



Serious Case Reviews

Information for Professionals

What is the Local Safeguarding Children Board?

The **Board** brings together all the main organisations who work with children and families across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, with the aim of ensuring that we work together effectively to keep children safe.

What is a Serious Case Review (SCR)?

A Serious Case Review looks at how local professionals and organisations worked together to look after the child or young person at the centre of the review. It will also look at how they are working with other children in the immediate family.

The review considers what was done, what lessons can be learned for the future and what changes may need to be made. It is not a criminal investigation or public enquiry and its aim is not to blame but to learn.

Why are you carrying out a SCR?

Regulations state that Safeguarding Boards MUST carry out an SCR when a child dies (including death by suspected suicide) and abuse or neglect may be a factor.

A SCR MAY be held by the CPSCB when a child has been seriously harmed as follows:

- Sustaining a potentially life threatening injury or serious and permanent impairment of health and development through abuse or neglect; or
- Seriously harmed as a result of sexual abuse; or
- A parent has been murdered and a domestic homicide review is being initiated; or
- Suffered serious harm following an assault by another child or adult;

AND

- The case gives rise to concern about inter-agency working

What is the purpose of a SCR?

- Establish what lessons are to be learned about the way in which local professionals and organisations worked together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Identify clearly what these lessons are, how they must be acted upon, the timescales for action and what is expected to change; AND
- Improve intra and inter agency working and better safeguard children.

What it is not

- SCR's are NOT inquiries into how a child died or was seriously injured, OR who is to blame. That is for the coroner and criminal court
- SCR's are not part of disciplinary procedures relating to an individual. If information comes to light which indicates action should be taken, this is for the relevant agency to consider.

What will happen?

Agencies involved will secure all records relating to the case and appoint a professional who had not been involved in the case, nor had supervised the worker, to look openly at practice and write a report called an Individual Management Review (IMR).

The IMR Author will read the files and interview staff involved in the case to analyse the agency's involvement, identify lessons and develop an action plan based on their recommendations.

What will I have to do?

You will be interviewed by the IMR Author to gather contextual information and analysis first hand. The purpose of this interview is NOT to catch you out. A written record of the interview will be shared with you.

A practitioner learning event may be held to allow for members of the panel and report authors, to understand the reasons for decisions made.

What happens next?

A Serious Case Review Panel (SCR) made up of senior people from Children's Services, Police, Health Services, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Services with an independent chair, meet to review all the reports.

The SCR will commission an overview author to write a report bringing together, and drawing overall conclusions from the IMRs. It will consider, with the benefit of hindsight, whether different decisions or actions may have led to an alternative course of events. It will make recommendations for actions.

The SCR Overview Report Author will present their report to the panel so clarification can be sought.

Who will see the report?

During the review process the reports will be kept confidential to those who represent organisations on the PSCB, or have contributed to the review, and the staff within those organisations who worked with the child and their family.

However, sometimes the coroner asks to see reports and to use parts of them during an inquest.

You will have a de-brief usually by the person who completed the IMR or your manager. The overview report and executive summary (which outlines the key findings and recommendations of the review) without giving personal details are made available to anyone who wants to read them on our website at www.peterboroughscb.org.uk. If there is a criminal trial these reports are not available until the trial has ended.

How long will the review take?

If the review is straightforward it should be completed within six months. However if it is more complex it can take up to nine months from the date of the event that triggers the review, to publication.

In this leaflet we have answered some of the most frequently asked questions about Serious Case Reviews. Of course, each case is different and you may have other questions you would like to ask. Please feel free to ask these or seek further information by contacting the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board's Business Manager:

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If you want to know more about Serious Case Reviews, you can look at **Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 – Chapter 4**, which can be found on the .gov.uk website: