

# Guidance on Effective Report Writing

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## Introduction

A Safeguarder has an important role to play in keeping the child at the centre and safeguarding their best interests during their involvement in the Children’s Hearings System. The Safeguarder is the only role tasked exclusively with this focus. Report writing is an integral part of the role of the Safeguarder. It is important that Safeguarders can perform their role to the highest standard and in doing so, never lose sight of the individual child and their needs.

Each one of us needs to know who we are – part of our identity is being able to make sense of our own history. For a child or young person who has been in the Children’s Hearings System, this might not be as easy to understand. All the papers, records and decisions that make up a child’s “case file” can have a significant part to play in a child, young person, or adult making sense of their life story. Understanding decisions and how they were made is part of that – which is why the quality of a Safeguarders report is so important.

A Safeguarders report can be accessed and read by several people including:.

- Children and young people – both now and in the future
- Parents and carers
- Panel members
- Reporters
- Social workers
- Solicitors
- Sheriffs
- Other Safeguarders

Safeguarders must write reports that can be understood by all those who may read it. The purpose of this document is to assist Safeguarders in producing robust, reasoned, accessible and well-written reports which uphold and respect the rights of the child and meet the Practice Standards. Writing reports which are guided by the principles outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) will ensure that the rights of the child are always at the forefront.

This document will highlight what a Safeguarder must do when writing their reports and include helpful suggestions to assist in the report writing process. Part 1 of this guidance focuses on the report writing process and Part 2 focuses on the legal framework that underpins reports and their submission.

### Reflection point:

**A significant amount of weight can be placed on a Safeguarders report. Safeguarders therefore have the capacity to influence the trajectory of a child’s life. It is important that any report written by a Safeguarder is robust, balanced, clear and in the child’s best interest.**

## Part 1 – Report Writing Process

### Structuring a report

There are many factors to consider when writing and presenting information in a report. This brief section will cover the basic requirements that each report should include.

#### Basic information

All Safeguarder reports should contain the following:

- name of the child and their date of birth
- name of the Safeguarder
- date and reasons for appointment
- who appointed the Safeguarder i.e. the Children’s Hearing or Sheriff
- date the report was completed
- date of the Children’s Hearing or court calling that the report was written for
- relevant background information about the child’s circumstances
- a list of people spoken to during enquiries
- the views of the child
- the views of all relevant persons
- the views of all professionals
- the views of any other individual that the Safeguarder has spoken to
- information as to key events or issues that have emerged during inquiries which are relevant to the consideration of what is in the child’s best interests
- if making recommendations, a critical and objective analysis as to what is in the child’s best interests
- if the Safeguarder is unable to do what is outlined in the reasons for appointment, an explanation as to why

This basic reference information ensures that the reader is clear who authored the report and why, who the report is about, what their circumstances are, who was spoken to in the compilation of the report and what the Safeguarder has recommended and why.

Safeguarders **do not** need to include the following information within the contents of their report:

Safeguarders contact details	Once the report has been shared with others, the Safeguarders contact details could be shared without their knowledge or consent. It could also give the impression that the Safeguarder can be contacted beyond their appointment.
Qualifications of the Safeguarder	Safeguarders are recruited based on core competencies and are trained and supported to have the necessary skills to fulfil their Safeguarder role. Including qualifications may give the impression that these are related to the requirements of the role and could create an inaccurate view of what the role is.
Child / family’s address or contact details	This is not necessary. Leaving this information out eliminates the risk of a direct or indirect breach of confidentiality. It also reduces

	the need for redaction of a report where there is a measure of non-disclosure.
Safeguarder's signature	There is no need to sign a copy of the report, either at the end, or on every page.
Word count	This could give the impression that Safeguarders are expecting to be paid by the word for their reports, therefore it is not necessary.

## Presentation

Safeguarders are required to process a large volume of information obtained throughout their enquiries and to present this in a report to the Children's Hearing or court. The way a report is presented can impact on how individuals read and engage with its content. It is important that reports are accessible and readable to several different audiences, but most importantly to the child.

When presenting information in a report, Safeguarders should consider the following:

- a logical structure. For example:
  - Introduction
  - Background/Context
  - Safeguarders enquiries
  - View of individuals
  - Conclusions and recommendations
- clear headings
- numbered pages
- succinct paragraphs
- simple sentence structure
- use at least size 12 font
- avoid the use of legalistic language and jargon
- avoid overly emotive statements
- avoid unnecessary or irrelevant information
- write in plain English

Before submitting a report, the final stage is proof-reading. Safeguarders must allow adequate time to proofread, and spell check their reports and correct any errors accordingly. Safeguarders should pay particular attention to ensuring that the child's name is spelled correctly for example. A report that has several spelling or grammatical errors can create an impression that the report was rushed or that the Safeguarder has not taken the time to be respectful to the child and their circumstances.

Safeguarders **must not** permit anyone else to type or proofread their reports. This is solely the responsibility of the Safeguarder. To allow another individual to do so would be a breach of Practice Standard 5. Safeguarders can utilise the 'read aloud' function, grammar and spellcheck features, contained with word processing documents to assist them in proofreading reports.

[Appendix 1](#) outlines a report template that Safeguarders can refer to. Safeguarders are encouraged to use this template as it is a helpful guide around structuring and presenting reports.

### Why are these elements important?

A clear structure and presentation enable the report to be accessible, readable, and understood by several different audiences, but most importantly by the child.

Effective participation, particularly for children and families, encompasses more than being present at a hearing or court. Understanding the documents that are before these forums and being able to challenge and question the information within them, is important for ensuring children and families can participate effectively in proceedings that impact them.

### Reflection point

How would you feel if you read a report about your own family which included many typos or basic grammatical errors? What conclusion would you draw about the author?

## Content of a report

In the previous section, the ‘basic’ features of a report were outlined. This section will look more specifically at the content of a report. A Safeguarders report and any recommendations are independent of any other report or document that may be submitted during proceedings. Safeguarder reports should be capable of being read and understood in isolation.

A Safeguarder report can often stay in panel papers longer than other reports. If referencing the report of another professional, Safeguarders should be aware that those reports may be removed from the panel papers. Also, children can request a copy of any one report at any given time, so the Safeguarder report should contain sufficient detail and context if it is read in isolation. Finally, Safeguarder reports are often the most recent in the panel papers and can often be read first.

## Sources of information

A Safeguarder will have gathered information from many sources during their enquiries. This information could be from discussions with the child, family, and professionals or from available documentation. It is important that a Safeguarder is clear about where and how they have obtained their information for the following reasons:

- This removes any ambiguity for the reader regarding the origin of the information.
- When information is presented and referred to correctly, it adds to the credibility and reliability of the report.
- It allows for triangulation of the information and enables the reader to decide where to place weight.
- It demonstrates that the Safeguarder has invested time in gathering information to assist them in forming a view about what is in the child’s best interest.

Sources of information has relevance to the conclusions and recommendations made by a Safeguarder. The information that a Safeguarder draws upon in forming their recommendations is crucial. In the absence of clear sources of information, the validity and strength of a Safeguarders recommendations can be diluted resulting in less weight being placed on the Safeguarders report.

If a Safeguarder is not clear about their sources of information, this could imply that the information presented in the report is the view or a statement made by the Safeguarder. This can impact the tone of the document and how that information is received by the reader. For example, it may read as the Safeguarder being biased or judgemental.

The table below demonstrates the difference when sources are stated clearly.

<b>Instead of this:</b>	<b>Consider this:</b>
John has not been attending school regularly.	The social work report dated 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2023, states that John has not been attending school regularly.
Mr Jones has a difficult relationship with his family and has limited support.	Mr Jones said that he has a difficult relationship with his family and has limited support.
Sarah’s mother is aggressive and struggles to work with agencies.	In conversations, with Ms Roberts, allocated social worker, she stated that Sarah’s mother

	is aggressive and struggles to work with agencies.
Mrs Smith experiences difficulties with her mental health.	In discussions with Mrs Smith, she told me that she experiences difficulties with her mental health.
Emma enjoys spending time with her mum.	When I spoke to Emma on 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2024, she told me that she enjoys spending time with her mum.

If a Safeguarder is seeking information outwith what has been disclosed to them by the Reporter or partnership agencies, such as medical records or criminal history, the Safeguarder should obtain this information using a mandate (see Appendix 2). However, Safeguarders should not routinely ask for mandates to be signed by parents or relevant persons to access this type of information. Safeguarders should also be clear that an individual is under no obligation to sign a mandate. Where a Safeguarder requests that a mandate be signed, this must be justifiable, proportionate, and appropriate in the circumstances.

## Language

“For years, pre-dating the Care Review, care experienced children and adults have said language needs to change to normalise their lives and shift away from professional speak. The language of care is stigmatising for children...”

The Promise, p.24

“Scotland must understand that ‘language creates realities’. Those with care experience must hold and own the narrative of their stories and lives; simple, caring language must be used in the writing of care files.

The workforce must be considerate and write reports in a clear, relatable way, in plain English. Reports must be written in the assumption that the young person will read them at a later date.”

The Promise, p. 69

Children and young people have undertaken a significant amount of work to educate adults and professionals about the impact that their language has on them. The Language Leaders are a group of children and adults with experience of the Hearings System whose aim is to make the language within the Hearings System personalised, accessible and caring. They have created the ‘Articulate Animation’ which encourages people to think about the language they use as well as other resources such as the ‘online word bin’. All the resources they have developed can be accessed [here](#).

It is crucial that Safeguarders are aware of and understand the impact that their language can have on children and others, not only when speaking with them but when writing about them. This section, whilst not exhaustive, will look at several elements of language and provide Safeguarders with considerations for when they come to write their reports.

## Writing in plain English

This means using language that everyone reading the report can understand. Safeguarders need to be aware that children will read their reports and as such any report should be written in language



accessible to them. Safeguarders should also be sensitive to varying levels of literacy amongst readers of the report. Also, not every child or family's first language will be English, and this should be given consideration. The table below outlines some basic principles of writing in plain English.

Use everyday words.	Avoid writing in capitals, it creates an impression that you are shouting.
Omit unnecessary words.	If using technical terms, explain them first.
Explain any abbreviations or acronyms.	Avoid jargon or legalistic terminology.
Avoid idioms.	Avoid exaggerated language such as 'obviously' or 'clearly'.
Limit each paragraph to one topic.	One concept per sentence.
Use neutral, non-judgemental language.	Keep sentences short and paragraphs succinct.

The following sections further expand on the use of language and what to consider when writing a report. The resource section of this document provides links to a variety of websites that have helpful information on the use and impact of language.

### Writing using strength-based language

Language can create stigma for people. Using strength-based language can help reduce this stigma. Writing in a strength-based way does not ignore the challenges or risks for a child. The table below briefly illustrates how Safeguarders can write in a strength-based way rather than from a deficit-based perspective. This can also influence what questions a Safeguarder asks in their conversations with people.

<b>Deficit-based</b>	<b>Strength-Based</b>
When I met with Steven at school, he wasn't interested in learning anything.	Steven enjoys the social parts of school over the educational parts.
Amy's mum is resistant to working with the social work department and isn't engaging with support.	Amy's mum isn't ready to engage with support that is currently available.
Robert is suffering from depression.	Robert is living with depression.
Jane is challenging and has severe meltdowns.	Jane feels emotions intensely and can find it difficult to manage these.
<i>Questions</i>	
What problems do you have looking after the children?	What does a good day look like for you?
What is not working?	What is working well?

## **Labels**

*'Alcoholic', 'drug addict', 'failure', 'chaotic', 'looked after', 'a challenging child'*

Safeguarders should avoid labelling people. It can diminish who they are as a person. There is more to them than the label you or other people may have given them. Describe the behaviour of a person rather than labelling them. The labels you choose can also reflect your own values and how you see other people.

For example, instead of describing someone as an alcoholic or drug addict, you could say, 'the person is experiencing difficulties relating to their alcohol and drug use...'. This is also strength-based language.

Safeguarders should put the person ahead of their characteristics. For example, instead of 'a blind man' use 'a man who is blind'. People-first language keeps the individual as the most essential element; there is more to each of us than our descriptors.

When speaking about disability, avoid phrases such as, 'afflicted by', 'suffers from', and 'confined to a wheelchair'. Consider using language such as 'is experiencing', 'lives with', or 'is a wheelchair user'.

## **Idioms**

*'At your wits' end', 'catch 22', 'over the moon', 'the tip of the iceberg',*

Whilst idioms are an informal way of engaging a reader in a report, consider how they may be interpreted by those from a different culture or country where the phrase may have a different meaning. Children, people for whom English is not their first language and people who are neurodivergent might find idioms difficult to understand.

## **Legalistic language**

*'Parties', 'remit', 'instructed', 'hereafter', 'henceforth', 'submission', 'inter alia'*

Using terms such as these may be familiar to a Safeguarder but consider whether children and families will understand these terms if they see them written in a report. Think about alternative words that could be used. For example, use 'reasons for appointment' in place of remit or 'individuals' instead of parties.

## **Exaggerated language**

*'Very', 'actually', 'obviously', 'clearly', 'literally',*

Safeguarders should reflect on whether exaggerated words add value to what they are trying to convey. Safeguarders should consider whether what is being written about is 'clear' or 'obvious' to the reader from the information presented. Take the following example: "Dad is clearly unable to look after the child at the moment". Is there anything lost by removing the word 'clearly'?

## Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics or behaviour of boys, girls, men, and women. This can often be a form of unconscious bias which can influence how we view and treat others. Safeguarders should consider the points below and how this is reflected in their reports and steps that can be taken to avoid this.

- Do you treat the behaviour, or appearance of children the same?
- Are you more likely to describe a boy's behaviour as challenging or disruptive?
- Are you more likely to view girls as being more susceptible to harm?
- Do you use phrases like 'a typical boy' or 'a typical girl'?

It is also important to remember that some children may not identify as a boy or girl and may identify differently. Safeguarders should be aware of this when writing their report and refer to them in the way in which they identify.

## What are children and young people telling adults about their use of language?

*Our Hearings, Our Voice* are a group of children and young people who want to change the language used within the Hearings System. In their '40 Calls to Action' these are some of the things they highlighted:

*"All your communications with me (letters and legal papers) should be written in a way that gives me the facts in a way that I can understand."*

*"Get rid of chronologies... they are traumatising! Meet me and get to know me."*

*"Do not judge me. Get to know me. Try to step into my shoes and understand what my life is like and what is important to me."*

*"Speak to me using words and explain things in ways that I will understand."*

*"Respect my Voice by listening, believing, valuing and including me when deciding what happens in my life."*

40 Calls to Action, Our Hearings, Our Voice  
<https://www.ohov.co.uk/about-us/projects/resources/>

This group are also part of the 'Language Leaders' and have identified many words that they would like to see changed in reports and in the Hearings System. The full list can be accessed [here](#). The top ten words the group identified to be put in the 'bin' were:

Unit	CSO
Respite	Childish
Absconding	Case Worker
LAAC	Disengaged
Maternal	Siblings

Safeguarders should consider how they can limit or reframe these words in their reports to make them more accessible to children and young people. It is recognised, however, that Safeguarders may need to use some of these references when stating their recommendations.

**Reflection Points:**

**What language do you use when speaking about your own family?**

**Would you describe the time you spend with your friends and family as contact?**

**Who are you writing the report for? Do you consider the child when doing so?**

**Think about some of the negative language you read in reports. How would you feel if you or a family member were written about in such a way?**

## **Analysis, conclusions, and recommendations**

The recommendations that a Safeguarder makes can be life-changing for a child and their family. Any recommendation that is made must:

- be informed by a purposeful and proportionate review of the relevant background information and available documentation.
- be informed by active listening and careful consideration of the views of those individuals and services involved.
- include a critical and objective analysis and evaluation of what is in the child's best interest.
- be informed by the child's human rights and principles of the UNCRC.

Safeguarders can obtain a vast amount of views and information from a variety of sources. Processing all of this to enable the Safeguarder to reach a recommendation can be challenging. The independent, critical, and analytical processing of information forms a significant and important part of report writing for a Safeguarder. It impacts upon how much weight those tasked with decision-making place on the Safeguarders recommendations. This in turn can impact the outcomes for children and young people.

### **What does critical analysis look like?**

Critical analysis of evidence and information is a skill that must be learned. Even for those already familiar with analysis and critical thinking, it is important that this does not just take place internally but is always clearly visible in the report. The process of arriving at a recommendation is equally as important as the recommendation itself.

The following elements are those which would be clearly demonstrated in a Safeguarders report that is critically analytical:

- The analysis goes further than a description of the information that has been gathered.
- The risks, strengths and challenges of each potential option have been considered and commented upon.
- The protective factors and risk factors for the child are identified.
- The child's needs are clearly identified with clarity around those being met or unmet.
- The impact on the child has been considered and explored.
- The Safeguarder separates out the views of others from the value or weight the Safeguarder places on them.
- The importance of each piece of evidence is triangulated and weighted in terms of what is fact versus what is opinion or hearsay.
- The Safeguarder provides evidence to support any opinions that they have made.
- The Safeguarder has answered the "so what?" questions. That is, what does all this evidence tell them about what it is like to be this particular child, with this child's needs.
- The Safeguarder has considered whether further assessments or information is required before a recommendation can be made.
- The analysis is centred around the child's views, rights, needs, and best interests.

## What would critical analysis look like in practice?

The following is an example of a recommendation that a Safeguarder could make. The table below contains considerations as to how a Safeguarder could approach a critical analysis in these circumstances.

*‘The Safeguarder recommends that the child be placed on a CSO, living with mum and that the child should have time with their father twice per week. Any time the child has with their father should be supervised by the social work department.’*

There are four elements in this recommendation that should be subject to critical analysis for this recommendation to be justified.

Element	Considerations for critical analysis (not exhaustive)
The child be placed on a CSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information or evidence is available that suggests the child needs compulsory measures?</li> <li>• Consider the alternative option. Why are voluntary measures not appropriate?</li> <li>• Why is it better that an order be in place than not?</li> <li>• Acknowledge the strengths or challenges currently being experienced by the child.</li> <li>• Reflect the views of others on the CSO and separate out the views of others from the Safeguarders own view as to why a CSO is necessary.</li> <li>• What are the child’s needs and how are they being met or not?</li> <li>• Demonstrate why a CSO will meet the needs of the child</li> </ul>
That the child lives with his mother	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information or evidence is available and from whom that indicates the child is best living with his mother?</li> <li>• Be clear about the protective versus risks factors of the child living with their mother.</li> <li>• Are there any challenges to the child living with their mother and if so, how can these be overcome?</li> <li>• What are the reasons and risk factors that mean the child cannot live with their father?</li> <li>• If the child has a view on where they wish to live, this should be clearly stated. (Article 12)</li> <li>• Will the child’s needs be met at home, whether that is with or without support?</li> </ul>
That time with child’s father is regulated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information or evidence suggests the child’s time with their father requires to be regulated? (Article 9 and 18)</li> <li>• What are the child’s views on this? (Article 12)</li> <li>• Why two times per week? What evidence or information is available that indicates it cannot be more than this or should not be less than this.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there are protective factors, state these.</li> <li>• What are the father's strengths as well as his challenges that have impacted upon the child being able to spend more time with him?</li> </ul>
That time with the child's father requires to be supervised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the risk factors that are preventing family time from being unsupervised?</li> <li>• What evidence supports the view that family time needs to be supervised?</li> <li>• Why should family time be supervised by the social work department and not someone else?</li> </ul>

Once a Safeguarder has written their analysis, they should reflect on the following points to ensure that the recommendations they are making are in the child's best interests and can assist the decision-makers in their task (Article 3).

