



Significant Case Review

Initial Case Review Guidance Notes

June 2016

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Initial Case Review Report Guidance Notes

A Significant Case Review is a multi-agency process for establishing the facts of a situation where a child has died or has been significantly harmed.

The function of the Review is to identify the learning to be gained from reflection on day to day practices and the systems within which they operate, it should be viewed within the context of continuous improvement and will apply when the significant incident or cumulative incidents (a case) give rise to serious concerns around professional/service involvement or lack of involvement.

Any agency can ask the Child Protection Committee (CPC) to consider a case for a Significant Case Review. Families cannot ask for a review, concerns raised by families should be addressed through the normal complaints procedures within the relevant agency.

It may not always be apparent to agencies that a case should be considered under the Significant Case Review (SCR) process. As soon as practicable after the event or series of events suggests that an SCR may be appropriate, contact should be made with the Child Protection Lead Officer who will advise on the process and timescales to be followed and will issue the appropriate documentation.

The following guidance sets out the basic information relating to the SCR process and sources of further information.

The Purpose of Significant Case Review

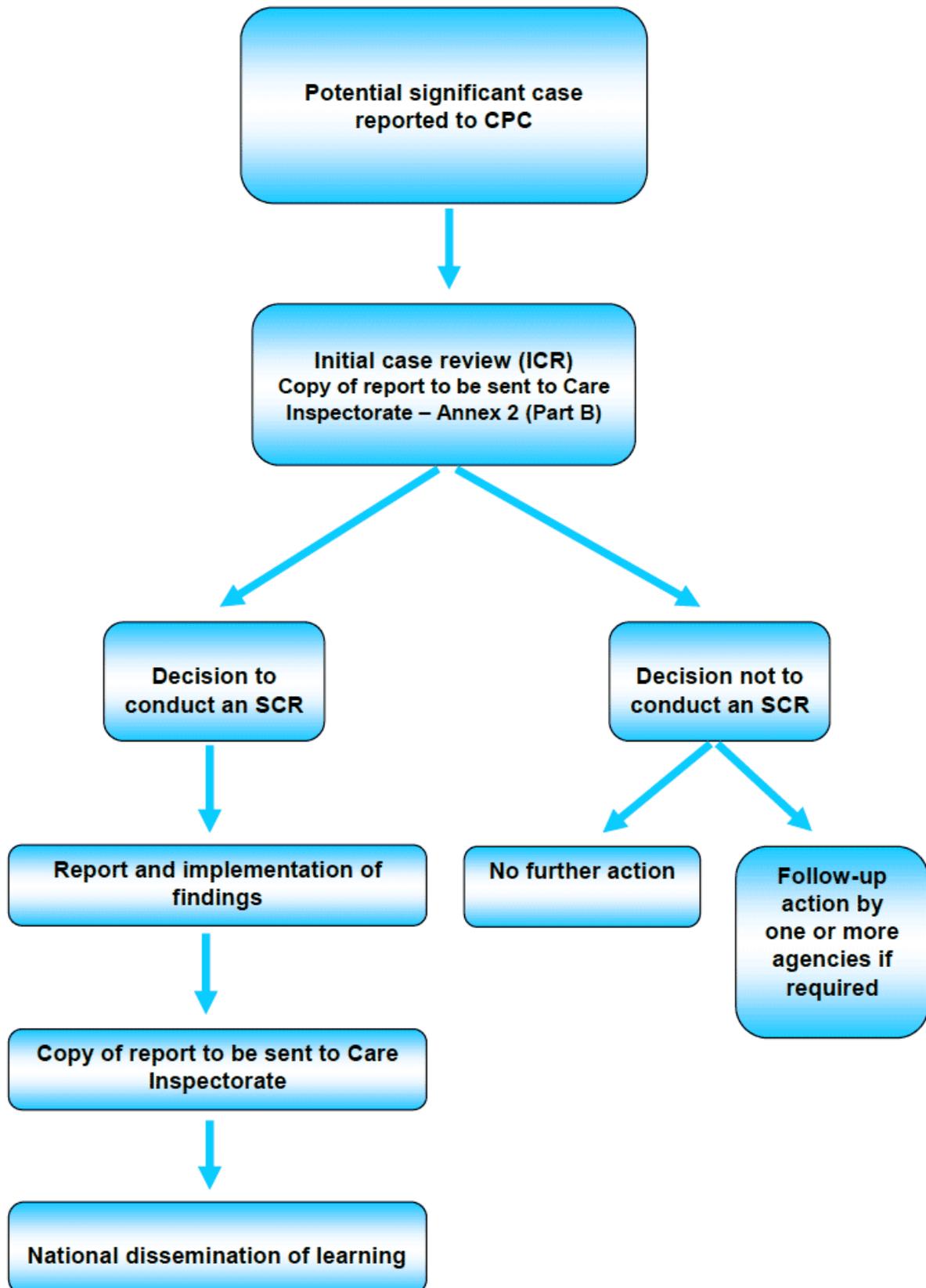
The overarching objectives of Significant Case Reviews are to:

- improve the protection of children and young people and ensure they get the help they need when they need it;
- recognise good practice and identify where learning and improvement needs to take place;
- recommend where improvements need to occur and consider how learning and change will be implemented;
- increase public confidence in public services;
- ensure transparency and accountability;
- identify national implications where appropriate;

CPCs are responsible for establishing the local arrangements needed to consider whether or not a case meets the criteria for a Significant Case Review and this is contained within the 'Glasgow Child Protection Committee Significant Case Review Protocol' February 2016.

A comprehensive guide to conducting a significant case review is contained in 'National Guidance for Child Protection Committees' Conducting a Significant Case Review. Both documents can be located at www.glasgowchildprotection.org.uk

Overview of the Case Review Process



Criteria for establishing whether a case is significant

- Abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death
- The child is on, or has been on, the Child Protection Register (CPR) or a sibling is or was on the SCR. This is regardless of whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death unless it is absolutely clear to the Child Protection Committee that the child having been on the CPC has no bearing on the case.
- The death is by suicide or accidental death
- The death is by alleged murder, culpable homicide, reckless conduct, or an act of violence
- At the time of their death the child was looked after by, or was receiving after care or continuing care from the local authority

When a child has not died but has sustained **significant** harm or risk of significant harm as defined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014 **and** in addition to this, the incident or accumulation of incidents (a case) gives rise to serious concerns about professional and/or service involvement or lack of involvement, and the relevant Child Protection Committee determines that there may be learning to be gained through conducting a Significant Case review.

Significant harm or risk of significant harm

"There are no absolute criteria for judging what constitutes significant harm. In assessing the severity of ill treatment or future ill treatment, it may be important to take account of: the degree and extent of physical harm; the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect; the extent of premeditation; the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements.

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, for example, a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm results from an accumulation of significant events, both acute and long standing, that interrupt, change or damage the child's physical or psychological development"

*Extract from the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014: Section 43
Page 13.*

Initial Case Review (ICR) process

The CPC may not immediately appreciate that a case is significant. An Initial Case Review (ICR) is, therefore, an opportunity for the CPC to consider relevant information, determine the course of action and recommend whether an SCR or other response is required. The ICR process is summarised in the next steps. An ICR should not be escalated beyond what is proportionate, taking account of the severity and complexity of the case and the process and its timescales, should not detract from agencies taking whatever urgent action is required to protect any other children and young people who may be at risk.

All involved agencies will be required to begin an information gathering process and complete the template incorporating the following information:

- a summary of involvement including background;
- an outline of known key issues;
- any identified elements of emerging practice;
- any identified areas for improvement;
- any particular sensitivities, specifically other parallel investigations;

Completion of the Initial Case Review Notification Form

On identifying a case as a potential Significant Case Review (SCR), the CPC Lead Officer should be notified and an Initial Case Review Notification Form (**Annex 1**) will be sent to you for completion.

The completed ICR should include:

- a statement on the current position of the child and what actions have been or will be taken;
- a brief description of the case and the basis for the referral;
- any other formal proceedings under way;
- the name of the agencies involved with the child/family and the name of the lead contact;

The completed form should be returned electronically to the CPC **Lead as soon as possible but in all cases within 7 calendar days**. The Chair of the Child Protection Committee and the Chief Officer Group will be notified that an SCR referral has been received.

Following receipt of the referral the CPC Support Team will notify all agencies identified as having contact with the child or young person that a potential Significant Case Review has been received. Each agency will be required to complete an Initial Case Review (**Annex 2**), and will be asked to complete and return to the CPC Support Team **within 14 calendar days**. If agencies are unable to complete the ICR Report within the suggested timescales the reasons should be notified to the Lead Officer for recording. When all information has been received the case will be assessed by the SCR Panel who will decide whether or not the SCR criteria is met.

