

Joint communication from the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, the Department for Education (DfE), the Home Office (HO) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

On 31 March 2020, we issued a joint note which set out how we would support local authorities and child safeguarding partners to fulfil their statutory and non-statutory requirements in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

As of 1 October 2020, the requirements and timescales will revert to those outlined in the statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), and the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: practice guidance](#).

This note reiterates expectations for:

- Serious incident notifications
- Rapid reviews
- Local child safeguarding practice reviews
- Outstanding serious case reviews
- Safeguarding partner yearly reports

It also reminds you of the DfE's child at immediate risk of harm procedures.

Serious incident notifications	
Statutory requirement	All serious incident notifications must be sent to the Panel within five working days of the local authority becoming aware of the incident.
Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide a serious incident notification of all incidents where a child dies or is seriously harmed, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. The online notification system is accessible 24 hours a day.	
More information on serious incident notifications can be found in Chapter 4 of Working Together	
Please email any questions around serious incident notifications to: Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk	

Rapid reviews	
Non-Statutory requirement	Rapid reviews should be submitted to the Panel within 15 working days of the safeguarding partners becoming aware of the incident.
Safeguarding partners are required to promptly undertake a rapid review on all notified serious incidents. Rapid reviews should assemble the facts of the case as quickly as possible in order to establish whether there is any	

immediate action needed to ensure a child's safety and the potential for practice learning.

Further guidance on undertaking a rapid review can be found in Chapter 4 of [Working Together](#) and in the Panel's [practice guidance](#)

Rapid reviews should be submitted to the Panel secretariat at: Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk.

Local child safeguarding practice reviews

Statutory requirement

Full reports should be sent to the Panel and the Secretary of State for Education **seven working days** in advance of the publication date

Local child safeguarding practice reviews should be published within **six months** of initiation.

Reviews should promote and share information about improvements, both within the area and potentially beyond, so safeguarding partners must publish the report, unless they consider it inappropriate to do so.

Safeguarding partners should set out for the Panel and the Secretary of State, the justification for any decision not to publish either the full report or information relating to improvements. Safeguarding partners should also inform the Panel and the Secretary of State of the reasons for any delays to the six-month publication timescale.

Further guidance on undertaking a child safeguarding practice review can be found in Chapter 4 of [Working Together](#)

Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk and Mailbox.CPOD@education.gov.uk

Outstanding serious case reviews

Statutory guidance

Complete/incomplete and unpublished SCRs sent to safeguarding partners, the Panel, and DfE

The final deadline for completing and publishing outstanding Serious Case Reviews is approaching.

The transition from Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to local safeguarding partner arrangements took place between 29 June 2018 and 29 September 2019. A one-year grace period was given for all initiated serious case reviews (SCRs) to be completed and published. That grace period will end on 29 September 2020.

If an SCR is not completed or not published by the end of the grace period, the LSCB must send the complete but unpublished SCR, or where it has not been completed – all information relating to the review (which should include learning arising from it) – to the safeguarding partners, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, **and** the DfE.

Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk and
Mailbox.CPOD@education.gov.uk

Safeguarding partner arrangements

Statutory requirement

Safeguarding Partners must publish a report at least once every 12-month period.

The report must set out what has been done as a result of the arrangements, including on safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

Further guidance on what the reports should contain can be found in Chapter 3 of [Working Together](#)

For any queries on safeguarding partner reporting issues, please contact: Safeguarding.reform@education.gov.uk

A copy of all published reports should be sent to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk), and the What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care (info@whatworks-csc.org.uk) within seven days of being published.

Children at immediate risk of harm cases

The DfE receives correspondence from practitioners and members of the public alerting us that they believe a child may be at immediate risk of harm.

Where we believe a child is at risk of harm, steps are taken to notify the Director of Children’s Services in the relevant local authority within 24-hours and to request assurance from the DCS that the child is safe.

Mailbox.CPOD@education.gov.uk