
**Milton Keynes Safeguarding
Children Board**

**Serious Case Review and
Learning Review
Practice Guidance and Tool
Kit**

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Introduction

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Regulations 2006 sets out the functions of LSCBs to undertake Serious Case Reviews, in accordance with the statutory guidance laid out in 'Working Together to safeguard Children 2006 and updated 2015.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 provides clear criteria in Chapter 4 about when LSCBs should conduct a Serious Case Review (SCR). MKSCB should consider whether to conduct a SCR where

- (a) abuse of neglect of a child is known or suspected; and
- (b) either
 - (i) the child has died and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child
 - (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

The primary purpose of any case review is, including a serious case review is to drive forward improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is done by;

- Establishing whether there are lessons to be learnt from the case about the way in which local professionals and organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Identifying clearly what those lessons are, how they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result,
- highlighting good practice so that there is growing understanding of what works well as well as identifying improvement that need to made to local service and/or to inter-agency working to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children

This guidance provides professionals in Milton Keynes (and from areas where a contribution to a particular case is required) with a step by step guide of the process to follow when undertaking a Serious case review in Milton Keynes .It also outlines responsibilities for key people at every stage of the process and in addition the appendices contain specimen letters and templates that are required to be used during a serious case review.

1.0 How to instigate a Serious Case Review

In Milton Keynes, the Serious Case Review Sub Group (SCRSG) considers cases to decide whether or not a recommendation should be made to the Independent Chair of the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board (MKSCB) for a Serious Case Review to be held.

1.1 How to refer to the Serious Case Review Subgroup (SCRSG)

Any agency can refer a case to the SCRSG, requesting that consideration be given to holding a Serious Case Review (SCR). Cases will also be referred via the Rapid Response Team and the Coroner, where they feel the case may meet the requirements for a SCR. The Child Death Overview Panel may also make a referral to the SCRSG for a case to be considered.

Referrals should be sent to the MKSCB office Administrator using the inter Agency Referral Form (Appendix 1). The MKSCB office, once a referral is received will allocate a reference number to that referral and ensure that all subsequent documentation around that case will have the same reference number. The reference number will be used to password protect all the documents relevant to that referral.

The MKSCB office Administrator will inform the MKSCB Chair, the SCRSG Chair and the Business Manager that a referral has been received for SCR consideration.

The MKSCB office Administrator with the support from the SCRSG Chair and MKSCB Business Manager, will inform Named Officers within each MKSCB member agency of the referral. This will include a request for additional information from each of these agencies where the child and/or family are known to the services (see appendix two). The form will be disseminated with the child and family member details and agencies will be required to send information on all. The additional information from each agency will be submitted with the referral form to the next SCR subgroup meeting for consideration. In the event that a referral needs to be considered before the next scheduled SCR subgroup meeting an additional meeting may be arranged.

Once it is known that a case is being considered for a review, each organisation must secure its records relating to the case to guard against loss or interference.

NB As meetings are held six weekly, if the next Panel is less than 48 hours away, Panel members will be requested to provide information for the subsequent meeting.

In these cases consideration will be given to arranging an extra meeting to review the case due to the timing.

1.2 Decision to Undertake a Serious Case Review or Learning Review

The SCRSG will consider the referral and the additional information received from each agency the family were known too using the criteria set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

The SCRSG will then make a recommendation to the MKSCB independent Chair using the referral Form, clearly recording each subgroup member's decision; within one month from the date the referral was received .

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 clearly states that the final decision to undertake a Serious Case Review rests with MKSCB independent Chair who may seek peer challenge from another LSCB Chair when considering this decision.

If the SCR criteria are not met, the recommendation from the SCRSG to the chair may still be to commission an SCR or to commission an alternative learning review. It must be clearly documented on the referral that consideration for an alternative review has taken place and an explanation of the outcome of that consideration recorded. It is likely that Ofsted and the National Panel will ask MKSCB Chair to account for this decision. This information must be sent to Ofsted.

Once the MKSCB Chair has considered the recommendation from the SCRSG and has made a final decision, the chair will record the outcome on the referral form and return to the SCRSG chair, business manager, MKSCB Deputy Chair and MKSCB Administrator.

The MKSCB Chair/MKSCB Office must inform Ofsted, Department of Education and the National Panel of independent experts of their decision within five working days of the Chair decision.

The MKSCB Business Manager will coordinate a written response from the MKSCB Chair, to all MKSCB Named Officers, the referrer and all Named professionals that provided the additional information (see Appendix 2). This response will ensure that the reason for undertaking a SCR or not undertaking a SCR is clearly stated.

1.3 Decision for Alternative Learning review

When a Case has been referred to the SCRSG for SCR consideration and it is the decision of the SCRSG that it does not reach the criteria for SCR an alternative Learning review must be considered. The process of informing the MKSCB chair and of an alternative learning review and informing the agencies of the outcome of that decision does not change. Alternative learning reviews include;

- Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP)
- Multi-agency review
- Single Agency review
- Audit single and multi-agency

A Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP) is a learning event where agencies come together with a facilitator to review the case together, identify learning and agree any actions arising from the SILP. The SCRSG will determine the scope and establish the terms of reference and timescale for the SILP and appoint a facilitator.

The key agencies and professionals involved in an identified case will be invited to a half or full day event to examine the case together. Agencies will provide chronologies of events (rather than a detailed management report). One facilitator will chair the event and another will write up the learning including recommendations, actions, timescales and clear responsibilities. Where necessary the writer will be an independent person. The report of summary of learning must be agreed by the SCRSG which will also monitor its implementation and report progress to the safeguarding children board.

This process will also involve agency managers who will take responsibility for implementing the actions and learning. Consideration for a second event to review how the agreed actions have been met and how the learning was disseminated within agencies will be given to each SLIP.

Multi-Agency Review (MAR) is a review that looks at the multi-agency working in an identified case when the case does not reach the criteria for a SCR but there are clearly some multi-agency learning needs identify.

The SCRSG will identify a lead reviewer for this review who can be someone from within MKSCB or an independent person. The SCRSG and the lead reviewer will determine the terms of reference, timescales and the methodology to be adopted.

The lead review will determine the format and /or content of information the agency must provide using the templates in the tool kit appended to this guidance or other formats/ recourses more fitting to the review determined by the facilitator.