- Has the Safeguarder addressed the reasons as to why they were appointed?
- Is the Safeguarders position clearly stated?
- Has the Safeguarder supported each element of their position with evidence?
- Has the Safeguarder demonstrated clear links between the evidence gathered and how this has impacted their views?
- Has the Safeguarder ensured that the analysis is balanced and not emotive?
- Does the analysis support the recommendations being made?
- Where the Safeguarder has written one report for multiple children, has the Safeguarder approached the analysis individually for each child to ensure the recommendations reached are specific to each child?
- Does the analysis, reflect the child's rights and principles of the UNCRC?

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The analysis undertaken by a Safeguarder should form clear links to their conclusions and recommendations. A Safeguarders conclusion is a summary of their position and answering the "why" questions, such as why the Safeguarder has agreed or disagreed with the recommendations of key professionals such as the Social Work department. Where the child has expressed a view and the Safeguarder is not in agreement with that view, it is important that the Safeguarder explains the reasons why.

Recommendations are an outline of what the Safeguarder is suggesting that the decision maker do. For example, to place the child on a CSO, to regulate time the child spends with their parent or to request an early review. Safeguarders must ensure that these are clearly stated within their report.

Safeguarders are expected to share their recommendations with all involved, particularly the child and their family, in advance of a hearing. This allows people the opportunity to be prepared before the hearing and for the Safeguarder to identify any areas of disagreement that they may be required to address.

### Process of reaching a recommendation

In	Processing	Out
Evidence gathered from: People spoken to in the course of enquiries The views of the child The views of all relevant people and professionals Key events or issues that have emerged during enquiries Reports from other professionals Observations	Critical thinking and analysis Triangulation "Show your working out"	Recommendations that are in the best interests of the child. Recommendations that are clear, reasoned and justifiable. A report which assists the decision-maker in their task.

### How to include children’s rights within an analysis

Writing from a rights-based perspective can serve to increase the accountability of those responsible for ensuring a child’s rights are upheld. Recommendations that are reached following a rights-based approach will ensure that robust decisions are made in the best interests of children. Safeguarders should ensure they are aware of the articles outlined within the UNCRC. The brief examples below from the UNCRC have been used to highlight how a Safeguarder can incorporate children’s rights in their analysis.

#### *Article 3 – Best interests of the child*

“The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.”

Safeguarders should refer to [General Comment No. 14](#) and also complete the ‘Best Interests’ module on the Virtual Learning Academy for an in-depth understanding of Article 3 and how this can be applied in their practice.

#### *Article 9 – Separation from parents*

“Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting or neglecting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this could cause them harm”.

If a Safeguarder recommends that a child live away from their parents, the Safeguarder should be clear about the reasons why, acknowledging that a child has a right to be with their family (*Article 18* is also relevant here as parents should be supported to raise their children where possible). It is for the Safeguarder to explain why, in their view, that living away from home is in the child’s best interest. Children have the right to see both of their parents. If a Safeguarder recommends that time with their parents is to be restricted, clear reasons need to be given as to why.



## Article 12 – Respect for the views of the child

“Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child’s day-to-day home life”.

Safeguarders are appointed to children of varying ages. Each child has a right to express a view in any decision that affects them. Safeguarders should treat these views with the same respect and importance as the adults and professionals that they speak to. For example, if a child expresses a view that they would like to spend more time with a parent, the Safeguarder should reflect this view in their analysis. It is for the Safeguarder to explain and reason why they are, or are not, in agreement with the child and what evidence supports their position.

Safeguarders often need to balance the rights of many individuals. Whilst all aspects of the UNCRC are important, *Article 19 - Protection from violence, abuse and neglect* and *Article 20 – Children unable to live with their family*, are helpful for reinforcing a child’s right to safety and to be cared for in places which respect their culture, language, and religion.

When forming their analysis, Safeguarders should consider what rights are being impacted and are relevant to the circumstances. For example, if a key issue for the child is non-attendance at school, Safeguarders may identify *Article 28 – right to education* as a basis to explore what supports or measures could be put in place to ensure this right is upheld.

### Reflection points:

If a child were to read your analysis and conclusions, would they understand why you made the recommendations you did?

A report should include everything that the Safeguarder needs the decision-maker to know to support their recommendations. If you were unable to attend a Children’s Hearing, would your report contain sufficient information and analysis to allow decisions to be made?

How often do you think about the rights of a child when writing your reports?

## Sensitive information

Sensitive information is that which could be distressing and upsetting for children and families to read about, or where a Safeguarder needs to consider how they reflect information sensitively such as a medical condition for example. There will be occasions where Safeguarders have to reflect both difficult and sensitive information in their reports.

In considering whether to include sensitive information, Safeguarders should consider the following:

- Is it necessary and relevant to the recommendations that the Safeguarder is going to make?
- If it is not, then the information should not be included in the report.

- If it is, the Safeguarder should consider whether the information can be captured without being overly graphic and specific.
- How can a person be supported in reading information which they may not know about?
- If the information cannot be rephrased or framed in a way that reduces distress, Safeguarders should consider whether a non-disclosure request is appropriate.

The following are examples of how Safeguarders may rephrase sensitive information in reports.

<b>Instead of this</b>	<b>Consider this</b>
Mia's mother was punched several times by her partner leaving her with black eyes, a burst lip and swollen face.	Mia's mother was assaulted by her partner resulting in injuries to her face.
Paul is prescribed 20mg of citalopram for anxiety.	Paul is prescribed medication to help manage his anxiety.

If the Safeguarder is of the view that sensitive information must be included and that this would cause significant harm to the child if disclosed, the Safeguarder should consider making a non-disclosure request. A non-disclosure request asks the hearing to withhold information from a specific individual, this can be the child or another person. It is for the hearing to decide whether they will grant this request. Part 2 of this document outlines the process and forms that require to be completed when a Safeguarder wishes to make this request.

**Reflection points:**

**How can sensitive and difficult information be captured in a way that minimises upset and distress to others, but most importantly to the child?**

**How would you feel if you were to read personal information about your life for the first time in a report?**

## **Separate reports**

It is not uncommon for Safeguarders to be appointed to groups of brothers and sisters at the same time. Safeguarders are required to see each of these children as individuals and ensure any recommendations they make are specific to each child and their individual needs. When children receive their panel papers, the information contained within them are the documents which are specific to them. They do not get copies of paperwork for their brothers and sisters.

Safeguarders should write a separate report for each child. Where Safeguarders choose to write one report for all children, they should be clear as to why this is in the best interest of each child.

The scenarios below, outline examples of why separate reports for each child are beneficial.

### ***Different relevant people***

Not all brothers and sisters will have the same parents, caregivers, or relevant people. Safeguarders should be aware of who has a legal right to access reports about each child they are appointed to. If there are different relevant people for each child, Safeguarders must write separate reports to ensure that they are not breaching the child's right to privacy or Practice Standard 5.

### ***Children must be seen as individuals***

Safeguarders are often appointed to brothers and sisters who will all have varying needs and experiences. Each child may require different levels of support dependent on their needs. A child having their own report ensures that the information contained within it is tailored to them and focused on their individual needs.

In addition, a child's brothers and sisters may have no awareness of the issues that their sibling is experiencing or what they have discussed, and consideration must be given to whether it is fair for them to read about it in a report. Children must be seen as individuals with their own set of views, needs and experiences and this should be reflected clearly in a report.

If a child were to request their report in future, and their brothers and sisters were part of that, it is likely that significant portions of that report would require to be redacted as it is not specific to that child. Consideration should be given to the impact this can have on someone trying to understand their life story.

### ***Child's right to privacy***

In brief, Article 16 of the UNCRC states that '*Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation*'. Whilst a Children's Hearing can be deemed a legitimate interference into this privacy, there remains scope to respect a child's right to privacy when writing reports. One way of doing this is to write a separate report for each child. This ensures that information contained within a report is unique to them, centred around them and is focused on their rights and needs.

**Reflection points:**

**How would you feel if personal information about your life was shared with someone that had no right to see it?**

**If you write about all children in the one report, how do you ensure that you are respecting each child's right to privacy?**

**When you explain to children what you will do with their information, do you highlight that their brothers and sisters might be able to read what they have said or what has happened to them? What impact do you think this would have on them?**

**What other organisations do you know that include all children in one report? Why might this be?**

## Part 2 – Legal Framework

This section of the guidance will focus on the legal framework that applies to reports and what is expected from the Safeguarder. There are several circumstances in which a report from a Safeguarder is required or expected. The following outlines those circumstances and the legislation which supports it.

### When is a report required?

#### 1. Reports **required** for a Children’s Hearing

If a Safeguarder has been appointed by a Children’s Hearing, a report is **required** to be submitted within 35 days from the date of that hearing appointment<sup>1, 2</sup>. This period is 35 calendar days, not working days. A Safeguarder can include anything in the report, that in their opinion, is relevant to the issues being considered at the Children’s Hearing<sup>1</sup>.

If a Safeguarder is unable to submit a report within 35 days an **interim report must** be submitted<sup>2</sup>. This report should include an explanation as to why an interim report has been submitted instead of a full report. It should include details of further enquiries or information that the Safeguarder requires and an estimate of how much time the Safeguarder will need to complete the full report.

A Children’s Hearing can make a substantive decision without allowing further time for the Safeguarder to complete a full report.

A Children’s Hearing may ask a Safeguarder for a further report including a supplementary report in addition to any full or interim report already submitted<sup>3</sup>. If the Safeguarder is unable to provide an additional report on what the hearing has asked for, the Safeguarder must explain the reasons for this to the Children’s Hearing. A supplementary report must be clear as to what document it is supplementary to.

#### 2. Reports **required** by a Sheriff.

A Sheriff can request a report from a Safeguarder in an appeal against the decision of a Children’s Hearing to assist in the determination of that appeal<sup>4</sup>.

A Sheriff may specify what the report should cover but the Safeguarder may cover wider areas if relevant to safeguarding the best interests of the child. If a Safeguarder has decided not to cover what is being asked for by the Sheriff, the Safeguarder should provide these reasons to the Sheriff.

A Sheriff has the general power to ask a Safeguarder for a report even where a report is not specifically required. If the Safeguarder provides a report to the Sheriff during the court

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<sup>1</sup> [Section 33 \(1\)\(a\), \(b\) and \(c\) of the Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Rule 56\(4\), The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Rules of Procedure in Children’s Hearings\) Rules 2013](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Section 33 \(1\)\(c\) of The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Regulation 6, The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders: Further Provision\) Regulations 2012](#)

proceedings, the Safeguarder should explore with the Children's Reporter whether that report should be available to any subsequent Children's Hearing.

A Safeguarder should attend court but, in the exceptional circumstances that the Safeguarder cannot attend and needs to contribute to assist the court in its decision making, a written report can be submitted. Where a Safeguarder submits a written communication explaining their reasons for being unable to attend and provides information about the extent of their investigations to date, this does not amount to a written report.

### When is a report expected?

3. Reports are **expected** by a Children's Hearing when a Safeguarder has been appointed:
  - by a Sheriff and when grounds have been determined and sent back to a Children's Hearing
  - and where a matter is referred back to a Children's Hearing following an appeal. This may be a new report if the Safeguarder was appointed at the appeal stage, or it may be a supplementary report if the Safeguarder was already involved and had previously submitted a report.

Whilst a report is not legally required in these circumstances, Safeguarders should consider the benefits of submitting a report to the Children's Hearing. The expectation of submitting a report in these circumstances, is to mitigate any unnecessary delay and to support the Children's Hearing reach an informed decision as to what is in the best interest of the child. If the Safeguarder has been involved in a proof proceeding or appeal, it is likely that the Safeguarder will have formed a view on what is in the best interest of the child, and it is important that the view of the Safeguarder is shared to assist in that process.

