

NSCP AND GSCP LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT REVIEWING PACK

PART TWO: Notification of Death of a Child in Care or Care Leaver

Working Together 2023 identifies that “the Local Authority must notify the Secretary of State for Education and Ofsted of the death of a looked after child”.

Working Together 2023 sets out that from January 2024 “the local authority **should** also notify the Secretary of State for Education, and Ofsted of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24”. Notifications for care leaver deaths allows the Department for Education (DfE) to understand and learn more about what happened so they can make better informed policy decisions to prevent future deaths.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel receive the notifications but do not undertake a review as their remit relates to children’s serious incidents up to and including children up to and including the age of 17 years. The notification of the death of a child in care or care leaver will not itself necessitate a Rapid Review (see [Part One](#)) or Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (see [Part Three](#)). Ofsted will also be notified of the death of a care leaver through the notification system.

Care Leaver Definition:

A care leaver is anyone aged up to their 25th birthday that meets both of the following criteria:

- is no longer looked-after
- has been looked after for at least 13 weeks which began after they reached the age of 14 and ended after they reached the age of 16.

Working Together 2023

Care leavers are entitled to support from their Personal Adviser up to their 25th birthday. Local authorities are required to keep in touch with all care leavers up the point they reach age 21; and to make their best efforts to contact all care leavers aged 21 to 24 annually to remind them that they remain eligible for support. If a young person chooses not to take up support between 21 to 24 years of age, the local authority might no longer be aware of a care leaver’s whereabouts or circumstances (and therefore their death). This is why the requirement for a notification is not mandatory.

Whilst the requirement to make notifications of the death of a child in care or care leaver rests with the Local Authority, the notification form asks if the child / care leaver is known to the Local Authority Children’s Social Care, ICB Services, and the Police.

As such, to provide a proportionate notification, it is important that each of the three statutory partner agencies explore their records to identify any relevant information and discuss this collectively. This will ensure that information that may prevent future deaths is shared in line with national requirements. Further, this will inform decisions about any local learning opportunities and/or the need to strengthen practice guidance. The notification information

requested for the death of a child in care or care leaver is less than for a Serious Child Incident Notification.

Notification Pathway:

The aim of the notification pathway is to support effective information sharing and decision making about notifications and any subsequent actions.

Upon discovering a young person has died, the Local Authority's Children in Care and Care Leavers Service will clarify if the young person meets the legal definition of a child in care or care leaver.

If they *do not*, notification under this guidance will not be required.

The death of a child in care or care leaver does not require a rapid review or local child safeguarding practice review. However, **if the young person is under 18 years of age a notification may still be required should this meet the criteria for a Serious Child Incident Notification** (see [Part One](#)).

Once the Local Authority has confirmed the young person was a child in care or care leaver and meets the criteria for notification a **Form A** will be submitted by the Local Authority to the relevant Business Manager.

- For Newcastle: safeguardingboards@newcastle.gov.uk
or
- For Gateshead: SafeguardingBoardsBusinessUnit@Gateshead.Gov.UK

Upon receipt of a referral the Business Manager will notify LCRG members who will be asked to consider the information shared on the referral.

LCRG Membership:

GSCP	NSCP
Deputy Strategic Director, Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning, Gateshead Council – Chair of Gateshead LCRG	Lead Assistant Director: Children's Social Care & Early Help, Newcastle City Council- Chair of Newcastle LCRG
Designated Nurse for Children's Safeguarding, Northeast, and North Cumbria (ICB)	Designated Nurse for Children's Safeguarding, Northeast, and North Cumbria (ICB)
Detective Chief Inspector Safeguarding, Northumbria Police	Detective Chief Inspector Safeguarding, Northumbria Police
Business Manager, GSCP	Business Manager, NSCP

LCRG members may be asked to gather information **FORM B** in support of the notification and arrangements will be made for the LCRG members to meet **within 5 days**. Where it is identified that the young person is over 18 years of age, Local Authority Adult Social Care

representatives and the ICB Designated Nurse for Adult Safeguarding will also be invited to gather information FORM B and to attend the LCRG Meeting. Other SCP leads may be invited to the meeting if they have information of relevance relating to the young person.

The LCRG meeting will take place and relevant information will be shared. LCRG members will decide if any additional action is required beyond Notification. **Within 2 days** of the meeting, each organisation will submit any further relevant information to be included in the Notification.

The Business Manager will prepare the draft Notification and share this with all relevant agencies for agreement. All organisations are required to respond **within 2 days** of the draft Notification being shared.

The Business Manager will organise submission of the Notification **within 2 days** of organisations agreeing the notification.

The LCRG Chair and Business Manager will identify the need for any further meetings /actions, and these will be planned from this point to support any identified learning and improvement plan.

Where the young person is over 18 years of age, decisions regarding learning activity will be decided with, and possibly led by, adult services.

Notification of a Death of a Child in Care or Care Leaver:

