

5.3.6 Quorate conferences

The primary principle for determining quoracy is that there should be sufficient agencies present to enable safe decisions to be made in the individual circumstances.

The minimum representation is Children's social care and at least two professional groups or other agencies who have had direct contact with the child who is the subject of the conference. In this context, a school is a separate agency from the rest of the People's services – Children's Directorate. A representative each for children's social care and the school should be provided.

Attendees whose contribution relates to their professional expertise or responsibility for relevant services are not counted in determining quoracy.

Where a conference is inquorate it should not ordinarily proceed, and in such circumstances the Chair must ensure that either:

- An interim protection plan is produced; or
- The existing plan is reviewed with the professionals and the family members that do attend, so as to safeguard the welfare of the child/ren.

Another early conference date must be set immediately.

In exceptional circumstances, the Chair may decide to proceed with the conference despite lack of agency representation. This would be relevant where:

- A child has not had relevant contact with three agencies (e.g. pre-birth conferences);
- Sufficient information is available; and
- A delay will be detrimental to the child.

Where an inquorate conference is held, an early review conference should be arranged.