**4. Deciding whether to convene a child safeguarding practice review**

**4.1 Referral**

4.1.1 Agencies should inform the relevant designated single point of contact for the ‘Safeguarding Partners’ of any serious incident which they think should be considered for a child safeguarding practice review, using the *Referral Form* (Document 1).

4.1.2 Local authorities have a separate duty to:

* notify the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel if a child dies or is seriously harmed in their area (or outside of England while they are normally resident in the local authority area);
* notify the Secretary of State and Ofsted where a looked after child has died, whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

Where a local authority makes a formal notification to the national Panel or Ofsted, it must always share this with the relevant local safeguarding partners and also complete the formal Referral Form for a child safeguarding practice review.

**4.2 Rapid Review**

4.2.1 When notified about an incident that might be subject of either a national or local child safeguarding practice review, the safeguarding partners are required to promptly undertake a Rapid Review of the case.

4.2.2 The Rapid Review must be completed within the timescales outlined in guidance from the national Panel (currently 15 working days of becoming aware of the incident). A flow chart setting out the key stages and timescales is included at the end of this section.

4.3 Initial Scoping, Information Sharing and the Securing of Records

4.3.1 All agencies who have had involvement with the subject child or family will be required to contribute to a Rapid Review. An initial scoping of agencies’ intervention will, therefore, need to be completed and other relevant information will need to be rapidly gathered. To support this, a *Template for Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* is included as part of this Practice Guidance along with a sample letter to accompany the template.

4.3.2 The purpose of the initial scoping and information sharing is **to gather the basic facts about the case, including determining the extent of agency involvement with the child and family**. More detailed information will be sought if the Rapid Review concludes the case has the potential to identify national or local learning and a decision is made to progress to a formal Child Safeguarding Practice Review or alternative Learning Review.

4.3.3 The *Template for Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* (Document 2) should be sent out to all relevant agencies **within 2 working days** of receiving the referral, along with an accompanying letter that briefly outlines the referral and explains the purpose of this initial scoping (Document 3).

4.3.4 Agencies should prioritise completion of the form and return it **within 5 working days.**

4.3.5 All agencies should also secure all records/files in relation to the case, ensuring they are removed to a secure place where they are not accessible to agency personnel other than through a nominated representative. (This request is included in the template letter – Document 3). Where access to the records is required for ongoing case work, a copy should be made and secured.

4.4 Setting the Date of the Rapid Review Meeting

4.4.1 Some areas in the wider West Midlands will have a standing Group which meets regularly to oversee learning from serious incidents and this Group will be well placed to undertake the Rapid Review of new referrals. Other areas may have to convene an extraordinary meeting to undertake the Rapid Review.

4.4.2 The date of the Rapid Review meeting[[1]](#footnote-1) should be set as soon as the *Templates for Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* have been sent out. The Rapid Review meeting should be scheduled **between 7 and 13 working** **days** of receiving the referral. This will allow for analysis of the *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* to establish the key events in the child’s life and inform the Rapid Review whilst also allowing sufficient time to prepare the necessary documents for the national Panel.

4.5 Documentation

4.5.1 The following documents should be shared with all those attending the Rapid Review meeting:

* the completed *Serious Incident Referral Form* that initiated the process;
* the Local Authority Serious Incident Notification to Ofsted, DfE and the national Panel in relation to the incident (if completed);
* copies of the completed *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing* templates from relevant agencies.

4.5.2 Wherever possible the documentation will be shared with participants in advance of the meeting. However, it is recognised that it may on occasion be necessary to share documentation at the meeting.

4.6 The Rapid Review Meeting

4.6.1 The meeting should include representatives from each of the safeguarding partners and any other relevant individuals. It will only be quorate if **at least one representative is present from each of the safeguarding partners** (the CCG, Police and Local Authority).

4.6.2 The Rapid Review meeting should:

* review the facts about the case as presented in the documentation;
* discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children’s safety and share any learning appropriately;
* consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
* decide whether or not to undertake a child safeguarding practice review. If the decision is not to proceed with a formal child safeguarding practice review, the Group will consider whether an alternative form of learning review is appropriate. In some cases, the rapid review process may identify key local learning that can be quickly acted upon, removing the need for further review.

4.6.3 The *Rapid Review Template* (Document 4) should be completed and agreed at this meeting. Areas who have decided to retain an Independent Chair may wish to ask them to endorse the outcome of the Rapid Review.

4.7 Sharing the Outcome of the Rapid Review

4.7.1 **Within** **2 working days** of the Rapid Review meeting, the safeguarding partners should send the completed *Rapid Review Template* to the national Panel (Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk)togetherwith a covering letter, see *Sample letter to accompany the Rapid Review Template* (Document 5).

4.7.2 Other agencies (including the agency who made the referral) should also be informed of the outcome of the Rapid Review.

4.7.3 Individual agencies should notify their own inspectorate bodies as required.

**Overview of the process to decide whether to convene a child safeguarding practice review or alternative learning review and the associated timescales.**

Agency submits *Serious Incident Referral Form*

⭣

Within **2 working days** of referral

*Initial Scoping and Information Sharing Template* sent to all relevant agencies

⭣

Date set for Rapid Review Meeting

*(This could be a standing Group responsible for overseeing learning from serious incidents or an extraordinary meeting to undertake the Rapid Review)*

⭣

Within **5 working days**

Completed *Initial Scoping and Information Sharing Template* returned by agencies and then shared with those attending the Rapid Review meeting along with the Referral Form and any LA notification

**Between 7 and 13 working** **days** of receiving the referral

**Rapid Review** meeting:

* Reviews the facts about the case presented in the documentation
* Agrees any immediate action
* Considers the case against the criteria for child safeguarding practice reviews
* Decides whether a practice review or other learning review should take place
* Completes the *Rapid Review Template* and agrees the recommendation

Within **2 days** of the Rapid Review meeting

*Rapid Review Template* and *accompanying letter* sent to national Panel.

Agencies (including the agency who made the referral) are informed of the outcome of the Rapid Review

1. Where absolutely essential to meet the required timescales, extraordinary meetings may be held via tele-conference. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)