



Terms of Reference

Child Deaths and Serious Case Reviews and Complaints Sub Committee

Introduction

The **Child Deaths and Serious Case Reviews and Complaints Sub-Committee (SCR)** is a Sub Committee of the Jersey Child Protection Committee (JCPC). It leads on the analysis about unexpected deaths of children and responding to any concerns affecting the safety and welfare of children which may give rise to the need for a serious case review. It oversees the complaints procedure for the JCPC.

Purpose

- Ensuring that there has been a co-ordinated response by all agencies when there is an unexpected death of a child
- Undertaking reviews of cases where serious abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected, a child has died or been seriously harmed, and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the agencies or other relevant people have worked together to safeguard a child
- Devising and managing a complaints system for any individual with experience of the child protection system to express their concerns
- Disseminating the learning from all the functions above

Membership

- The **SCR** will be chaired by the Independent Chair of the JCPC and have a designated Vice-Chair.
- Representatives will be Members of the JCPC and shall be drawn from a number of agencies, which will include:
 - Health and Social Services Department
 - States of Jersey Police
 - Education, Sport & Culture
 - Family, Nursing & Home Care
 - Probation and After-Care Service and Prison Service
 - Jersey Medical Society
 - Voluntary sector
- Membership will comprise at least 12 members plus the Chair.

Terms of Reference

- The **SCR** shall ensure that the following values are reflected in all aspects of its work:

- The paramount welfare of the child;
- Multi-agency working;
- Inter-agency partnership;
- Partnership with parents;
- Anti-discriminatory practice
- Confidentiality of all verbal and written material about clients and professionals involved in the review of cases

- **Accountability**

The Sub-Committee will refer matters as required to the JCPC and will report to each JCPC meeting

- **Roles and responsibilities:**

- To receive and undertake an initial assessment of all cases referred to it (from any source) because abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; **and**
 - the child has died; **or** the child has been seriously harmed or the child has sustained serious and permanent impairment to health or development through abuse or neglect **and**
 - there is cause for concern as to the way in which the States departments or voluntary agency partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child from the abuse or neglect that led to the death or serious harm; **or**
 - there is evidence that a child has been seriously harmed by organised and/or multiple abusers (within or outside the family) or abused within an institutional or custodial setting **or**
 - a child who has died or been seriously injured was/is being looked after by the children's service at the time of death/injury..
- To decide whether the case falls within the above criteria and there is sufficient reason to undertake a serious case review and to make a recommendation to the Chair of the JCPC on the action to be taken.
- To decide on the Chair and Members of any Serious Case Review Panel and oversee the management of the review process.
- To decide on the scope of the specific review – including the time period for reviewing the actions taken in the case; the time frame for the review; which agencies will be asked to provide Internal Management Reports; and the person to be commissioned to write the Independent Overview Report. These decisions may be delegated to the Serious Case Review Panel and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the SCR will have delegated authority to confirm these.
- To develop procedures for the management and delivery of a Serious Case Review to the JCPC and monitor the effectiveness of these. This includes defining the purpose of the SCR process as for learning only and to clarify that information gathered for the purpose of the SCR is to be used and disseminated only for this purpose.

- In cases in which it is decided that a full Serious Case Review is not necessary (whether or not a Serious Case Review Panel was appointed), the Sub-Committee may ask one of its members to take the lead in seeking Internal Management Reports from the relevant agencies, and prepare a report for the Sub-Committee on lessons to be learned from the case, and actions to be taken. The Sub-Committee, on receiving such a report, may conclude that a Serious Case Review is necessary and appoint a Review Panel and an Independent Overview report writer.
- To ensure that the effective application of the JCPC Information Sharing Protocol provides the basis to facilitate information exchange relating to this function of the SCR while maintaining compliance with Data Protection and Human Rights legislation.
- To discuss and approve the draft of the Overview Report with its recommendations and agree the draft action plan for reference to the JCPC.
- To collect and analyse information of unexpected child deaths and, in consultation with the designated paediatrician, police, and the Deputy Viscount (Coroner) to decide whether the death may need to be the subject of a Serious Case Review.
- To consider whether the case points to matters of concern affecting the protection of children living in Jersey, or in a specific area of practice and to report these concerns to the Chair of the JCPC in the first instance in order that consideration can be given on how to disseminate points of concern or learning points identified by the Sub-Committee.
- To collect aggregated data on the circumstances surrounding unexplained deaths in order to inform strategic planning on how best to safeguard children from circumstances which may lead to avoidable child deaths or serious injury.
- To set up and operate a complaints procedure so that parents and children and relevant others who have been the subject of a child protection enquiry can make a formal complaint, or express dissatisfaction about any aspect of the service they have received which is within the remit of the JCPC and/or regulated by its guidelines. To ensure that parents and children are aware of the complaints system and of how they can get help in making use of it.
- To set up and operate an inter-agency feedback process for professionals within the system to raise practice questions in relation to specific cases or broader queries in relation to the inter-agency child protection processes.

Administration:

- Support to the Sub-Committee and its Chair/Vice-Chair will be provided through the JCPC Office. The Professional Officer will assist in providing relevant materials and advice to the Sub-Committee
- Administration will include production of agenda and minutes for confirmation by the Chair of the Sub-Committee