Single-Agency Review (SAR) is a review of a case that is carried out by an individual agency. When a single agency review is recommended by the SCRSG and MKSCB Chair, the MKSCB chair will write to the Lead for safeguarding with the agency identified requesting for that review to be undertaken. Agencies can choose the method they use to conduct the single agency review. Examples of methods include Root Cause Analysis reports or Internal Management Reports. The agency must inform the MKSCB Chair and the SCRSG of the method and timescales for the review. The findings and learning from a single agency review is shared with the MKSCB Chair and SCR sub-group.

Audit

Multi-agency

MKSCB Quality Assurance (QA) sub-group will be asked by the MKSCB Chair as recommended by the SCRSG to conduct an audit of practice in the agencies involved in a particular case. Audits will follow a signs of safety approach to identify what was working well with the case, what agencies were worried about, and what needs to happen now. Audits will include the voice of the child, and the voice of the practitioners involved in the case.

Single-agency

An agency will be asked to conduct an audit of a particular area of practice and report their findings to the MKSCB QA sub-group. Audits will include the voice of the child, and the voice of the practitioners involved in the case, where appropriate.

In all alternative case reviews all correspondence will be managed through the MKSCB business office.

1.4 Timescales for SCR

As soon as the Chair approves the recommendation for an SCR to take place (which must be within one month of the case being referred to the SCRSG), the Serious Case Review must be completed within six months of initiating it.

The MKSCB Business Manager will support this process ensuring there is a clear timeline in place and agreed at the first Scoping meeting.

Sometimes the complexity of the case does not become apparent until the review is in progress. As soon as it emerges that a review cannot be completed for example, because of potential prejudice to related court proceedings, the Independent chair of the review or the MKSCB Business Manager on their behalf, should discuss this with the MKSCB Independent Chair and write to Ofsted and the National Panel outlining the progress made to date and the proposed new extension date. This letter must demonstrate that the extension is required to complete an effective SCR that ends in good outcomes for children. The request for extension is considered as part of the Evaluation by Ofsted. Every Effort must be made, while the SCR is in progress to capture points from the cases about improvements needed and take corrective action to implement improvements and disseminate learning.

1.5 Actions for the Serious Case Review Sub Group

- The MKSCB Business Manager who is a member of the SCRSG is to take a lead role in the coordination and support of the SCR process.
- Develop the draft scope and terms of reference for the SCR as far as possible in light of the information known in the case at this stage .These will be revisited and finalised by the SCR panel/reference Group on review of the merged chorology.
- To identify and appoint an appropriate individual to Chair the SCR Panel/Reference group (depending on the methodology used). This person should be an independent of the MKSCB and the organisations involved in the case.
- Ensure the SCR Panel/Reference group membership is appropriate with the right organisations, level of seniority represented, including communications represented for media discussions and that the members have sufficient Knowledge and expertise.
- Inform the National Panel of the names and qualifications of the independent experts appointed.

2.0 Initiating the Serious Case Review

2.1 Letter to agencies confirming decision

Once a decision to undertake an SCR has been taken and the review chair and overview writer has been commissioned; the MKSCB Business Manager sends a formal notification and request for completion of a chronology, to Designated Senior Managers (currently MKSCB representatives) of the identified agencies, to inform them that a Serious Case Review is to take place.

It is expected that organisations have robust systems and processes in place in order to fully co-operate with this request, taking all necessary steps to quality assure and govern contributions to the SCR.

This initial letter will provide timescales and templates, together with notes for completion for the provision of an agency chronology and individual management review report. The chronology will need to be returned first. This will enable the merged chronology to be created as soon as possible in the process.

Compliance with timescales for submission for the chronology and the Individual agency reports is important to ensure the review meets the National set timescales. Agencies failing to meet the agreed timescale may cause delays to the completion of the review; these delays will be included in the SCR Overview Report.

Copies of this letter will be sent to the Head of Communications for Milton Keynes Council, who acts as the communication lead for the MKSCB and to the Legal Advisor to the MKSCB. Where the case involves criminal proceedings or death, a letter will also be sent to the Coroner.

2.3 Individual Agency reports

These reports are required from every agency who has been involved with the child or their family. The purpose of the individual Agency report is to look openly and critically at individual organisational practice to see whether the case indicates that changes could and should be made, and if so, to identify how those changes will be brought about. As part of the process of writing the report the report writer is expected to meet with practitioners who were involved with the case to ensure all aspects of involvement are considered.

Once the Designated Senior Manager has received the letter and template for the Individual Agency report, s/he must ensure the following;

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- That files are secured as soon as possible to guard against loss or interference.
 - To identify an author for the individual agency report, who has no direct involvement with the case, and who is independent of services involved to undertake the individual Agency report and ensure that they have the capacity to carry it out within timescales.
 - Arrange suitable supervision support for the report authors in undertaking the review.
 - Monitor progress regularly and ensure that any predicted delays in completing phases of the work to the timescales requested are immediately reported to the Independent Chair of the SCR Panel/Reference Group.
 - Attempt to resolve any difficulties in completing the work to timescales, e.g. through provision of additional help / workload relief
 - Ensure that the report is written using the template and that the terms of reference are answered within the report.
 - Quality assure the report against required standards and accept its contents on behalf of the agency, before its submission, ensuring that the report is appropriately thorough, analytical and challenging
 - Identify any urgent action needed to address issues of concern arising as the Individual agency report progresses
 - Provide feedback and debrief for any staff involved in the process

2.4 Producing the chronology and individual agency report - role of the agency report author.

Once informed by the Designated Senior Manager within the agency, the report author must produce a comprehensive and well-structured review of their agencies involvement with the child and their family.

Where Individual Agency Reports are deemed not to be of sufficient quality, the SCR Panel/Reference Group has the right to return these to the authors for revision.

As outlined in OFSTED descriptors, the review must take full account of the individual needs of the child and family and be sensitive to their racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identity. Practice at individual and organisational levels must be openly and critically analysed against national and local statutory requirements, professional standards and current procedural guidance. Good practice must also be highlighted and areas for change in practice clearly identified and supported with measurable and specific recommendations for improvement.

Other key points to note for the completion of the reports are;

- Designated Senior Managers and Authors must be aware of the timescales for completing and submitting the chronology and individual Agency report, noting the separate dates and allowing adequate time for these to be quality assured and signed off by the Designated Senior Manager. Any difficulties in meeting timescales must be raised as early as possible with their Designated Senior Manager as delays in submission are critical to the overall process and will have an impact on Serious Case Review timescales, and ultimately the Ofsted judgement of the review. Each agency will be monitored on this and this will be reported on in the Overview Report.
- The chronology must be completed on the pro forma provided (Appendix 6). The chronology is not designed to be an accurate chronology of the family history, but of the agency knowledge and action (e.g. where a family moved house in April but the Health Visitor found out in June the chronology should record the date the Health Visitor was informed, not the date the family moved). Where there is no agency contact for periods during the timescale of the review, this should be made clear in the chronology and the narrative of the Individual Agency report.
- The analysis element of the individual Agency report is critical, Please refer to the MKSCB template of Individual Agency report for more information. The analysis MUST link to the time period and terms of reference of the review. Key things to include in the report are:
 - This is what has happened
 - This is why
 - This is what we learned
 - This is what we need to change
 - This is how we are going to change it
- All those involved in and contributing to a review should be aware that the information contributed may be used during an inquest.

