

Edinburgh Child Protection Committee

Inter-Agency Referral Discussion Review Group



1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) Review Group was established in 2007, with the introduction of the first Edinburgh and Lothians Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures and has developed as time went on.

The primary purpose of the group is to provide scrutiny by senior decision makers for IRD decision making to affect positive outcomes for children.

The IRD review group will also provide quality assurance and improvement planning for the distinct multi-agency IRD process.

2. Role and Remit

- 2.1. The role and remit of this group is consistent with the IRD Review and Sign Off section (p.24) of the [Edinburgh and Lothians Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures \(2024\)](#). The remit includes scrutiny of the following:

- 2.1.1 Every inter-agency referral discussion record will be reviewed within three weeks of the date of referral or within one week if proposed for closure earlier.
- 2.1.2 The inter-agency referral discussion should only be closed when there is multi agency agreement about the level of assessed risk and therefore, a decision on progressing to an appropriate pathway for the child/children. This must include consideration of a Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM) and/or referral to Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration (SCRA). If a CPPM is not convened, a clear plan for monitoring around the GIRFEC process should be documented or rationale for not doing so.

The inter-agency referral discussion should only be closed when the [IRD Closure Summary](#) has been completed and included in the IRD, within the 'Notes on Outcome/Update' section.

- 2.1.3 The IRD Review Group is also responsible for recording strengths of practice (single or multi-agency) and any areas for development, so these can be considered further by the IRD Operational Oversight Group and improvement or workforce development activity planned and reviewed.

3. Membership

- 3.1. Membership of the group includes a delegated representative from City of Edinburgh Council Children's Service Management; a Consultant Paediatrician, NHS Lothian Public Protection; and a Detective Inspector, Public Protection Unit, Police Scotland.

On occasion membership will be covered by someone with delegated authority from one of these agencies to ensure the meeting remains quorate by having representation from the Local Authority, NHS Lothian Public Protection and Police Scotland.

4. Record of the meeting

- 4.1. A formal record of the meeting will be taken on a standardised template.
- 4.2. The meeting will specifically record the group's view on the decision making together with any further actions required, who and when they are to be undertaken by.
- 4.3. The meeting will also record practice learning and development, both in terms of areas of strength and areas of improvement.

5. Risk Assessment

- 5.1. The broader remit of the group will consider the standard of risk assessment, the actions agreed by those involved in the IRD and an assessment of the quality of joint work undertaken in the process.
- 5.2. Learning and development needs specific to any individual practitioner will be discussed with them and/or their line manager directly, in line with single-agency arrangements.

6. Governance

- 6.1. The learning documented by the IRD review group will be scrutinised by the IRD operational oversight group on a 8-12 weekly basis. This is to enable the identification of trends for learning and development or quality improvement work and the best route to achieving improvement.
- 6.2. Recommended process improvements will be referred to the Performance Quality & Improvement Sub-Committee for consideration.

7. Preparation

- 7.1. A significant amount of preparation is required for each meeting of the Review Group and members should be freed up to undertake advanced preparation.

7.2. Police Scotland will provide a list of all IRDs to be discussed in advance of each meeting. Relevant agency records will be accessed for discussion at the meeting.

8. Review

8.1. The remit and terms of reference of the IRD group will be reviewed on an annual basis by the CPC.