### 4. Oral reports

An oral report is wider than a verbal contribution that a Safeguarder may make at a hearing and should only be provided when no other alternative is available. If a Safeguarder needs to provide an oral report, this report should contain a recommendation that is reasoned, justified and in the best interests of the child. Where there is not enough time to prepare a written report, or timescales are such that a Safeguarders enquiries are finished too late to produce a written report, an oral report may be appropriate. However, interim reports should be considered in the first instance.

If a Safeguarder has provided an oral report to a Children's Hearing, it is reasonable to expect that the reasons for decision will reflect the material parts of that oral report which influenced that decision. If the hearing is deferred, the Safeguarder should reflect their oral report in any subsequent written report that may be produced. This is to ensure that the child and others, understand what the Safeguarder's views were and how this may have influenced the decision-making process.

### When are reports not required or expected?

There are circumstances in which reports from Safeguarders are not required or expected. These circumstances include:

- a 2<sup>nd</sup> working day hearing
- an advice hearing where the Children's Hearing is being asked to provide advice to the Sheriff regarding an application to vary or terminate a child protection order
- a Children's Hearing to review a contact direction decision made by a Children's Hearing

- a Children’s Hearing considering the suspension of a compulsory supervision order (CSO) pending an appeal against the decision of a Children’s Hearing
- when the Sheriff has appointed a Safeguarder when the statement of grounds is sent for proof
  - A report would not be required to be submitted to the court in this instance unless specifically requested by the Sheriff.
  - Once grounds have been determined, a report would be expected to be submitted for the Children’s Hearing that will consider the established grounds
- a Children’s Hearing considering the further issue of an interim compulsory supervision order (ICSO)
  - Where a Children’s Hearing makes an ICSO and sends the grounds of referral to proof, a report is not required for subsequent ICSO hearings. A report would be expected once the Sheriff has determined the grounds and sent it back to the Children’s Hearing for consideration.

### How might a Safeguarders report be used?

Safeguarder reports are permitted to be shared by the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) for the purposes of performance monitoring, investigating complaints, and auditing requests for payment of fees and expenses of Safeguarders<sup>5</sup>. There are other circumstances in which someone may wish to access or use a Safeguarder report which are detailed below.

#### 1. Report sampling

Safeguarders should be clear when explaining their role to children, families, carers, and professionals how their information will be used. This includes making people aware that the report containing their information may be used to monitor the performance of the Safeguarder’s practice. If a child or relevant person indicates that they do not want the report to be used for that purpose, the Safeguarder must inform the Safeguarders Panel Team to avoid it being used for report sampling.

#### 2. The report being shared with the local authority

When a Safeguarder submits their report to the children’s reporter, the reporter is required to share a copy of that report with the relevant local authority. If the child is already on an ICSO or CSO then the Safeguarders report would be submitted to the local authority who has been named as the implementation authority on that order<sup>6</sup>.

#### 3. Safeguarders accessing the report of a previous Safeguarder

Where a Safeguarder is appointed, the reporter must tell the Safeguarder if they have a copy of any report submitted by a previous Safeguarder in relation to that child<sup>7</sup>. The Safeguarder can request a copy of that report. Before doing so, the Safeguarder should consider, how old the report is, what the purpose would be of obtaining the report, and any reason that would mean it should not be in

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<sup>5</sup> [Regulation 7 of The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders Panel\) Regulations 2012 as amended by The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders Panel\) Amendment Regulations 2016](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Section 20D\(8\), The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Rules of Procedure in Children’s Hearings\) Amendment Rules 2021](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Regulation 9\(1\)\(a\), The Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders: Further Provision\) Regulations 2012](#)

the current paperwork. If a Safeguarder requests a copy of a previous Safeguarder report, the reporter **must** provide a copy to the Safeguarder and the child, relevant persons and panel members<sup>8</sup>.

#### **4. The Safeguarders report being used in civil proceedings**

If a Safeguarder is contacted in relation to the use of their report in a legal process, the Safeguarder must confirm that their appointment has ended, and they no longer hold any information regarding the case including their report.

If a Safeguarder is approached during their appointment, the Safeguarder must confirm that their appointment is ongoing, and they have no right to disclose or authorise the use of their report to those who have no legal right to access it.

In both of these circumstances, the Safeguarder may tell the person that they will need to ask someone else who might have the right to have, hold or release their report. This would normally be SCRA, the child or relevant person. However, the Safeguarder must not provide any details of any person who may have copies of the report or try to get these details on behalf of the person who has approached them.

#### **5. Speaking to the Safeguarders report as a witness**

Safeguarders might be cited as a witness to speak to their reports. A Safeguarder cannot prevent someone citing them as a witness or putting their report to them as a witness. In these circumstances, the Safeguarder can explain that their report was relevant at the time of writing, it formed part of the discussion at the Children's Hearing, and that the decisions reached by the hearing may or may not indicate how much weight was placed on the report.

Safeguarders may also be cited as witnesses to speak to things that may have been disclosed during enquiries or to speak to what someone has told them whilst their involvement is ongoing. Safeguarders should refer to the court practice note for considerations around being a witness and remaining involved in an appointment.

#### **6. Affidavits**

Safeguarders might be asked to sign affidavits to confirm that a report, which appears to be their report, is actually their report. Once an appointment has ended, the report is no longer in the possession of a Safeguarder therefore the Safeguarder will not be able to confirm with certainty whether it is a copy of their report. Given the report will be retained by SCRA, or in some cases the court, the Safeguarder should signpost the individual seeking the affidavit, to SCRA or the Sheriff Clerk who should be able to confirm if the report is the same one that was used during the proceeding in question.

#### **Sensitive information in reports**

There may be times when a Safeguarder is aware of information that may cause distress, harm or upset if it was included in a report. There are rules and legislation which permits information to be withheld

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<sup>8</sup> [Regulation 9\(1\)\(b\) and 9\(2\), The Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders: Further Provision\) Regulations 2012](#)



from an individual. Non-disclosure can refer to withholding the names and addresses of where a child is living for example but can also include other sensitive information. There are different types of non-disclosure, and each requires to be responded to differently. The [Non-Disclosure of Information a-Good-Practice-Guide](#) issued by the Children's Hearing Improvement Partnership provides further information about this.