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- Once the chronology is complete it will be necessary for the report author to decide which practitioners, who have been involvement in the case need to be contacted and a meeting to discuss the case arranged with them and the report author . This process is important to ensure that the author understands and gets a true reflection of what happened and to be able to clarify context where things were identified as not happening that may be should have. The discussion with the practitioners involved should be recorded and the records agreed by both the staff member and the report author.

Where staff are no longer in post, or are unable to be interviewed, this should also be recorded as part of the report, explaining the reasons for this. This information could also be used to inform the context for the report.

Note: Discussions with staff as part of this process is as a means of clarifying the agency involvement, and reflecting on and learning from the case. While they should not be used as a disciplinary interview, they inevitably can be stressful for staff and staff may wish to bring someone to the interview with them for support.

- The Individual Agency report should be written using the MKSCB template (see appendix 6) the details for the individual case will have been added by the MKSCB Business Manager and emailed to each agency contributing to the review.

2.5 Informing and involving the Family

The Chair of the SCR Panel/Reference group and the Business Manager will ensure that a plan is agreed at the initial Scoping meeting. This will include how the family are informed that the review is taking place and why and inviting the family to contribute to the review. The SCR Panel /Reference Group needs to ensure that all significant family members have the opportunity to be involved in the SCR, especially those who have had a caring role or significant relationship with the child or young person.

This will be done by the Business Manger contacting the family first via telephone and then followed by a meeting with the family members to explain the process of the review and why it is being undertaken. Once initial contact have been made with the family a letter will be sent to family members confirming that a review is taking place and the reasons for that review and confirming the date ,time and who will visit the family.

Families should be clear that the SCR is a review of agency functioning through which staff are encouraged, as part of a learning process, to reflect critically on their practice. It is not its purpose to inquire into how the child died or who is culpable.

The family may need a worker to be identified to support them during the process, and will need further contact as appropriate. This will include informing them of the outcomes from the SCR and sharing the Executive Summary and possibly the Overview Report (to ensure no surprises if the Coroner is making use of the Overview Report at inquest).

2.6 Establishing the Serious Case Review Panel/Reference Group

The purpose of the SCR Panel/Reference Group is to offer professional expertise and independence rather than representation of the agency. Its task is to give an independent overview of how agencies work together and aid the analysis and learning from the Individual Agency Report. Suitably experienced individual(s) representing these agencies should be identified by their Designated Senior Manager following a request to this effect from the MKSCB Business Manager. Membership of this panel/Reference Group needs to reflect the issues raised in the terms of reference for each SCR. It is also important for different professional disciplines to be represented to ensure that the relevant advice and perspective is available to the Panel/Reference Group (e.g. both a designated nurse and doctor). Where a small number of agencies are involved in the case, other agencies will be asked to provide a representative to ensure challenge. Minimum panel size is six.

3.0 The Serious Case Review

3.1 Role of the Serious Case Review Panel/Reference Group

The draft Terms of reference are completed by SCRSG at the initial Scoping meeting and approved by the Chair and the overview author on behalf of the Panel and are only changed in exceptional circumstances.

The structure of the panel/reference group will depend on the model used to undertake the SCR.

If a SCR is being conducted using the SLIP model the panel /reference group will meet at the start of the review for an initial scoping meeting to determine the Terms of Reference, it is expected that for this initial scoping meeting all agencies will have completed a Chronology using the template (Appendix 4) and that a merged Chronology will be available for all Panel /reference members.

The Panel /Reference Group will then meeting again to consider the first draft of the overview report to offer that expert professional knowledge and advice on local practices and procedures to ensure that the recommendations are appropriate to local ways to working. They will also then attend the Recall event once the overview report is in its final draft.

The Chair and overview writer with the support from the MKSCB Business manager will ensure that an Authors briefing, practitioner event and recall event takes place.

In a review where a traditional/blended method is used the panel is expected to meet more regularly and the process is more structured. The first panel meeting will consider the draft Terms of Reference from the SCRSG and agree a clear time line for the review.

At subsequent meetings the panel should:

- Review the merged chronology, identifying key issues, decision points, inconsistencies between agencies and good practice
- Review each agency individual Agency report, and invite the report writers and their managers to attend the Panel to discuss the report, ensuring practice issues and recommendations have been identified. The panel must also identify any further work needed from any agency to provide clarification to the SCR Panel/Reference group.
- Identify lessons and recommendations emerging from the SCR process either for individual agencies (additional to those identified in their own report), or for the MKSCB to improve the multi-agency process. Whilst agencies may have identified single agency recommendations themselves, the SCR Panel/Reference Group should consider whether they wish to adopt them as formal recommendations to form part of the Overview report. Only recommendations agreed on by the SCR Panel/Reference group as a whole will be included in the Overview report. Additional recommendations or actions will be the responsibility of the single agency and will not form part of the MKSCB SCR monitoring process.

In all SCRs irrespective of the method used consideration must be given to commissioning multi-agency reviews separate to the SCR where there are wider issues apparent that may relate to the case that fall outside the terms of reference for the SCR.

3.2 Role of MKSCB

The MKSCB Manager who is a member of the SCRSG is to take a lead role in the coordination and support of the SCR process. The Business manager will arrange the commissioning of the Independent author and Chair once agreed by the SCR Subgroup.

MKSCB members need to ensure that their agencies plan for the tight timescales, to include quality assurance of IMR's, and signing off by a senior manager. MKSCB members need to understand that they are responsible for ensuring that the recommendations they have made are put into place and

that evidence for this is provided to the MKSCB SCR subgroup as this happens.

There is an opportunity for MKSCB members to champion SCR's within their agencies, ensure that IMR writers have sufficient workload capacity to complete the task, and to feedback lessons learned for the agency.

