

Education & Children's Services

**CHILD PROTECTION REGISTRATION AND CHILDREN SUBJECT TO
CARE & SUPERVISION ORDERS**

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Team: Child Protection, Family Support

1. Policy Aim

To ensure the safety and welfare of a child that has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm, and to provide each child with the most appropriate service to meet their needs. This may include, child protection registration, voluntary accommodation, the sharing of parental responsibility through care proceedings, or care proceedings with continued child protection registration.

2. Relevant Legislation, Regulations, Government Guidance

Part IV, V – Children Act 1989

Children Act Guidance – Part A1

Slough Borough Council References

Berkshire ACPC Procedures

3. Policy

A child may be looked after by Slough Borough Council and also be subject of a child protection processes. The looked after and child protection systems must be integrated and carefully monitored in a way which promotes a child centred rather than a bureaucratic approach.

The purpose of the child protection register is to provide a safeguard for children who have been, or are likely to be, the subject of significant harm through abuse or neglect and are considered to need an inter-agency child protection plan. The level of protection provided by registration, and the inter-agency child protection plan, is limited and is dependent on the degree of co-operation from the child's parents or carers. In some circumstances, where this co-operation is not forthcoming, the child's safety can only be ensured by Slough Borough Council seeking a court order – either a care order or a supervision order. In those instances, where the removal of the child is necessary, and a court order is used to achieve this, it is unnecessary to also invoke use of the CP procedures.

It should be recognised that the court process can be both stressful and traumatic for the child and the parent/carers. This stress is likely to be exacerbated if families are also expected to take part in core group meetings and to attend review child protection conferences, in addition to the requirements and demands of the court proceedings. The expectation that parents be parties to both processes at the same time is likely to cause confusion and resentment, and should only be required where it is necessary to ensure a child's safety.

However, it must be noted that every situation is different. In some situations it will be appropriate for a child to remain on the child protection register while they are the subject of court proceedings. Decisions about individual children should be based on the specific circumstances for that child. The safety and welfare of the child must be the primary consideration at all times.

4. Guidance

In all situations where, following a referral of child protection concern, it is necessary to take immediate action to protect a child (ie. emergency protection order, child accommodated by agreement) an initial child protection conference should be convened. The conference must consider what action, if any, should be taken to ensure the child's continued safety.

If the child has already been removed and the conference recommends that care proceedings should be initiated AND that an interim care order should be sought to prevent a child returning to the care of their parents, or the person from whose care the child was removed in order to protect their safety and welfare, it may not be necessary to place the child's name on the child protection register.

However, the conference must make a clear recommendation that if, at any time during the course of the care proceedings, the child returns to the care of their parents or carers of whom there are concerns, a further conference must be convened prior to the return home, regardless of whether the care proceedings are to continue. This will be necessary in the following circumstances:

- a) An application for an interim or full order is refused
- b) The child is placed with parents/carers in a residential or community assessment unit
- c) The child is placed at home whilst the subject of an order
- d) The care proceedings are withdrawn
- e) The child on an order is having unsupervised contact with carers or extended family.
- f) Any other situation where the child returns to the care of their parents or carers, whether by agreement or not.

The re-convened conference will ensure that all professionals and agencies involved with the child or family will be fully aware of the changes to the child's care and legal status. The conference will also enable multi-agency consideration of the level of any continuing risk to the child, whether or not registration is necessary and what services and support are appropriate to achieve to achieve the child's continued safety and welfare.

In cases where a child has been registered for a period of time, but where the inter-agency child protection plan has failed to achieve the required level of safety for the

child, care proceedings may be initiated at a later stage. In these circumstances, once an order has been made which ensures the child's safety (ie. an interim care order) a review conference should be convened to consider the de-registration of the child while they are protected by the court order.

Prior to any conference taking place when a child is, or likely to be, the subject of care proceedings, legal services should be consulted and asked for their advice in respect of legal issues and the protection of the child.

It is important that other professionals and agencies involved with the child and family are fully informed regarding the child's care and legal status, and the progress of the care proceedings, at all times. Statutory reviews that are required and clear plans which are made for the child's future care should assist in ensuring this happens.

Registration of Children Subject To Supervision Orders

Whether a child who is the subject of a supervision order should be placed on the child protection register is a decision that should be made on a case by case basis taking into account all the particular circumstances of the individual child.

Children Subject to Supervision Orders & Not Placed on the Child Protection Register

If a child has not been placed on the child protection register, but is subject to a supervision order, a multi-agency safeguarding meeting should be convened within 10 days from the making of the order. This meeting should consider the care plan and any written agreements. Further multi-agency meetings should be held on a case by case basis depending on the individual circumstances of the child on the supervision order.

5. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Child Protection Team on a yearly basis on the date specified on page 1 of this policy.