

# FALKIRK COUNCIL: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

## LEARNING REVIEW PROTOCOL

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Falkirk Council Children and Families Social Work Service is committed to ensuring that, as a service, we continually improve our practice to ensure that we achieve tangible, improved outcomes for the children and families with whom we work.

Through established supervision processes, we promote a climate of transparency, providing workers with the opportunity to reflect on individual cases.

This Learning Review Protocol outlines an approach which can be used to consider in more detail particular cases. The case review approach can be used as a mechanism to share learning, in particular:

- to identify good practice,
- to identify areas for improvement
- to support practitioners in cases where lack of progress in improving outcomes for children

The review process outlined in this Protocol follows some of the key principles of the SCIE<sup>1</sup> model of learning, which focus on:

- a 'systems' model which helps identify factors in the work environment that support good practice and which creates conditions which act as a barrier to this
- supports an understanding of 'why' and not just 'what' happened (recognising that actions or decisions will usually have seemed sensible and justifiable at the time they were taken)
- encourages practitioners' engagement in the process

There currently exist various processes for reviewing cases. This protocol sets out the criteria and pathway to be adopted for a learning review within the context of wider case review structure (see Appendix 1)

### 2. CRITERIA FOR UNDERTAKING LEARNING REVIEW

A case may be considered for a Learning Review where it meets any of the following criteria:

- Good practice within a case which would benefit from being shared across the service
- Concerns about apparent lack of progress in progressing the child's plan
- Placement breakdown e.g. fostering and residential placements
- Disruption meetings e.g. permanency or adoption breakdown

---

<sup>1</sup> Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). Learning together to safeguard children: a 'systems' model for case reviews

- Failure to secure a child through the legal system, despite this being recommended by the professionals involved.

### 3. PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING LEARNING REVIEW/REFERRAL PATHWAY

A request for a Learning Review may be initiated where any of the criteria in paragraph 2 above are met. The referral pathway to trigger a Learning Review is outlined on Appendix 2.

It is likely that the need for a Learning Review will initially be identified at either a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting or a review meeting. Following this:

1. The case should be raised and discussed during supervision (worker/line manager).
2. Line manager should make a recommendation to relevant Service Manager that the case should be reviewed. The worker and line manager complete the Learning Review Referral Form (Appendix 3)
3. Service Manager agrees case meets criteria and ensures that appropriate review process being initiated. Where the Service Manager does not agree that the case meets the criteria for a Learning Review, the reasons for this should be recorded in the workers supervision notes
4. Request discussed at Children and Families Continuous Improvement Group (CFCIG) -
  - a. Agreement to proceed to Learning Review. Lead reviewer identified, parameters of the review established and timescales set. Feedback to team manager and worker by Service Manager in writing, including copy of Learning Review Protocol.
  - b. Agreement not to proceed to Learning Review. Feedback to team manager and worker by Service Manager in writing, explaining rationale for decision and recommendations for further action where appropriate. Team Manager to report back to CFCIG on progress against any recommendations.
5. Lead reviewer initiates and conducts review process
6. Findings of the review presented to CFCIG to agree recommendations and further actions, including shared learning across the service.

### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT GROUP (CFCIG)

- Ensure referrals meet criteria for Learning Review and that there will be benefit to the relevant team, service, or organisation in conducting the review.
- Identify most appropriate individual to lead/co-ordinate the review, ensuring the necessary support/resources are in place.
- Set out the key objectives/outcomes of the Review, to ensure sufficient focus.

- Consider the findings of the Review, agree recommendations and any further actions.
- Agree process to monitor implementation of any actions.
- Agree mechanism for dissemination of learning to workers involved, teams, the service and/or wider workforce