Serious Case Reviews will receive full administrative support from the MKSCB Administrator who will coordinate meetings, and take detailed minutes including action points and ensure these are circulated. The Administrator will also produce the combined agency chronology, and it is vitally important the MKSCB template is used to assist this process. Any future changes to the chronology by agencies should be kept to a minimum, but if there needs to be additions, these need to be highlighted to the administrator for insertion. In cases that involve families where there are complexities around who is who and who is related to who the administrator will also produce a genogram for the case from the information provided by agencies.

Consideration to how the child and family members are to be referred to throughout the review must be given at the start of the review and the Terms of Reference must be explicit on this.

All agencies involved with the SCR must ensure that confidentiality is of up most importance through the review process.

3.3 Producing the Overview Report

This will be written by an Independent Author commissioned by the MKSCB. The Overview Report will reflect a rigorous examination of the facts, providing convincing explanations for how and why events occurred and actions or decisions taken by agencies were or were not taken. The report will;

- be written in plain English and in a way that can be easily understood by professionals and the public alike.
- be child focused
- be suitable for publication without the needing to be amended or redacted
- Include a good overview and introduction of the case using the terms of reference.
- Provide a sound analysis of what happened in the case using a comprehensive chronology, why and what needs to happen in order to reduce the risk of recurrence.

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- bring together the findings of all individual identify agency reviews and other relevant investigations, reviews or enquiries, considering all aspects of service provision over the course of the review period, identifying missed opportunities by individual agencies and identify areas where practice needs to be improved by identifying key themes.
 - ensure evidence of good practice is shared so that a growing understanding of what worked well can inform agency's learning through recommendations.
 - Clearly evidence that consideration has been given to the ethnicity, religion and culture of the child and family.
 - Be clear about what information was known to the agencies and professionals concerned about the parents , child and significant others, the family history and the home circumstances of the child, making it clear which agencies were involved in the process
 - Using the benefit of hindsight or evidence from research to consider whether different actions or decision by agencies may have led to an alternative course of events.
 - Include lessons to be learned nationally and locally brought together in a summary, supported by clear, logical, specific and achievable recommendations for improvement and a comprehensive action plan for implementation. These action plans will be fully completed on the agreed pro forma and agreed by the Serious Case Review Panel/Reference Group before the Review is completed. This report should also include details of how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored and evidenced.
 - Clearly explain the involvement or non-involvement of parents and other significant carers in the process
 - Make reference to any parallel procedures that took place in relation to the case and explain how any learning from these were taken into account

It is the responsibility of each SCR Panel/Reference group member to ensure that their Designated Senior Manager is fully informed of the progress of the Serious Case Review. The member must ensure that the Designated Senior Office has sight of the Overview Report, Executive Summary, single and multi-agency recommendations and completed action plans.

3.4 Producing the Executive Summary

An Executive Summary must also be extracted from the Overview report by the Independent Author once this has been agreed by the SCR Panel/Reference Group. This report needs to be completed at the same time as the Overview Report. It should be suitably anonymised so that the child and family cannot be identified and must be appropriately brief, giving a clear and comprehensive overview of events leading up to the SCR, key issues arising from the case and recommendations which have been made. It should also include information about the SCR process and the composition of the SCR Panel. The purpose of the Executive Summary is to put information into the public domain that gives people confidence that we have looked into what happened and are doing something about it. The executive summary should include all multi- agency recommendations.

It is not primarily aimed at the professionals involved in the case, who should have access to single and multi-agency debriefs, practitioner events and, possibly, the overview report in order to inform learning. The Executive summary should be checked by Data Protection colleagues to ensure it is fit for publication before this happens.

3.5 MKSCB approval of the Overview report and associated documents

The MKSCB will approve the SCR Overview Report including agreed recommendations, Executive Summary and completed action plans once these have been signed off by the Overview Report author and SCR Panel/Reference Group.

The MKSCB will then ensure the following;

- That the Overview report, individual Agency reports, executive summary and completed action plans are submitted to Ofsted and the National Panel.
- That the Executive Summary, and, in some circumstances, the Overview Report is shared with the child and/or their family in advance of this information being placed in the public domain. The MKSCB need to ensure that this is done by the most appropriate method, a staff member with continuing involvement with the family, for example.
- That there is discussion and agreement as to who should be the key recipients (other than MKSCB members who will receive this automatically) of a copy of the Overview report.
- That the executive summary, once cleared as appropriate for publication is placed on the MKSCB website. This does not need to

take place until the Ofsted evaluation has been received. Consideration also needs to be given about the timing of publication where there are ongoing criminal or other procedures.

- That any media or public relations issues arising from the case have been identified and a clear way forward agreed. This is particularly important where there is an ongoing criminal case.
- That the Independent author of the Overview Report holds a multi-agency debrief or recall event, supported by the Panel/Reference group. This is specifically aimed at staff who worked with the family during the period covered by the review.

3.6 Dissemination of learning

Once the SCR has been completed and received by the MKSCB, all members will receive a copy of the Overview Report. MKSCB representatives will be directly accountable for the dissemination of learning from each Serious Case Review within their own agency, and as such will be responsible for deciding how widely to disseminate the overview report and other documentation within their own agency as part of this process.

It is important to note that the overview report remains the property of the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board and contains highly sensitive and confidential information. Any sharing of this report must be done so within the framework of confidentiality and information sharing.

The MKSCB Business Manager will ensure that the MKSCB Interagency Training Manager receives a copy of the overview report in order to ensure that any lessons learnt and recommendations are incorporated into MKSCB training where appropriate.

The team will also place the Executive summary on the MKSCB website following receipt of the Ofsted evaluation of the Serious Case Review. The MKSCB through the SCR Subgroup are responsible for monitoring the evidenced implementation of both single and multi-agency action plans.

4.0 Action Planning and Review

All action plans will be passed to the MKSCB Business Manager for the coordination of monitoring and implementation through the SCR subgroup. The MKSCB Business Office will expect to receive regular feedback from single agencies and leads for multi-agency recommendation evidencing progress against agreed actions. This will then be monitored and signed off through the MKSCB SCR Subgroup.

MKSCB member presentative are accountable for the implementation of single agency recommendations relating to their own agency and multi-agency recommendations.

Progress against agreed Multi Agency actions will be reported on at every MKSCB meeting using a RAG rating system.

5.0 Contributing to SCRs Out of Area

Requests for information from other LSCBs where a SCR has been commissioned and has identified that the child involved was resident in Milton Keynes during the period of the scope for the review must be coordinated through the MKSCB business office.

Requests for individual agency reviews will be sent to agencies identified from MKSCB business office. Agencies must complete the report and ensure it is signed off by their agency before submitting it to the MKSCB SCR subgroup for final quality assurance check before MKSCB business office sends on to the LSCB who has commissioned the review.

Progress of SCR from other areas will be monitored through MKSCB SCR subgroup. The Business manager will take a lead role in liaising with the requesting LSCB to ensure that any recommendations specific for Milton Keynes Agencies, MKSCB are informed of and robust monitoring of the implementation of those recommendations is in place.

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

RESTRICTED

Referral Form of Serious Incidents for Consideration by MKSCB Serious Case Review Sub-Group Name of child:

Working Together 2015 provides clear criteria in Chapter 4 about when the MKSCB should conduct a Serious Case Review (SCR). **MKSCB partner agencies should ensure that serious incidents which may meet the criteria for a serious case review, or other type of learning/review, are brought to the attention of the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board SCR sub-group using this form.**

Professionals wishing to have a case considered by the MKSCB SCR sub-group should notify the MKSCB Office as soon as possible.

Anyone wishing to refer a case to the MKSCB SCR sub-group should discuss the case, and their reasons for referring it to the SCR sub-group, with their agency designated safeguarding lead/officer and/or the MKSCB office.

The MKSCB Serious Case Review sub-group also considers cases for other types of review and requests for consideration can be made using this form.

Please send the completed form to:

Email: mkscb@milton-keynes.gov.uk

or by post: MKSCB, Galley Hill Centre, Galley Hill, Milton Keynes MK11 1PA

Name of child/family being referred for SCR sub-group consideration:

REFERRER¹

NAME	AGENCY & DESIGNATION/TITLE	CONTACT DETAILS - Address, telephone number and e-mail address

Please give the details of the designated safeguarding lead/officer with whom you have discussed the case.

NAME	AGENCY & DESIGNATION/TITLE	CONTACT DETAILS - Address, telephone number and e-mail address

Date of referral to MKSCB Office/MKSCB SCR sub-group:

Signed:

¹ Please note that as the referrer you may be required to present the referral at the MKSCB Serious Case Review Sub-Group.

RESTRICTED

Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

RESTRICTED

SECTION 1

Once completed, this form should be sent to the MKSCB Office as soon as possible, preferably by email: mkscb@milton-keynes.gov.uk

THE ABOVE SHOULD FOLLOW A DISCUSSION WITH A NOMINATED MANAGER OR SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR IN YOUR AGENCY.

1.1 BRIEF INFORMATION OF FACTS AND FAMILY COMPOSITION

CHILD'S DETAILS

Name of Child	
Date of Birth	
Home address	
Ethnic Origin	
Faith/Religion	
Disability	
Is the child/young person subject to a child protection plan or has been previously?	
(If so when, for what and for how long?)	
Is the child/young person open to Children's Social Care or a Children & Families Practice (if so, who is the lead practitioner)?	
Date of Death or Serious Incident	
Address of location of incident	
Carer at time of incident	
Is this case known to be the subject of a criminal investigation? (If so who is the lead investigator?)	
Is this case known to be the subject of a Coroner's Inquiry? (If so who is the key contact?)	
Are there any adult safeguarding concerns and have these been shared via completing a SABR1 (Adult referral form)? If so who is the key contact?	

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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1.2 FAMILY DETAILS

Name	Relationship to Child	Date of Birth	Legal Status	Ethnic Origin

1.3 OTHER AGENCIES KNOWN TO BE INVOLVED

Agency	Contact Details: Address, Telephone and E-mail	Reason for involvement (include whether current or not)

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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1.4 BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF CASE

PLEASE NOTE: The information you provide will be used to help establish whether the case meets the criteria for a Serious Case Review or other type of learning review.

Please provide a brief outline of the child and family circumstances:

Please provide details of the incident which triggered this referral:

Please outline why you are making this referral for SCR sub-group consideration:

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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Please use the chronology table below to outline any events around the time of the incident.
PLEASE NOTE: This should only include key events and DOES NOT need to be a detailed chronology at this stage.

Date and Time	Event

SECTION 2 - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SERIOUS CASE REVIEW SUB-GROUP

When notifying the MKSCB of a case which may meet the threshold for a SCR, or Learning review, then a nominated senior manager should be identified immediately within the referring agency who will ensure that the information known to the agency is made available and shared appropriately with the MKSCB SCR Sub-Group.

After reviewing the information from all agencies it has been agreed that this case:

- a) Meets the threshold for a Serious Case Review
- b) Does not meet the threshold for a Serious Case Review
- c) Warrants a Significant Incident Learning Review (SILP)
- d) Warrants a Multi-Agency Review
- e) Warrants a Single-Agency Review
- f) Warrants a Multi-Agency Audit
- g) Warrants a Single Agency Audit
- h) Further information to be gathered before a decision can be made
- i) Needs no further action

Definition of terms

Review: Is an evaluation designed to identify potential service delivery and procedural improvements.

Audit: The process of systematic examination carried out to assess how successfully processes have been implemented. For further information see flow chart on pg 8.

It is recommended/not recommended that this case is subject to a Serious Case Review for the following reasons:

Record the decision and the reason why that decision has been made:

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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When the MKSCB SCR sub-group decision is that a case does not meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review, other review options must be considered, for example a Multi-Agency Case Audit (see flow chart on pg 8)

Record the decision process and the reason why that decision has been made:

The following Serious Case Review Sub-Group members took part in this decision:

Name	Job Role/Title	Agency/Organisation

Has legal advice been sought? *Please give details.*

Date of SCR sub-group meeting, and decision:

Signed (*SCR Sub-Group Chair*):

Name:

Title:

Organisation:

Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form



(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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SECTION 3 - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MKSCB CHAIR

As MKSCB chair I have been made aware of this case and the above details of the case discussion and recommendation by the MKSCB Serious Case Review sub-group.