Glasgow CPC has an established Multi Agency SCR Panel chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer. The Panel on behalf of the CPC assesses all available information and if necessary will request additional information, and then decide whether the case meets the criteria for an SCR.

There are three potential outcomes from the assessment Panel:

1. The case meets the criteria for an SCR and the Review will begin.
2. The criteria for an SCR is not met and no further action is required.
3. The criteria for an SCR is not met however the panel agree there is learning to be had from the circumstances of the case and further action is required, either one or more of the following may apply or other actions may be identified:

- Development of a policy/protocol or guidance
- Training requirement
- Single or joint agency enquiry to identify potential learning.

The decision will be notified to the CPC Chair and involved agencies and the process will begin depending on the decision agreed.

The case meets the criteria for a Significant Case Review

Details of the review process can be found in the 'Glasgow Child Protection Significant Case Review Protocol February 2016' however for the purposes of this guidance the summary process is as follows:

An Independent SCR Chair will be appointed by the Chief Officers

The SCR Panel will be established for the duration of the SCR. The Panel will meet approximately every 8 weeks. The Panel will oversee the direction of the review and offer expert advice to the SCR Chair

A multi-agency Review Team will be established and the members will conduct an investigation within their respective agencies to determine the facts of the case. The Review Team normally meet 8 weekly but this can be more frequently if required. The Review Team will be chaired by the Independent Chair appointed to lead the SCR process.

Glasgow CPC has adopted a systems approach to conducting the Significant Case Review. While the investigation will look at the circumstances and actions taken in a particular case, the focus for learning is **not** on the action of individual workers but rather the systems and processes in place within and between agencies.

The final SCR report is normally completed within 6 months and the report is tabled to the CPC to decide how it will be communicated both internally and externally.

Once signed off the final report is the property of the Child Protection Committee.

The learning points identified through the Significant Case review will be disseminated through the relevant agencies to ensure action is taken to bring about the required change and improve outcomes for children.

If you have any questions or require additional information you should contact the CPC Lead Officer or CPC Support Team using the below contact details.

karen.frew@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk or 0141 420 5800

debbie.proctor@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk or 0141 420 5665



Initial case review NOTIFICATION (annex 1)

The designated person within any agency should complete this initial case review notification and send it electronically by e-mail to the local CPC Lead Officer **as soon as possible and in any case within 7** calendar days of first informing the agreed lead.

On receipt of the written notification, the CPC Lead Officer/Support Team will alert the CPC Chair and other services/agencies who are involved with the child that the case has been reported as a potential SCR. This alert to other services/agencies will be e-mail. These other services/agencies will then be asked to submit an initial case review report (**Annex 2**) by the CPC lead. The CPC lead will acknowledge all initial case review notification reports.

DETAILS OF PERSON MAKING THE NOTIFICATION

Name of person completing this form:	
Agency:	
Contact telephone number:	
Date form submitted to CPC Support Team	

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON DETAILS

Child's name/identifier:	
Child's date of birth:	
Child's gender:	
Agency Identifier (e.g CHI, etc):	
Child's home address:	
Child's current residence:	
Child's current legal status:	
Sibling names DOB Gender Address if different:	
Name of child's parents/carers:	
Parent/Carer address if different to child:	
Is/has the child's name been on the child protection register? If yes, please give details below	
Are any siblings currently on or have been previously on the child protection register? If yes, please give details below	
Education establishment details (include nursery):	

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – PERSONAL (once completed)

Grounds on which the criteria for an SCR may have been met
Are there any immediate concerns? If yes, what are these and have these been passed to the relevant agency for consideration/action?
What action has been taken?
Are there any general concerns? If so, what are these and have they been passed to the relevant agency/service for consideration.

SERVICES INVOLVED

	Name of service	Name of staff member	Designation	Email	Telephone
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Summary of the case:
Any other proceedings underway:

Please return completed form electronically by email to the CPC Lead Officer/Support Team:

Lead Officer Email Address – karen.frew@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

Support Team Email Address - debbie.proctor@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

To be completed by CPC Support Team

Date Received:	
Date Sent to CPC Chair:	



Initial case review AGENCY REPORT (annex 2)

The form has been distributed to you, along with the “guidance notes on Significant Case Review” because **[insert agency]** on **[insert date]** has requested the Child Protection Committee (CPC) consider a Significant Case Review on the child or young person named below and it is believed your agency has been involved with the child/young person.

