

Rapid Review

A Guide for Staff in Partner Agencies



What happens in a Rapid Review?

Working Together 2026, Chapter 5 states that the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP) is responsible for undertaking a Rapid Review (RR) following any Serious Incident Notification (SIN) or acceptance of a referral from a partner agency.

Partner agencies, supported by the PSCP Business Unit, work together over a 15-day period to collate what agencies know about that child/family and bring it together into a succinct report. There is a Rapid Review meeting held to discuss the information and make recommendations for next steps, prior to the report being finalised. This then goes to strategic leaders for them to offer scrutiny before being sent to National Panel.

The aim of the Rapid Review process is for partners to:

- Gather the facts about the case, as far as they can be readily established at the time.
- Discuss whether there is any immediate action needed to ensure children's safety and share any learning appropriately.
- Consider the potential for identifying improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Decide what steps they should take next, including whether to undertake a child safeguarding practice review.

To help gather the facts of the case an information sharing form is sent to the appropriate manager of all agencies involved. They are asked to complete the form to provide a concise summary of facts and involvement. We expect the manager to complete the form with frontline colleagues. Practitioners working with the family will have best knowledge of the context and history of the child and family, who they have worked with. Managers and colleagues may be able to identify what they believe is good strength-based practice of the case and provide suggestions of what they feel could be improved, both within multi-agency practice and across the system. It is this feedback that can help improve future work across agencies.

We recognise that a serious incident can be a traumatic event for staff and how it can cause concern and anxiety. We ask agency leaders and managers to ensure that all staff have a safe reflective space, not only to help to complete forms and provide us with information, but also to provide staff with the opportunity to talk about their circumstances and receive the right support at the right time.

The purpose of the Rapid Review is not an attempt to apportion blame, single out individual practitioners or be critical of specific agencies. It is the opportunity for the Partnership to work with all practitioners involved to understand if there is potential learning to prevent similar serious incidents happening in the future.

There may be times where it is felt appropriate for a 'learning event' to also be held within the Rapid Review period to inform the outcome of the Rapid Review. Where this happens, agencies will be notified at the earliest opportunity, and it will usually occur in the short window between agency information being sent back and the Rapid Review meeting being held.

Decisions about a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR)

Working Together 2026 sets out the criteria that the Partnership must take into account when deciding whether or not to carry out a local CSPR. We must consider whether the case:

- Highlights or may highlight improvements needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including where those improvements have previously been identified.
- Highlights or may highlight recurrent themes in the safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children.
- Highlights or may highlight concerns about two or more organisations or agencies working together effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Is one which the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (National Panel) decide a local rather than a national review is more appropriate.

We will also consider the following circumstances:

- If we have specific cause for concern about the actions of a single agency.
- Where there has been no agency involvement and this gives us cause for concern.
- Where more than one local authority, police area or clinical commissioning group is involved, e.g. cases where families have moved around.
- Where the case may raise issues relating to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of children in institutional settings.

Working Together 2026 also sets out when National Panel may decide that a National CSPR is required.

If more information about Rapid Reviews is required, then this can be found within Working Together 2026. If you have any questions about local process, then please contact the Business Unit via the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership mailbox - pscp@plymouth.gov.uk.