I agree / disagree with the decision and recommendations made by the MKSCB SCR sub-group because:

If the decision is the case meets a Serious Case Review, the following issues should be considered in the Terms of Reference:

NB THE MKSCB WILL SEND A FORMAL LETTER TO THE REFERRER ADVISING OF THE OUTCOME OF THE CASE AND WHERE A REVIEW HAS BEEN AGREED GIVING A STEER ON THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Date:

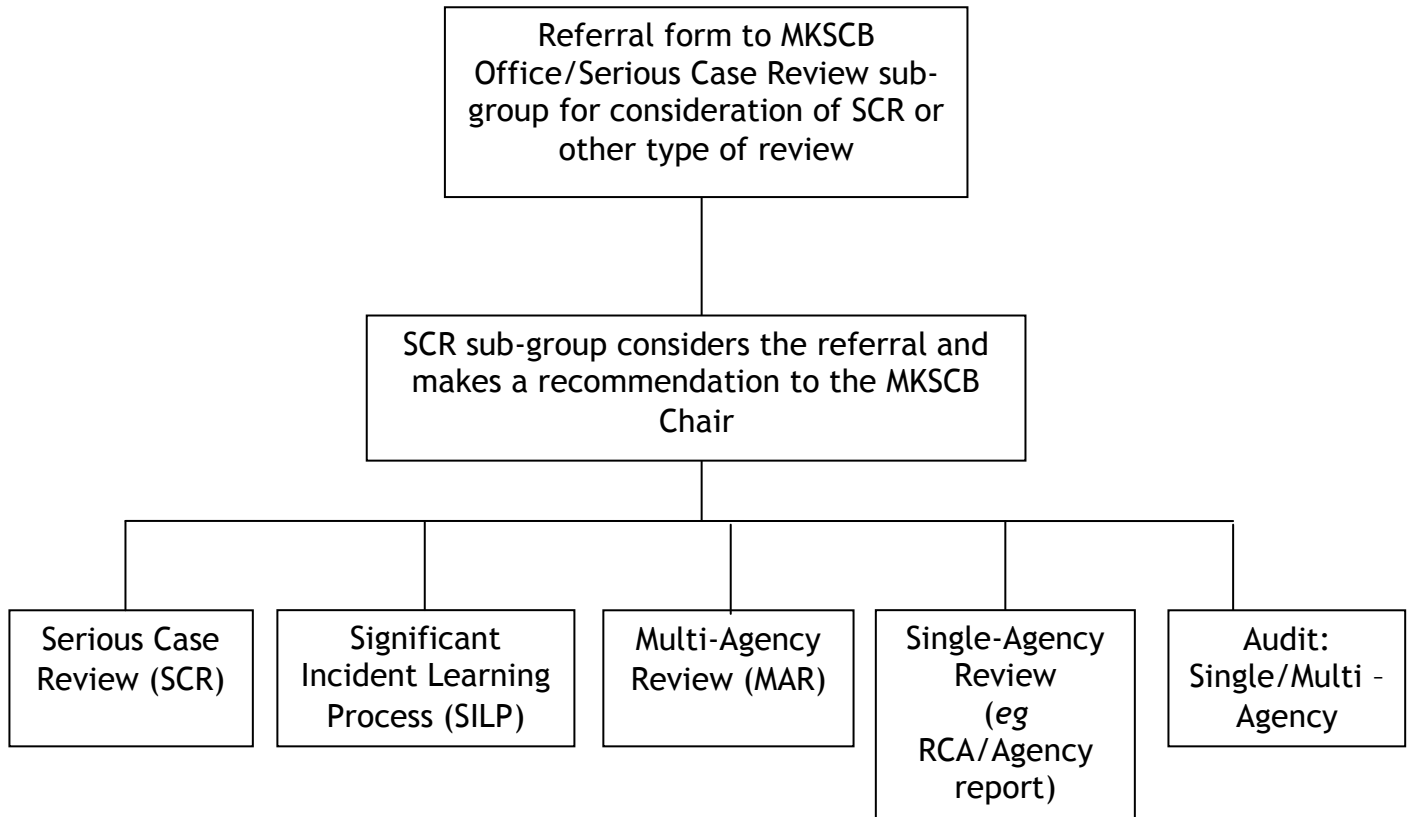
Signed (MKSCB Independent Chair):

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form

(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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Definitions of different kinds of learning/review:

Serious Case Review (SCR)

Working Together 2015 provides clear criteria in Chapter 4 about when the MKSCB should conduct a Serious Case Review (SCR). The MKSCB should consider whether to conduct a SCR where

(c) abuse of neglect of a child is known or suspected; and

(d) either (i) the child has died and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child

(ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP)

A learning event where agencies come together with a facilitator to review the case together, identify learning and agree any actions arising from the SILP.

The key agencies and professionals involved in an identified case will be invited to a half or full day event to examine the case together. Agencies will provide chronologies of events (rather than a detailed management report). One facilitator will chair the event and another will write up the learning.

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Appendix 1: MKSCB Referral Form

(MKSCB use) Ref No:

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This process will involve operational staff and their managers who will own the summary of learning at the end of the process. A second event takes place to review how the agreed actions had been met and how the learning was disseminated within agencies.

Multi-Agency Review (MAR)

Case where the criteria for a serious case review is not met, but the case involved a number of agencies and the SCR sub-group considers there to be multi-agency learning that can be gained from a review of the case.

Single-Agency Review (SAR)

A review of the case is carried out by an individual agency and the findings and learning shared with the MKSCB SCR sub-group. Agencies can choose the method they use to conduct the single agency reviews. Examples of methods include Root Cause Analysis reports or Internal Management Reports.

Audit

Multi-agency

MKSCB Quality Assurance (QA) sub-group will conduct an audit of practice in the agencies involved in a particular case. Audits will follow a signs of safety approach to identify what was working well with the case, what agencies were worried about, and what needs to happen now. Audits will include the voice of the child, and the voice of the practitioners involved in the case.

Single-agency

An agency will be asked to conduct an audit of a particular area of practice and report their findings to the MKSCB QA sub-group. Audits will include the voice of the child, and the voice of the practitioners involved in the case, where appropriate.

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Appendix 2: Additional Information Form

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Additional/ Initial Information Request

MKSCB Serious Case Review Subgroup has received a referral for Serious case review / Learning review consideration. Please provide the MKSCB Serious Case Review sub-group with the information on the child and family members requested to assist with this process.

AGENCY

Agency Name:	
Name (person completing):	
Job Title:	
Date Completed:	

SUBJECT

Name of Child:	
Date of Birth:	
Date of Serious Incident or Death:	
Home address:	
Previous address:	
Ethnic origin:	

OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

Name	Relationship to Child	DoB	Address

SIBLINGS

Name	Relationship to Child	DoB	EO	Address (and dates believed resident)

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Appendix 2: Additional Information Form

RESTRICTED

INFORMATION REGARDING INCLUDE CHILD'S NAME	
Date:	Details of involvement

Once completed please return to MKSCB office via mkscb@milton-keynes.gov.uk
Or by post to Galley Hill Education Centre, Galley Hill, Milton Keynes, MK11 1PA

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Appendix 3: Letters to Organisational Agencies

- i. Letter to MKSCB to notify of SCR
- ii. Letter to Agencies to notify of SCR and request Agency Report Author
- iii. Draft email to MKSCB
- iv. Letter to agency practitioners from agency report author

i. Letter to MKSCB to notify of SCR



Date

Dear MKSCB Board Member

The MKSCB Serious Case Review (SCR) Sub Group has recently recommended a case for SCR in accordance with Working Together 2015 Chapter 4;
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf.

