

CONFERENCE PACK – USER GUIDE

This guide is for workers who will be supporting children and young people to complete a conference pack. The pack should be used with children age 5 and above.

From September 1 2008 the pack should be completed with all children and young people who are the subject of an Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences.

Before the Initial/Review Conference

The pack is designed to help children and young people express their wishes and feelings about their experiences at home, in school and in the wider community within the conference process. The information which is collated should be used to inform:-

- Initial and Review Case Conference Meetings
- Core groups
- Core assessment
- Future planning for the child or young person

The guidance in the pack states that the detailed contents should only be shared with the social worker, the child and the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), it is essential that prior to the Initial and Review Conferences there is a discussion with the child/young person about how information will be shared, including:-

- What information will be shared with parents/carers and others
- How it will be shared
- Why it will be shared

By doing this at the outset not only will the child/young person understand and inform how the materials/information will be shared, but also there is clarity regarding what and how information will be shared with parents and carers in particular.

Once completed the pack should be sent to the Conference and Review Team or to the named IRO (where this is known). It should be sent as soon as possible after completion and no later than **one working day** before the Initial/Review Conference meeting.

The IRO will then review the material and prepare a summary for the conference – the child's words should be used as much as possible.

During the Initial/Review Conference

The child/young person will have put in a lot of work to complete the pack and it is essential that this effort and the information provided are recognised during the meeting.

The IRO will identify time during the Conference meeting agenda to ensure the child/young person's views of what's good, what's worrying and what could be different are heard.

Dedicated time to hear what the child/young person says needs to happen will also be included within the agenda.

After the Initial/Review Conference

Immediately following the conference the IRO should complete the 'Letting you know what happened section' and return it to the social worker. This should outline for the child/young person the key decisions that were made and what will happen next. The 'reviewing officer comments' section should always be completed and include some positive comments from the IRO about the information the child/young person gave.

Where this is not possible the IRO should ensure appropriate arrangements are made and that the information is returned within **3 working days**.

The social worker should make a copy 'Letting you know what happened' section and feedback as soon as possible after the conference and no later than **5 working days** following the conference.

The child/young person should be given a copy of the section to keep in their wallet. The original document should be returned to the conference pack.

The IRO should ensure the master pack is returned to the social worker and that this is retained by the worker as part of the child's case record and for completion prior to the next meeting.

Child Protection Plan Discontinued

When the child/young person's protection plan is discontinued, the contents should be filed in the child's case record and the empty folder returned to the Safeguarding Board Officer, Bolton Safeguarding Children Board.

NB - this user guide is a live document and will be regularly reviewed and where necessary amended.