us:**

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Website:  [https://www.oldhamsafeguarding.org/](C:\\Users\\joanne.symonds\\AppData\\Local\\Microsoft\\Windows\\INetCache\\Content.Outlook\\XS1GDV6F\\Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership)

**X** (formal twitter): [Safeguardoldham](https://twitter.com/Safeguardoldham)

Sign up here to our[NEWSLETTER](http://eepurl.com/hi7PA9)

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safeguarding-practice-review-panel-practice-guidance> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National Panel Guidance document - <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/793253/Practice_guidance_v_2.1.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)