Brief Synopsis

I am writing to inform you that following a peer review by *Peer's name and LSCB*, I have agreed for the SCR to take place.

We are currently recruiting an Independent Serious case Review Panel Chair and Overview Report Writer.

Please can you pass on the enclosed letter to your relevant Senior Manager, if this is not yourself, to inform them of the SCR and request they nominate an Agency Report Author.

Kind Regards

MKSCB Independent Chair

ENC

Appendix 3: Letters to Organisational Agencies

ii. Letter to Agencies to notify of SCR and request Agency Author (attach Author Report guidance)



Date

To whom it may concern

Re: **Childs Name and DOB**
Childs Address

I am writing to inform you that I have recently agreed to commission a Serious Case Review in respect of a child who died on the **Date of Death**.

We are currently recruiting an Independent Serious Case Review (SCR) Chair and Overview Report Writer. I understand that your agency, **AGENCY (To be amended)**, has had some involvement or contact with the child or his family.

The Independent Serious Case Review Panel Chair and MKSCB will be in touch shortly to discuss the process further and request an in depth chronology. In the meantime please respond to **Name**, MKSCB Administrator on **Administrators email**, identifying who will be completing the agency report on behalf of your agency.

Can I also take this opportunity to remind you that any records in relation to **Childs Initials** or his/her family need to be made secure from the date of receipt of this letter.

Further information regarding serious case reviews can be found on the MKSCB website and in *Working Together 2015*.

Should you have any queries about the SCR process or if you wish to discuss this further, please contact **Name**, MKSCB Business Manager on **Business Managers Phone Number** or **Business managers Email**.

Yours Sincerely

MKSCB Independent Chair

ENC

Appendix 3: Letters to Organisational Agencies

Agency Report Author Guidance

- The Agency Report Author must be of sufficient seniority to be able to work at all levels within your agency. The Agency Report Author must be fair in the way that the views of staff are represented. The Agency Report Author should be familiar with current child protection practice and is expected to produce an independent and objective report within prescribed timescales in accordance with national guidance.
- The Agency Report Author will have had no significant involvement in the case under review.
- The Agency Report Author should have unrestricted rights of enquiry and access to staff, paper and electronic records and files, if it is envisaged that the Agency Report Author will wish to interview staff that are central to the case. Staff who wish to be interviewed should be offered this opportunity by the Agency Report Author. Such interviews should be allowed.
- The Agency Report Author must ensure that the relevant agency staff are informed of the purpose of the Agency Report and the process leading to the SCR.
- The Agency Report Author should ensure that all files relating to the child are secured, to ensure information is not altered or lost. The Agency Report Author should be empowered to demand appropriate security measures are taken. If the case remains open then a full copy of the file should be taken and the original file secured. All files should be made available to the Agency Report Author.

Appendix 3: Letters to Organisational Agencies

iii. Draft email to MKSCB

Dear Board Member

We have a new Serious Case Review (SCR) commencing for Milton Keynes regarding a child (*Child initials*) who sadly died *brief synopsis*.

Following submission of a referral and receiving additional multi-agency information, SCR Sub group considered this case on *date* and recommended a SCR.

Chairs name, MKSCB Independent Chair has agreed with this recommendation.

The initial Scoping meeting took place with the Independent Lead Reviewer and Independent Chair for this case on *Date of Meeting*.

At this early stage, the following agencies have been identified as being required to provide Agency Reports:

Agency Reports

List Agencies

Statements of Information

List Agencies

Please could you kindly nominate an Agency Report Author and advise the MKSCB Office by *Insert date and email*.

Please can I kindly remind you that your nominated Author will need to be independent of the management of this case, be someone with a strategic view of their organisation and be able to challenge the structure of their organisation, have the capacity to undertake and support this SCR and have good analytical skills.

The initial Agency Report Author and Practitioner briefing is scheduled for *Insert date* - Once we have received your nominations, individual invitations will be sent out, along with the chronology template.

I look forward to hearing from you,

With kind regards

MKSCB Business Manager

Appendix 3: Letters to Organisational Agencies

iv. Agency Report Author letter to practitioner colleagues

Dear Colleague

Re: <Family Details>

I am writing to inform you that Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board (MKSCB) has decided to undertake a Serious Case Review of the above case.

I understand that you have had some involvement or contact with the child or his/her family and so I will need to identify a time to meet with you about your involvement with the case.

As you may be aware when such a review is being conducted all the records regarding the child should be kept secure. I have arranged for relevant notes to be kept at for the duration of this case review.

I will be contacting you shortly to arrange a convenient time for us to meet to discuss this case. I will need to document our meeting so I can refer to them when I compile my report. A colleague or other professional may accompany you to the interview with me, for support, if you wish.

Further details of serious case reviews can be found on the MKSCB website.

Please do contact me if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Agency report author

Appendix 4: Chronology template

Chronology Template in respect of:

Agency:	Date completed:	Name of person completing chronology:
----------------	------------------------	----------------------------------------------

- Record any occasion there was direct or indirect contact with the child
- Record any occasion there was direct or indirect contact with the family members - individually or as a unit
- Record if the child was seen alone and if they had an opportunity to express their wishes and feelings
- Record any referral to other agencies or information sharing
- Include exact dates: day-month-year, if not known, state 'not known' do not include periods of time
- Record times in 24-hour format
- Please consider good practice in addition to concerns or learning identified.

DATE & TIME	CONTACT WITH CHILD (inc direct contact, medical information, reports, observations)	CONTACT WITH PARENTS/CARERS and other family members	INTER/INTRA-AGENCY COMMUNICATION (internal/ inter-agency phone calls. Letters, etc)	INFORMATION SOURCE	STAFF INVOLVED List initial of those involved and provide a separate ID list	COMMENT Opportunity for the agency author to clarify or explain information/raise queries/highlight good practice/raise concerns

Appendix 5: Agency Report template

Agency Report

(Name of Agency and Agency logo)

Subject: Child *insert initials*

Date of first submission to SCR Panel:

Date of Revision:

Date of final submission:

Author:

Author signature:

Job title:

Date:

As the author of this report, I can confirm that I have never been directly involved with or directly managed any staff involved in this case, and had no involvement in the subsequent investigation.

