

22 April 2026

Child Protection Case Conference Decision-Making

To request the following information in relation to child protection case conferences conducted by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

This request relates to the period covering the last three years.

1. The total number of child protection case conferences held.

Case Conferences	Initial Review	Review
2025/26	354	780
2024/25	287	712
2023/24	284	690

2. Where recorded, the number of conferences where the outcome or decision was not unanimous.

This is recorded in the Case Conference Minutes in each individual case.

Belfast Trust are unable to provide the above information as it is not centrally collated to provide. To undertake this exercise would necessitate a manual interrogation of data.

We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

3. Where recorded, the number of conferences where there was documented professional disagreement with the social worker's recommendation or assessment.

This is recorded in the Case Conference Minutes in each individual case.

Belfast Trust are unable to provide the above information as it is not centrally collated to provide. To undertake this exercise would necessitate a manual interrogation of data.

We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

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4. **A brief explanation or any recorded guidance on how decisions are reached at case conferences (for example, whether by consensus, formal voting, or another method).**

All matters in relation to a Child Protection Case Conference can be found in the following link:

[Child Protection Case Conferences](#)

5. **Any standard templates, forms, or guidance used for recording case conference minutes, specifically showing how decisions and any professional disagreement are documented.**

All matters in relation to a Child Protection Case Conference can be found in the following link:

[Child Protection Case Conferences](#)

6. **Any current policies or procedural guidance relating to:**
a) **how consensus is reached at case conferences**
b) **how disagreement or dissent from professionals is recorded**
c) **how professional challenge or escalation is managed**

All matters in relation to a Child Protection Case Conference can be found in the following link:

[Child Protection Case Conferences](#)

7. **Any summary-level audit, review, or quality assurance information (if held) that relates to decision-making or professional disagreement within case conferences.**

None available