Please complete this Initial Case Review Agency Report and send it by email to the CPC Lead Officer & Support Team **as soon as possible and in any case within 14 calendar days from the date the Initial Case Review Agency report was requested.**

This report should contain information relevant to the agency/service’s contact/interaction with the child or young person. Each agency/service will submit details of their own involvement with the child or young person.

All ICR Report received by the CPC Lead Officer & Support Team will be acknowledged.

CPC USE ONLY

Case Reference Details	
Date request for information sent:	
Date report to be completed & returned by:	
To be returned to:	karen.frew@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk debbie.proctor@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

AGENCY COMPLETING FORM

Name of person completing this form:	
Agency:	
Contact telephone number:	
Date form submitted to CPC Lead Officer/Support Team	

LEAD CONTACT FOR YOUR AGENCY

Name:	
Designation:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

FURTHER INFORMATION

Should further clarification be required please contact the CPC Lead Officer or Support Team

karen.frew@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

or 0141 420 5800

debbie.proctor@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

or 0141 420 5665

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – PERSONAL (once completed)

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON DETAILS

Child's name/identifier:	
Child's date of birth:	
Child's gender:	
Agency Identifier (e.g CHI, etc):	
Child's home address:	
Child's current residence:	
Child's current legal status:	
Sibling names DOB Gender Address if different:	
Name of child's parents/carers:	
Parent/Carer address if different to child:	
Is/has the child's name been on the child protection register? If yes, please give details below	
Are any siblings currently on or have been previously on the child protection register? If yes, please give details below	
Education establishment details (include nursery):	

SERVICES INVOLVED

Please see below details of services/agencies known to have had involvement with the child/young person. If you are aware of any agency having contact who is now included below please complete relevant details

	Name of service	Name of staff member	Designation	Email	Telephone
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – PERSONAL (once completed)

Summary of Involvement

--

Background

History of your agency / professional involvement (including your knowledge of the circumstances relating to the referral for review)

--

Outline of key issues, including:

- were there strategies and actions to minimise harm?
- was there evidence of information sharing?
- was there recognition and assessment of risk?
- was timely and effective action taken?
- was there evidence of planning and review?
- how good was the record keeping?
- were legal measures used appropriately?

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Good Practice

Please note any positive outcomes about areas of practice both within your own agency and on a wider basis

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Poor Practice

Please note any concerns about areas of practice both within your own agency and on a wider basis

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Any particular sensitivities:

(e.g. legal issues as advised by PF/Police or cases where there are likely to be disciplinary proceedings)

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Recommendation

Please highlight any areas which may require further consideration

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Please return completed form electronically by email to the CPC Lead Officer/Support Team:

Lead Officer Email Address – karen.frew@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

Support Team Email Address - debbie.proctor@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk

To be completed by CPC Support Team

Date Received:	
Date Sent to CPC Chair:	



Initial Case Review Report (ANNEX 2 part B)

For completion by CPC Support Team and will be emailed to the Care Inspectorate.

Following the SCR Panel on **[insert date]** a decision was made whether to proceed or not to a Significant Case Review. The details of the case and decision are noted below.

DECISIONS MADE AND REASONS

Case Review No:	
Date of Review Report:	

CASE REVIEW GROUP

Options to be considered	
Decisions Made:	
Reasons:	
Date:	

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Date notified of above decision:	
Note of discussion by CPC:	
Decisions Made:	
Reasons:	
Date:	

CHIEF OFFICERS

Date notified of above decision:	
Note of any comments/discussion by chief officers:	
Decisions Made:	
Date:	



Significant Case Review Report (Annex 5)

AGENCY COMPLETING THIS FORM

Name of person completing this form:	
Agency:	
Contact telephone number:	
Date form submitted to CPC Lead Officer/Support Team	

Core data – child	
Child's identifier	
Age of child	
Gender	
Sexual orientation	
Disability	
Health needs (including mental health and/or learning difficulties)	
Education	
Living circumstances prior to incident	
Position in family/number of siblings	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
Nature of injury/cause of death	
Legal status of child	
CP registration	
Agencies/Services involved	

Parent/carer factors	
Age	
Mental health issues	
Disability	
Health needs (including mental health and/or learning difficulties)	
Substance use (if applicable)	
Convictions (if applicable)	
Relevant information about childhood (if applicable)	
Domestic abuse (if applicable)	
Antisocial behaviour (if applicable)	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
Marital/relationship status e.g. co-habitation	
Living circumstances	
Agencies/Services involved	

Environmental factors	
Financial problems	
Housing	
Support from extended family/ community	

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Other relevant factors

Introduction

This should include the circumstances that led to the review, the purpose and focus of the review, the periods considered and agencies involved, the extent of the family's/carers' involvement. Note how long the report has taken and reasons for any delays.

The facts

This should include the family background and circumstances, including agency involvement. A chronology of significant events, (which should also include when the child was seen and by whom and whether the child's views were sought) should also be included. Where appropriate, the chronology may be presented in a number of distinct phases and should be supplemented by a written account of what happened during each phase. A genogram may be a useful format to map out key relevant person, and families. In the reviewing of the case, a full chronology will be required but for the purpose of the report, the primary aim at this stage is to highlight areas of practice or events that are considered by the review to be particularly relevant, not to provide an overly detailed account of events. As such the full chronology should not be included within the body of the report. Details of all significant adults in the child's life should also be included.

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Analysis

This section should critically assess the key circumstances of the case, the interventions offered, decisions made etc. For example, were the responses appropriate, were key decisions justifiable, was the relevant information sought or considered, were there early, effective and appropriate interventions? Were any concerns about safety and/or wellbeing recognised? Was there a timely and appropriate response? Were the family and child's circumstances sufficiently assessed? Were compulsory/legal measures properly considered and was the child referred to the Children's Reporter? If so, when? It should always be remembered that the review is taking place with the benefit of hindsight and the analysis should consider the actions of services within the context of the circumstances of the time.

Key issues

Following on from the analysis and depending on the circumstances of the case, the review should clearly identify the key areas that impacted on the child and agency responses and then explore these further to understand how they came about. This section should assist readers to understand the 'why' of what happened and a level of root cause analysis should be applied. It would be helpful to explore key areas within a framework of cause and effect factors – for example, resourcing, organisational culture, training, policies etc.

Learning points

This section should highlight the key learning points from the review – again the focus here should not be on 'what happened', but the reasons why it happened as it will be these areas that services and organisations can actively take forward and address. This section should also actively address strengths and good practice identified as well as the learning that has taken place since the case, any changes in practice and policy that have been implemented and the outcome of changes.

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – PERSONAL (once completed)

Recommendations or if using SCIE model Findings and Issues

These should be SMART: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**imed

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OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – PERSONAL (once completed)

Executive summary

This report should provide a brief, anonymised account of the circumstances of the case and agency involvement. Chronologies should not be included. Analysis of the key events has to be sufficient to allow a context for the identification of the key issues and learning points but a balance has to be struck to ensure confidentiality issues are respected. The Learning Points, recommendations and action points should be replicated in full.

Appendices

These should include, if not already within the body of the report:

- Review Team membership
- Remit
- Chronology¹
- Files accessed
- People interviewed

SCIE Learning Together Model*

An [SCIE Learning Together](#)² report is structured to a standard format to include an overview of the case, an appraisal of professional practice. It identifies findings rather than listing conclusions and recommended actions. The findings articulate succinctly what the issues have been found and record how this is evidenced through answering five key questions:

- How did the issue manifest in this case?
- What makes this an underlying issue rather than an issue particular to the individuals involved?
- How prevalent is the issue?
- How widespread is the pattern?
- What are the implications for the reliability of the system?

Findings are themed together under the following patterns using a systems typology and listed in priority as defined by the review team:

- Management systems
- Family-professional interaction
- Tools (human interaction with)
- Responses to incidents
- Longer term work
- Cognitive/emotional bias

Rather than make recommendations, each finding asks questions of the CPC to help the members come to a decision as to how to resolve the issue and ensure the CPC has measures in place to know when the issue has resolved. The responsibility for implementing change rests within the CPC and its partner agencies.

*Learning Together reviews must be undertaken by accredited Lead Reviewers.

¹ GIRFEC Briefings for practitioners – Scottish Government – August 2012

² Learning together to safeguard children: developing a multi-agency systems approach for case reviews – Fish, S., E. Munro, and S. Bairstow, 2008