



## NEW Practitioner Escalation Protocol

### Questions & Answers

***Warwickshire Safeguarding has produced a new Escalation Protocol to support practitioners working in all agencies to have the tools to raise concerns about professional practice, decision making or resource allocation. This new protocol now replaces the former Escalation Policy developed by Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board.***

#### **Q1. What is Escalation?**

All professionals working with children, young people, adults with care and support needs and their carers, are individually responsible for being satisfied about the substance and progress of safeguarding plans for service users. Where there may be concerns about professional practice, decision making or resource allocation, escalation should be used by practitioners to raise their concerns and ensure a positive outcome for service users.

#### **Q2. What is the first step I should take?**

An initial discussion should take place between practitioners aiming to reach agreement. In the majority of situations healthy challenge takes place between practitioners with early resolution being achieved. If the discussion between practitioners fails to resolve the issue, the escalating practitioner should follow the three stages set out within the Escalation Protocol.

#### **Q3. What do I do if agreement is not reached?**

There should then follow a Line Manager to Line Manager discussion (Stage 1) in an attempt to reach a resolution. If a resolution cannot be reached at this stage the escalation must move to a Senior Manager to Senior Manager (Stage 2) discussion, with advice and support also being sought from the designated safeguarding leads within agencies (unless the escalating practitioner or manager is the designated safeguarding lead for their setting, e.g. a school or early years setting, in which case the escalating practitioner should pursue the process).

In the unlikely event that the issue cannot be resolved by the steps described above and/or the discussions raise significant policy issues, the matter should be referred to Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership (Stage 3) in a timely way.

It is recognised that this process might not be appropriate in all settings especially where the escalating practitioner is the designated safeguarding lead, senior manager or does not have a line manager; for example, in schools, early years settings and for individual childminders. Where this is the case the escalating practitioner should follow the process at each stage and record accordingly on the monitoring form.

#### **Q4. I am worried that my manager is not progressing my concerns, what should I do?**

Where the escalating practitioner is concerned about a safeguarding decision made by a manager in their service or organisation, or they feel their concerns are not being addressed appropriately, they should escalate to the manager of their line manager, safeguarding lead or sideways to an alternative team/manager within their service, in accordance with their organisation's own internal escalation or whistleblowing procedure.



**Q5. How will Warwickshire Safeguarding monitor the escalations and what difference will it make?**

It is essential that all escalations are recorded to provide evidence that this issue has been raised and to ensure effective monitoring processes can be put in place. From the Line Manager to Line Manager stage of the protocol (stage 1) managers (or escalating practitioners as appropriate) are asked to complete an Escalation Monitoring Form which will be stored on the child/adult's file. Warwickshire Safeguarding will review agency annual returns to determine whether there are any key trends being identified and whether any learning or policy amendments are required. This will be managed through the Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup.