

# Stages of Escalation Procedure

**You disagree with the action / in action / decision of another agency and feel that, consequently, a child is not effectively safeguarded**

Progress in respect of the escalation and dispute resolution should be recorded on the child's file at every stage.

Throughout the process, disputes must be resolved promptly, with the child's welfare and safety taking priority.

## Stage One

### Level One – Discussion Practitioner to Practitioner

Most disagreements can be resolved through discussion and negotiation.

Practitioners discuss the disagreement directly and aim to resolve through conversation and negotiation.

If unresolved → report to line managers.

### Level Two – Line Manager to Line Manager

Relevant line managers review the concern.

Most day-to-day disagreements should be resolved here.

Consider involving a **Designated or Named Practitioner** at this point if helpful.

If unresolved → escalate to service leads.

### Level Three – Service Lead / Designated Practitioner

Escalate to senior leads (e.g., Headteachers, Service Managers, Designated Nurses, Designated GPs).

Issue considered at service lead level, may include Team Around the Family.

Designated/Named Safeguarding Practitioner may be directly involved.

**Agreed actions fed back immediately to managers.**

**Record the conflict and outcome on the child's file.**

## Stage Two: Formal Dispute Procedure Disagreement unresolved after Stage One.

→ Escalate to **Executive Manager/Lead (e.g., Assistant Director) involved.**

Strategic equivalent from the other agency is also engaged. **Senior leaders review the issue together.**

Examine the practitioner disagreement and previous attempts to resolve it. Clarify any misunderstanding or lack of practitioner clarity. Consider all practitioner views and evidence.

**Agree a way forward centred on the child's best interests.**

**The need to safeguard the child takes precedence over practitioner stalemate.**

**Record and communicate the decision and required actions.**

## Stage Three – Disagreement Remains - Escalate to Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP)

If the above stages have been exhausted and agreement cannot be reached, activate the formal process. The urgency should be determined by the Executive Manager/Lead, no longer than 7 working days. **If the issue relates to child protection, this should be determined with 24 hours.**

Executive Manager/Lead emails the CSCP Chair and copies in the CSCP Business Manager setting out the issue and what has been done to try and resolve the issue informally.

An impartial CSCP member, appointed by the CSCP Chair, reviews the case and consults with the other Executive Leads before making a final decision. The CSCP Business Manager records formal use of the escalation procedure and reports it to the Partnership so that learning and actions can be identified.