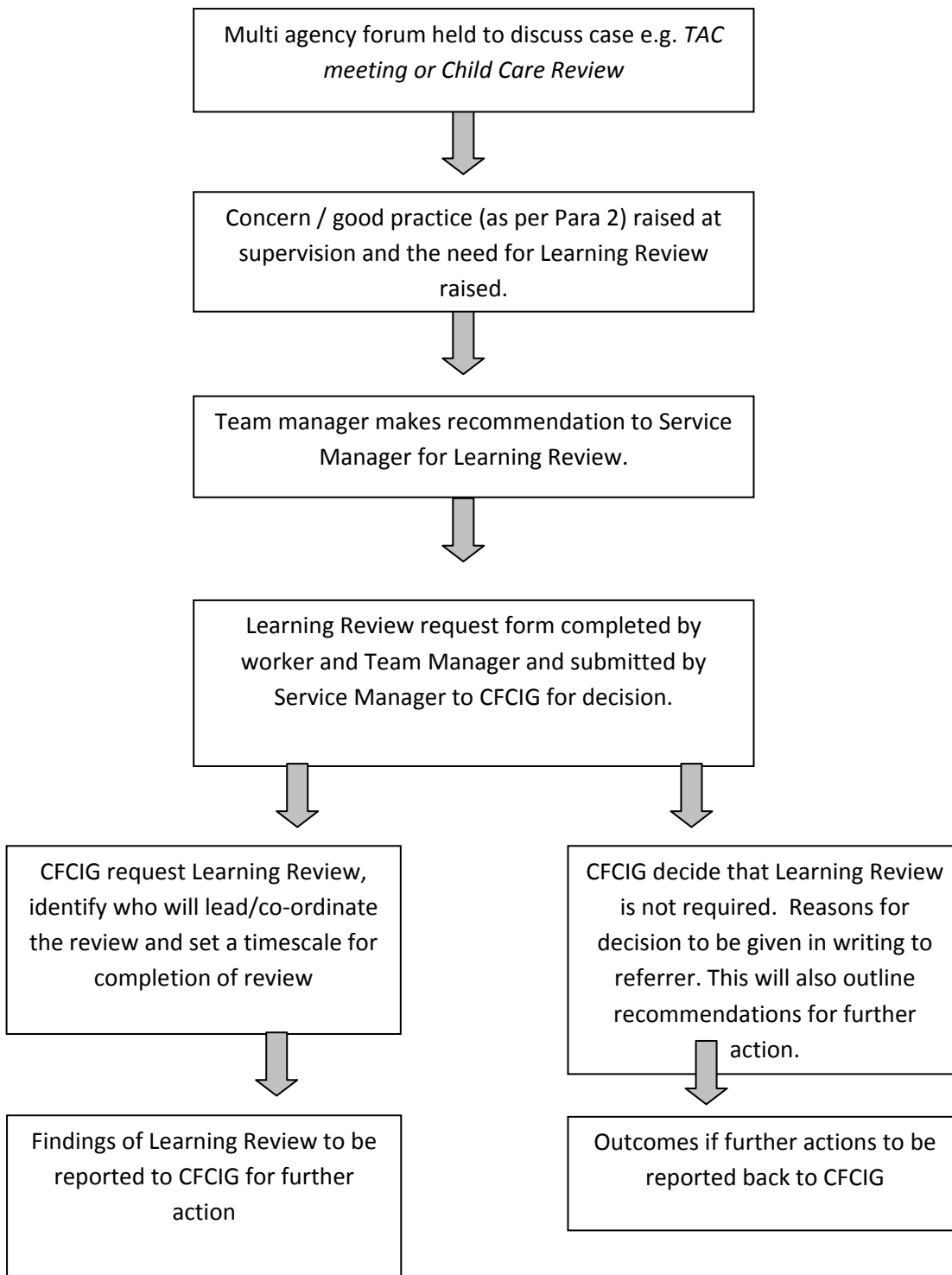
## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEAD REVIEWER

- Ensure clarity of objectives.
- Agree with Service Manager the individuals to be involved in the Review. Confirm that workers are aware of review process and that they have received a copy of the Learning Review protocol.
- Review case files prior to the group meeting.
- Plan the format that the Review will take. (Separate pack for Reviewers to be developed). Examples of prompt questions for the discussion are outlined in Appendix 4
- Outline of the overarching findings should be shared with the group for accuracy check.
- The draft report of the findings of the Review should identify key issues relating to the particular case but also whether the findings of the review have implications for other teams/service as a whole.
- Present findings to CFCIG.

**Appendix 1 - Overview of Types of Case Reviews**

<b><i>Type of review</i></b>	<b><i>Criteria for review</i></b>	<b><i>Link to protocol</i></b>
Significant Case Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-agency</li> <li>• Commissioned by CPC</li> <li>• Child death/serious incident</li> <li>• Criteria as per SCR protocol</li> </ul>	SCR protocol
LAC learning review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-agency</li> <li>• Commissioned by HOLAC</li> <li>• Criteria as per LAC LR protocol</li> </ul>	Looked After Children Learning Review protocol
CPR case review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-agency</li> <li>• Commissioned by MACIG</li> <li>• Children on CPR &gt; 18 months</li> <li>• Children re-registered within 12 months of de-registration</li> </ul>	MACIG CPR Case Review guidance
Disruption reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-agency</li> <li>• Commissioned by Adoption and Fostering Service</li> <li>• Undertaken by Independent Co-ordinator</li> <li>• Criteria - multiple placement breakdown</li> </ul>	<p>Procedure in Relation to Disruption Process(Adoption/Permanent Fostering Placements)</p> <p>Email <a href="mailto:jacquie.toye@falkirk.gov.uk">jacquie.toye@falkirk.gov.uk</a></p>
Structured Debrief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single agency (Falkirk Council Children's Service)</li> <li>• Criteria - Wider range of concern. Initial Discussion with Lead Officer determines if this option is appropriate for a Debrief</li> </ul>	Email <a href="mailto:evelyn.kennedy@falkirk.gov.uk">evelyn.kennedy@falkirk.gov.uk</a>
(Social Work) Learning review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single agency (Falkirk Council Children and Families)</li> <li>• Commissioned by CFCIG</li> <li>• Criteria as per this protocol</li> </ul>	Email <a href="mailto:Leni.rademacher@falkirk.gov.uk">Leni.rademacher@falkirk.gov.uk</a>

**Appendix 2: Learning Review Referral Pathway**



*Appendix 3: Learning Review Referral Form*

The person first concerned that the criteria for a Learning Review has been met, should notify the C.F.C I.G. using this template.