### 1. Non-disclosure requests

A Safeguarder may make a 'non-disclosure request' which is a request that any or part of a document, or information contained in a document that will be part of a Children's Hearing or Pre-Hearing Panel should be withheld from a specified person. The grounds on which this request can be made is that disclosure of that information to the specified person **would be likely to cause significant harm to the child**. These requests are considered and decided by a Children's Hearing or Pre-Hearing Panel<sup>9</sup>.

### 2. Non-disclosure process

SCRA have produced a guidance note for those who wish to make a non-disclosure request. The guidance can be found [here](#). A non-disclosure request requires forms to be completed alongside the report that the request relates to. Copies of these forms are attached as appendix 4 and 5 of this document.

A Safeguarder can make a non-disclosure request, before or after their report is submitted. However, the need for information to be withheld should be identified as early as possible as the request may be too late if the reports have already been sent out. It may be necessary for a request to be made during a hearing if information that is not included within a report comes to light, at, or shortly before the hearing and disclosure of that information is likely to cause significant harm to the child.

### 3. Duties of reporter to redact information

When information is to be withheld (including when a non-disclosure request has been made, but not yet considered by the hearing), the reporter must ensure that the relevant information is removed from any report being sent to the person from whom the information is to be withheld. A Safeguarder can help the reporter with this process by ensuring that any information that the Safeguarder may include in their report that may be redacted is not included at all or at the very least ensure that this information is kept separate and is clearly identifiable.

Safeguarders should keep in mind that where a non-disclosure measure exists, or has been requested, the reporter requires additional time to check all documents. Safeguarders should be aware of this when submitting their reports and ensure they are submitted promptly to allow the reporter adequate time to read and redact information where necessary.

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<sup>9</sup> [Rule 85, The Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Rules of Procedure in Children's Hearings\) Rules 2013](#)

## Resources

### Report writing

Celcis Webinar – ['Write right about me'](#)

### Language

Celcis Webinar – ['Write right about me'](#)

Children's Parliament – 'I am more than being in Care' - ['How we talk about care'](#)

Each and every child - ['How we talk about care experience matters'](#)

### [Language Leaders](#)

Our Hearings, Our Voice – [Language in the Children's Hearings System](#)

TACT Fostering & Adoption - [Language that cares - Changing the way professionals talk about Children in Care](#)

### [The Promise](#)

Writing in Plain English - [Free guides \(plainenglish.co.uk\)](#)

### Legislation

[Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)

[The Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Rules of Procedure in Children's Hearings\) Rules 2013](#)

[The Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders Panel\) Regulations 2012](#)

[The Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders: Further Provision\) Regulations 2012](#)

[The Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011 \(Safeguarders Panel\) Amendment Regulations 2016](#)

[Children \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#)

[United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\)\(Scotland\) Act 2024](#)

## Appendix 1 – Report Writing Template

### Safeguarder Report Writing Template

This is designed to provide Safeguarders with a succinct outline of what should be included within an effective Safeguarder report. It should be considered alongside the other information available within this report writing guidance, as well as the report writing module.

Your report needs to be able to stand alone – it may be the first report a panel reads, and a child may read it at a later date in isolation from other reports. It also needs to explain why you, as an independent Safeguarder, have come to your conclusions and recommendations.

If you follow the outline suggested below, it is likely that you will demonstrate elements of the Practice Standards (as these are what this template has been based upon).

### Safeguarder’s Report

For

Child(ren) name(s), date of birth, age

Date of Hearing

Safeguarder name

### Introduction

Date of Safeguarder appointment.

Who requested a Safeguarder (Panel or Sheriff).

Reasons for appointment if given (or specify if these have not been provided).

The Safeguarder provides an explanation if they have been unable to address the “reason for appointment” given by the Panel or Sheriff.

### Background/Context

This should be a **brief summary** of relevant and recent key events in a child’s life to date. It should not read like a chronology.

This summary may include:

- Information about the child’s family, and who they live with.
- How long Social Work have been involved.
- Significant events in the child’s life.
- Significant points in their Children’s Hearing journey to date.
- Legal orders already in place.

- Summary of the Grounds of Referral in plain English.

This section also needs to provide a holistic sense of this child and their life. This can include information about any disability, anything significant they are managing in their life, their age and stage, their identity and culture.

### **Safeguarder Enquiries**

- Who the Safeguarder has met, spoken with, or received information from (and how they are connected to the child).
- How and where the Safeguarder met them; in person/video call/telephone call.
- How often the Safeguarder met them.
- What the Safeguarder has read.
- Anyone significant to the child that the Safeguarder has not spoken to and why.

### **Views**

The views of key people should be presented in the order that makes the most sense. Starting with the views of the child can help to make the report child centred. Sometimes, however, the views of the child are easier to understand when presented after the views of others.

Throughout, it is important to be clear on what has been expressed to, or observed by, the Safeguarder directly, versus what has been observed or expressed by someone else.

#### 1) Views of the child

These could be directly from the child and/or those who know the child best. It may also include the Safeguarder's observations of the child.

The Safeguarder must include how these views were gathered.

#### 2) Views of parents/carers/other family

The Safeguarder should include all views of relevant persons and people that are important to the child or caring for the child.

#### 3) Views of professionals

This should include the views of Social Work as a minimum.

It should also include any other key professionals involved in the child's/parent's/carer's lives.

It should be clear if the views of the professionals have come from their report or from a conversation the Safeguarder has had with them.

It should also be clear if this is the direct view of the professional or the Safeguarder's interpretation of the professional's view.

## **Analysis**

A Safeguarder must take the available evidence in their report and process it in a way that links to their conclusions and recommendations for each child.

It is important that the analysis does not just take place internally but is always clearly visible in the report.

It should include a discussion on the child's views, their rights, their needs, and their best interests.

The Safeguarder should demonstrate their "working out." This could include showing that:

- The impact of events on the child has been considered.
- The Safeguarder has taken into account any risk factors vs. protective factors.
- The child's needs vs. unmet needs have been considered.
- The Safeguarder has weighed up the risks and benefits of different options available.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This is about answering the "why?" questions, including why the Safeguarder has agreed or disagreed with the recommendations of key professionals such as Social Work.

It should be clear how the child's view has influenced the Safeguarder's recommendations.

All recommendations made must be clear, reasoned and justifiable.

**Safeguarder name.**

**Date report submitted.**

## Appendix 2 – Mandate

### Information sheet on Safeguarders requesting records from third parties

As a Safeguarder I want to learn about what is going on in a child or young person's life to help make sure that any decisions that are made at the hearing or in court are what is best for the child or young person.

In my role as a Safeguarder, I occasionally need to access records from different professionals involved in your/your child's life such as your GP or the Police. I need permission to do this. This helps me ensure I have all the information I need to do what is in your child's best interest. The section below outlines what information I am seeking access to and why.

1. What records are you seeking access to for your enquiries or reports?  
\*Complete as appropriate\*
2. Why do you need access to these records?  
\*Provide an explanation of why you need these and what you will do with them\*
3. Do you need access to all of my **[insert record type]** records?  
\*If yes, explain why you need all the records held by [insert record holder]  
  
\*If No, explain what specific aspects of the records you are requesting
4. Do you need any other information from me?  
\*Fill this section as required such as GP contact details etc.

**Mandate for Requesting Access to Records from a third-party**

I, \*INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL\*, understand that by agreeing to and signing this form I give, \*INSERT NAME OF SAFEGUARDER\*, permission to access my *\*insert type of records i.e. GP/medical records/Police records\** for *\*insert reason, i.e. for a report/court proceedings.\**

Please give the Safeguarder, **\*INSERT SAFEGUARDER NAME\***, copies of my records, in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Safeguarder's signature:**

**Date:**

**Note for professional/organisation being asked for copies of records**

Practice Standard 5 for Safeguarders state that Safeguarders must comply with the data protection legislative framework, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. All personal information, whether held digitally or in paper format, relating to the appointment held by the Safeguarder must be destroyed securely following the end of the appointment.

## Appendix 3 – Report writing checklist

### Report writing checklist for Safeguarders

#### Basic reference information

Have I included:			
Name of the child and their date of birth		Name of the Safeguarder	
Date and reasons for appointment		Who appointed the Safeguarder	
Date the report was completed		A list of people spoken to during enquiries	
Date of the Children’s Hearing/court calling that the report was written for		The views of the child	
Relevant background information about the child’s circumstances		The views of all relevant persons	
Information as to key events or issues that have emerged during inquiries relevant to the consideration of what is in the child’s best interests		The views of professionals	
My reasons for not being able to do what the hearing/court asked me to		The views of any other individual spoken to	

#### Structure and presentation

Have I:			
Used clear headings		Used succinct paragraphs	
Numbered pages		Avoided legalistic language	
Used a logical structure		Avoided jargon and acronyms	
Used at least size 12 font		Avoided overly emotive statements	
Written in plain English		Proofread and reflected on the report before submission	
Been clear about my sources of information			

#### Language

Have I:			
Used neutral, non-judgemental language		Used everyday words	
Avoided writing in capitals		Explained all abbreviations or acronyms	
Avoided idioms		Avoided exaggerated language	
Avoided labelling people		Explained any technical terms	
Kept my sentences short		Kept my paragraphs succinct	
Used strength-based language		Used language the child will understand	



## Analysis

<b>Have I demonstrated/addressed:</b>		
The risks, strengths and weaknesses of each potential option		What the evidence tells me about what it is like to be this particular child, with this child's needs.
The strengths versus the challenges		Whether further assessments or information is required before a recommendation can be made.
What the protective factors and risk factors are for the child.		An analysis centred around the child's rights, needs, and best interests
What the child's needs are and what is meeting or not meeting these needs.		Separated out the views of others from the value or weight I have placed on them.
The impact of events on the child		

<b>Following my analysis have I:</b>		
Addressed the reasons as to why a Safeguarder was appointed		Ensured that my analysis is balanced and not emotive
Clearly stated my position		Ensured that my analysis supports the recommendations being made.
Supported my opinions with evidence		Approached the analysis individually for each child to ensure the recommendations reached are specific to each child.
Demonstrated clear links between the evidence gathered and how this has impacted my views.		

## Conclusions and Recommendations

<b>Have I:</b>		
Explained why I have agreed or disagreed with the recommendations of other professionals		Explained why I have or have not agreed with the child's view
Made it clear what I am asking the decision-maker to do		Shared my conclusions and recommendations with the child, family and social worker.

**Appendix 4 – Form 3 – Non-disclosure request\***

**Form 3 - Non-Disclosure Request  
Reports/Documents for a Children’s Hearing or Pre-Hearing Panel**

**This Form will be provided in full to the child (if able to understand), all relevant persons, any Safeguarder and panel members. The Request will be considered by the Children’s Hearing or Pre-Hearing Panel.**

Child’s Name:	Date of Birth:
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Name of Person making Request:
Job Title:
Date of Request:

**1. Summary of the information requested to be withheld**

<p>Current address of the child</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Current address of (specify relevant person)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Name of current carer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Name of proposed carer(s)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Address of proposed placement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child’s school/nursery</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child’s GP/health centre</p> <p>Other information to prevent disclosure of an address <i>Please give outline description e.g. ‘name of headteacher’</i></p> <p>Other information unrelated to an address <i>Please give outline description e.g. ‘medical history of X’, ‘previous behaviour by Y’, ‘family background of Z’</i></p>
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**2. Person(s) from whom the information is requested to be withheld**

**3. Reasons for making the request**

*Reasons should explain why disclosure of the information to the specified person(s) would be likely to cause significant harm to the child.*

**4. Which Document(s) Contain the Information**

Form 4

*Ideally provide the information to be withheld only on Form 4 and not in any other document.*

Other document(s) – specify by name and date

*If the request does not relate to the whole of the document specify all places within the document where the information appears e.g. by page and paragraph number.*

Please send to the relevant SCRA team mailbox

\*a copy of this form can be accessed [here](#)

**Appendix 5 – Form 4 - Non-disclosure request – Full details of information\***

**Form 4 - Non-disclosure Request – Full Details of Information**

Child's Name:	Date of Birth:
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Name of Person making the Request:
Job Title:
Date of Request:

<b>The following is the full information referred to in the Non-disclosure Request:</b>
<i>Current address of child:</i>
<i>Current address of (specify relevant person):</i>
<i>Name of current carer(s):</i>
<i>Name of proposed carer(s):</i>
<i>Address of proposed placement:</i>
<i>Child's school/nursery:</i>
<i>Child's GP/health centre:</i>
<i>Other information to prevent disclosure of an address:</i>
<i>Non-address related information:</i>

The above information is contained only in this Form, not in my report.

The above information is also contained in my report.

\*a copy of this form can be accessed [here](#)