

## **Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership** **Resolving professional differences / escalation procedure**

When professionals are working together in the complex business of safeguarding children there will inevitably be occasions when there are professional differences of opinion. Constructive challenge is an important component in positive partnership working, but where differences of opinion cannot be resolved quickly and easily, practitioners have a duty to take action to address professional disagreements in a way that is appropriate, timely and proportionate.

Learning from rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews highlights the importance of resolving professional differences of opinion to ensure that children and young people are not left at risk of harm. If sufficiently serious, and when disagreements are not able to be resolved, it is important that they are escalated formally and recorded. This process sets out the steps to be taken to address professional differences of opinion when the issue relates to the safeguarding needs of a child or young person.

It should not be confused with the process to be followed for making a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) when there is a child protection concern. A single agency may choose to escalate a professional disagreement with another agency or, if appropriate, more than one agency may choose to jointly escalate an issue.

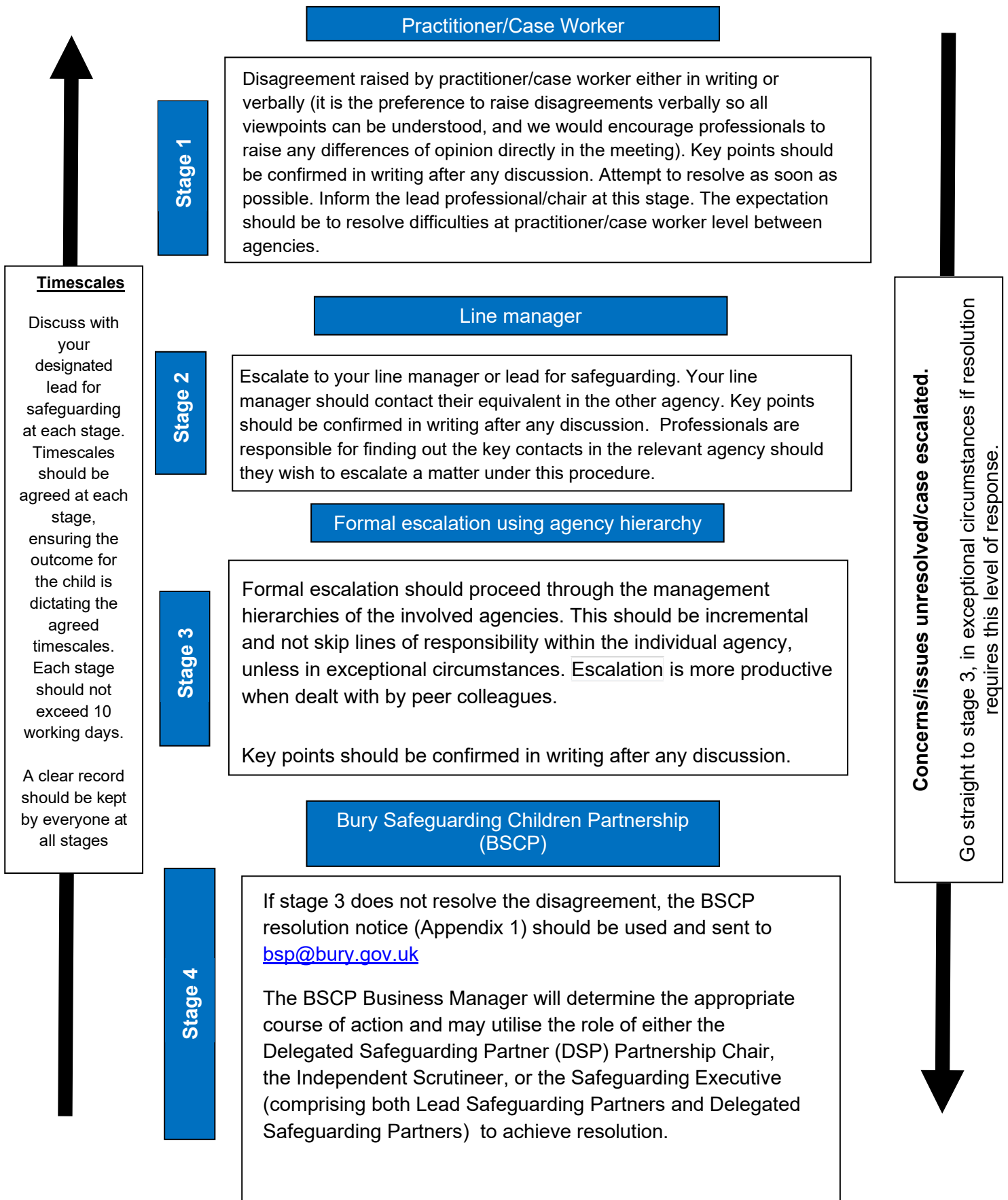
Principles in practice:

- Challenge is positive and should always be focused on the desired outcome for the child and family.
- The safety and wellbeing of the child is always paramount.
- It is the responsibility of each individual professional and agency to progress challenge if they are not in agreement with the outcome of any aspect of assessment, planning or intervention (any level of need and support).
- Challenge should be restorative and relationship based. Language should therefore be respectful and where possible discussions with the relevant practitioners should take place first.
- Challenge and escalation should be resolved in a timely manner.
- Challenge must be evidenced based and recorded on the child's file, including details or how the resolution improved outcomes for the child and/or family.
- Disagreements should be raised verbally wherever possible, for example, in the meeting it should be made clear that there is a difference of opinion, so that all viewpoints can be understood. This can then be followed up in writing.
- Professionals are responsible for understanding the escalation procedure and they are accountable for finding out the key contacts in the relevant agency should they wish to escalate a matter under this procedure.

Ensure your safeguarding lead is consulted with throughout the escalation process. Please attempt to resolve any disagreements informally, before initiating the formal process.

This document **must be read alongside** the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual on [resolving professional differences / escalation policy](#)

# Resolving professional differences / escalation policy procedure



## APPENDIX 1

### Outcome resolution notice

THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE SENT/STORED SECURELY TO [bsp@bury.gov.uk](mailto:bsp@bury.gov.uk)

<b>Date of Notification</b>	
<b>Name of Child/Young Person</b>	
<b>D.O.B</b>	
<b>Outcome Resolution Notice Referrer details:</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Role</b>	
<b>Agency/Team</b>	
<b>Contact Details</b>	
<b>Designated safeguarding lead aware of this notice?</b>	Yes / No Name of safeguarding lead:
<b>Summary of disagreement</b>	
<b>Evidence of the challenge that has taken place at stages 1, 2 &amp; 3 and the outcome at each stage</b>	
<b>Desired outcome for the child and / or family. Please include details of what it is you are requesting happens as a result of this challenge</b>	

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Date Outcome Resolved</b>	<b>Supporting Evidence</b>
		Embed written confirmation between parties about the agreed outcome
<b>Stage 3</b>		
<b>Stage 4 (to be completed by Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit)</b>		Final decision of:

Once stage 4 has concluded, the escalation notice will be completed, and a copy of the notice will be sent to the referrer informing them of the decision in writing.