<b>Name of person completing this Report:</b>	
<b>Service/Team:</b>	
<b>Date form submitted to Service Manager</b>	

<b>Name of Child or Young Person</b>	
<b>SWIS No.</b>	

<b>Name of Parents/Carers</b>	
<b>Others In Household (name &amp; relationship)</b>	

<b>Other agencies known to be involved (please provide names &amp; disciplines of various professionals within each agency, if known)</b>	
<b>(Child's Plan Form 1 can be attached)</b>	

**Ground(s) on which the criteria for a Learning Review may have met (please see Section 2, Protocol for Conducting a Learning Review)**

--

**Brief description of the circumstances of the Case**

--

**Key Facts/Background to the Case (include chronology)**

--

Please give details of the reasons why a Learning Review has been requested

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Signature of Worker.....

Signature of Line Manager.....

**To be completed by CFCIG**

<b>Date discussed:</b>	
<b>Decision:</b> Proceed to Learning Review YES / NO	<b>Rationale:</b>
<b>If decision to proceed to a Learning Review</b>	
Key objectives of the Review: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	
Lead Reviewer:	
Timescale for completion:	
<b>If decision not to proceed to Learning Review</b>	
Further action required: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	



**Appendix 4: Learning Review Discussion Prompts**

1.	<p><b><i>Introductions</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you tell me who you are, what your current job is and what your role was in the period under review?</li> </ul>
2.	<p><b><i>Overview</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you give me a brief description of what happened in this case and the part you played?</li> </ul>
3a	<p><b><i>Key Practice Episodes</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there any period that were particularly critical in the way the case developed or was handled?</li> <li>• What do you think were crucial moments in the period of time under review, when key decisions or actions were taken that you think determined the direction the case took or the way the case was handled?</li> <li>• From what you have said, it sounds like X, Y and Z were key episodes?</li> <li>• From the way you have told the story and your part in it, it seems to break down in this way?</li> <li>• If we look at it chronologically, it sounds like X was a critical time/aspect to look at in more detail?</li> </ul>
3b	<p><b><i>'Mindset' and 'local rationality'</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you tell me a bit more about what was going on at this time?</li> <li>• Can you flesh out for me what was behind your thinking (reasons but also emotions and actions at this time)?</li> <li>• What information was at the front of your mind? What was most significant to you at this point? What was catching your attention?</li> <li>• Were there other things occupying you at the time?</li> <li>• What were your main concerns? What were you tossing up at the time? Did these concerns clash at all? Were there any conflicts? Were some dismissed, others prioritised?</li> <li>• What were you hoping to achieve?</li> <li>• What options did you think you had to influence the course of events?</li> </ul> <p>Follow-up and probing questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this the way you always do it?</li> <li>• Is that usual?</li> <li>• Why is it done in that way?</li> <li>• How do you mean?</li> <li>• Can you explain that a bit more fully please?</li> <li>• In what way?</li> </ul>
3c	<p><b><i>Contributory factors</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We want to look at what influenced the sense you made of things and what you did. You mentioned earlier that X, Y, Z. Do you want to say anything more about that?</li> <li>• If you look at this list of potential factors, were any of them important? When and why?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aspects of the family</li> <li>- Aspects of your role</li> <li>- Conditions of work/work environment</li> <li>- Personal aspects</li> <li>- Your own team factors</li> <li>- Inter-agency/inter-professional team factors</li> <li>- Organisational culture and management</li> <li>- Wider political context</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p><b><i>Things that went well</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What things relating to the case went well?</li> <li>• What do you think you or others did that was helpful/useful? And what factors supported/enabled it?</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p><b><i>Queries/clarifying questions from the overview perspective</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We've been told X, Y, Z, is that something you were aware of?</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<p><b><i>Suggested changes</i></b></p> <p>Off the top of your head, having thought back on this case and your role, are there any small, practical changes that you can think of which would help in similar situations/issues in the future?</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b><i>Summing up</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recap....., do you feel this accurately captures what you've told us?</li> <li>• What else would you like to add?</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	<p><b><i>Reflections</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You were given information about this meeting beforehand. In what ways was it what you expected?</li> <li>• How have found this session?</li> <li>• What comments or questions do you have for us at this point?</li> <li>• How do you feel now, about yourself and your role, after this discussion?</li> </ul>

## “Anatomy” of a Learning Review Discussion

### What are we drawing on?

- Staff Experience (Review Team and Case Group)
- Local Performance Data (Review Team)
- National Evidence
- Relevant Research

“View in the tunnel” and analysis of Key Practice Episodes, including identification of contributory factors