Name of Agency Senior Manager:

Senior manager signature:

Date:

Confidential

Not to be disclosed to any other party without the express permission of (*insert agency*)

Appendix 5: Agency Report template

Agency Report Contents Page

Introduction

Author's Background

Agency Background Information

Background

Family Composition and Brief History of Family

Methodology

Agency Involvement with the Child

Analysis of Involvement

What Have We Learnt?

Recommendations for Action

Appendix 1: Timeline

Appendix 2: Scope (and Terms of Reference)

Appendix 5: Agency Report template

INTRODUCTION

This agency report arises from a serious case review commissioned by the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board (MKSCB) to investigate the circumstances surrounding the on (date), and the response of the various agencies involved, including (name of agency)

AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND

The author of this report is (Please include author's job role, and a brief summary of their background and experience.)

AGENCY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Authors should provide a brief summary of the agency.

BACKGROUND

This section should:

- Describe the circumstances that led to the event involving the child
- Set out the Scope and Terms of Reference for the review, and the disciplines involved Please refer to the Terms of Reference throughout the agency report.

FAMILY COMPOSITION and BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAMILY

Provide a key to family and staff involvement as the report must be anonymised. For example:

Child: <i>Child x</i>	Date of birth: <i>01-01-2001</i>
Ethnic Origin: <i>Mixed</i>	Religion: <i>C of E</i>
Mother: <i>Parent 1</i>	Date of birth: <i>02-02-1992</i>
Ethnic Origin: <i>White British</i>	Religion: <i>not documented</i>
Father: <i>Parent 2</i>	Date of birth: <i>03-03-1983</i>
Ethnic Origin: <i>Black</i>	Religion: <i>None</i>
Sibling: <i>child y</i>	Date of birth: <i>02-02-2002</i>
Ethnic Origin: <i>Mixed</i>	Religion: <i>C of E</i>

Appendix 5: Agency Report template

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this Serious Case Review has been a (Insert approach). This has been done to build on current arrangements and experience for producing agency reports and obtaining a secure chronology and robust individual analysis by each involved agency, but adding the greater involvement of practitioners and clinicians and encouraging reflection and learning from the circumstances and context of the case.

Each agency involved has been required to produce an Agency Report, but with the direction that this should have a clear focus on the issues and likely areas for learning set out in the Terms of Reference.

Role Of Individual	Agency/ Organisation Employing the Individual	Nature of Contact (meeting, interview, telephone call, e-mail, correspondence etc.	Date(s) of Consultations

***(Name of Agency)* INVOLVEMENT WITH THIS CHILD AND FAMILY?**

- *From the chronology detail the involvement with this child and family over the period set out in the SCRs Terms of Reference*
- *Briefly summarise decisions reached, the services offered and/or provided to the child(en), and other action taken*
- *Briefly summarise decisions reached, the services offered and/or provided to the child(ren) and family, and other action taken*
- *This section should note specifically each occasion on which the child was seen, any direct or indirect contact with the child and/or family members (as a unit or as individuals); include any referrals and other information received and any action taken*
- *Include, where possible, quotations from the agency's records of contact with the child/family*
- *Provide an overview of involvement of family and professionals*
- *Highlight key events*
- *Address the points documented in the terms of reference, including racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identity and any issues of disability of the child and family*

ANALYSIS OF INVOLVEMENT

Consider the events that occurred, the decisions made and the actions taken or not taken. Where judgements were made, or actions taken, which indicate that practice or management could be improved, try to get an understanding not only of what happened but why something either did or did not happen. Consider specifically the following:

- Were practitioners aware of and sensitive to the needs of the children in their work, and knowledgeable both about potential indicators of abuse or neglect and about what to do if they had concerns about a child's welfare?*
- When, and in what way, were the child(ren)'s wishes and feelings ascertained and taken account of when making decisions about the provision of children's services? Was this information recorded?*
- Did the organisation have in place policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and acting on concerns about their welfare?*
- What were the key relevant points/opportunities for assessment and decision making in this case in relation to the child and family? Do assessments and decisions appear to have been reached in an informed and professional way?*
- Did actions accord with assessments and decisions made? Were appropriate services offered/provided or relevant enquiries made, in the light of assessments?*
- Were there any issues, in communication, information sharing or service delivery, between those with responsibilities for work during normal office hours and others providing out of hours services?*
- Where relevant, were appropriate child protection or care plans in place, and child protection and/or looked after reviewing processes complied with?*
- Was practice sensitive to the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identify and any issues of disability of the child and family, and were they explored and recorded?*
- Were senior managers or other organisations and professionals involved at points in the case where they should have been?*
- Was the work in this case consistent with each organisation's and the MKSCB's policy and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and with wider professional standards?*

Appendix 5: Agency Report template

- *Were there organisational difficulties being experienced within or between agencies? Were these due to a lack of capacity in one or more organisations? Was there an adequate number of staff in post? Did any resourcing issues such as vacant posts or staff on sick leave have an impact on the case?*
- *Was there sufficient management accountability for decision-making?*

WHAT WE LEARNT FROM THIS CASE?

Are there lessons from this case for the way in which this organisation works to safeguard and promote the welfare of children? Is there good practice to highlight, as well as ways in which practice can be improved? Are there implications for ways of working; training (single and inter-agency); management and supervision; working in partnership with other organisations; resources? Are there implications for current policy and practice?

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Recommendations should fully address the practice issues raised in the agency report rather than just relate to processes - ask 'what will change if the recommendation is implemented?' and 'what will improve the outcomes for the child(ren)?' Ensure the Recommendations are clearly taken from the body of the report and avoid using the word 'and' in a recommendation.

Ask yourself what action should be taken by whom and when? What outcomes should these actions bring, and in what timescales, and how will the organisation evaluate whether they have been achieved? Are there any immediate statutory requirements for the notification of concerns and are there likely to be any media handling issues?

Consider what evidence can be used to determine the Actions have been completed.

The recommendations should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART).

Recommendations should be linked to the issues raised under 'What do we learn from this case?', and be clearly set out.

The recommendations then need to be incorporated into the Action Plan by the author of the agency report and submitted with the draft agency report to the Panel (Appendix 6).

Appendix 6: Agency Report Recommendations and Action Plan template

AGENCY REPORT ACTION PLAN FOR (INSERT CHILD'S INITIALS)

(INSERT AGENCY NAME) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENCY REPORT

	Recommendation (*SMART)	Action	Lead	Timescale	Outcome	Progress	Evidence
1							
2							

Appendix 7: SCR Process Flowchart

