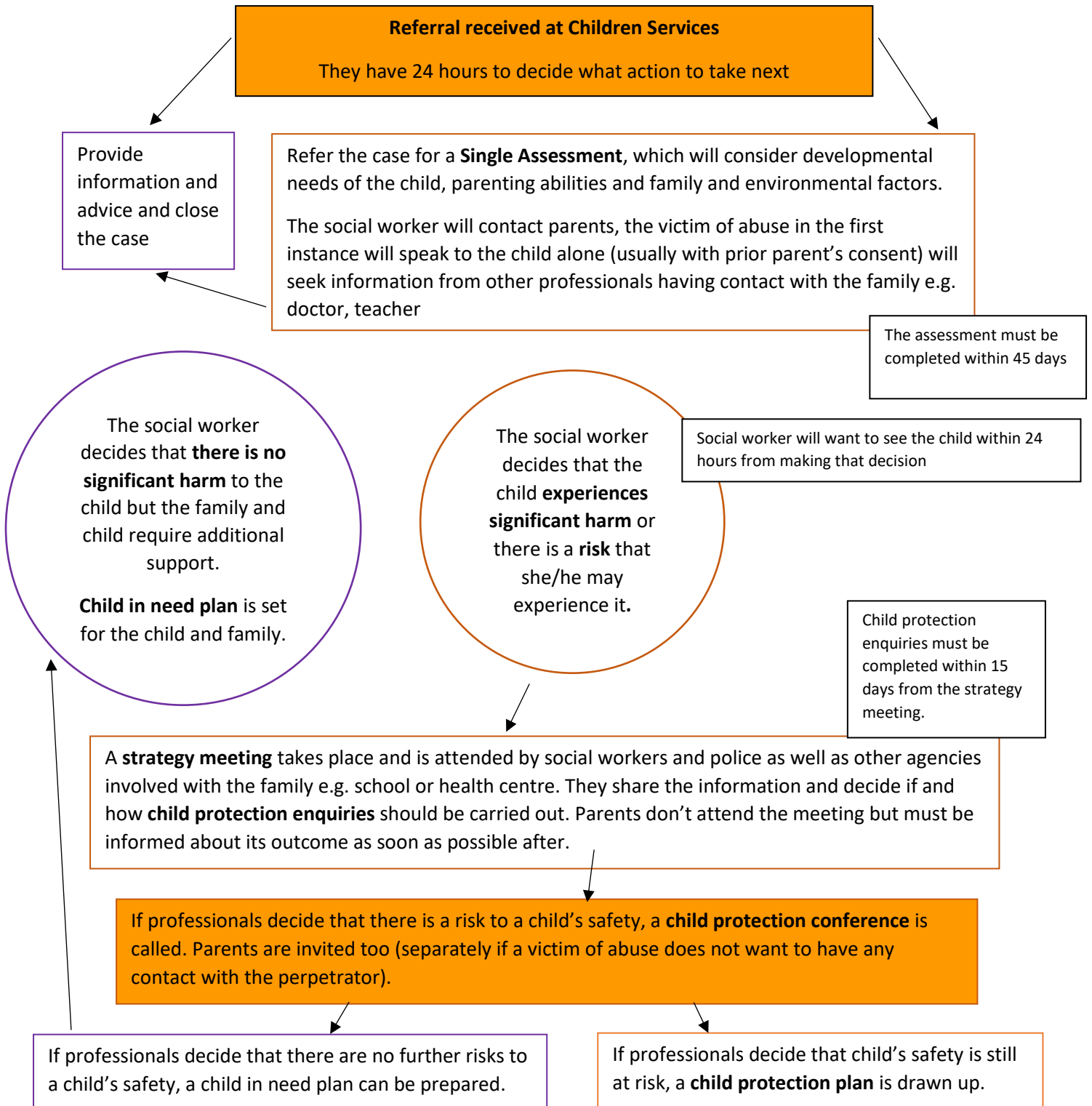


# ACTIONS TAKEN BY CHILDREN SERVICES



**Significant harm** - Ill-treatment or impairment of health or development including for example impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another; Significant harm can include: emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Harm can be caused by a parent's actions and/or by lack of action of a parent which would protect the child from harm.

### Child protection plan

It sets actions for parents and agencies supporting them and the child. A **core group** is set up, it consists of professionals working with the family. The group meets regularly and parent also takes part in the meetings, or both parents if they both co-operate and there are no risks from the parent who was abusive. Progress in completing a child protection plan is discussed at these meetings.

Child protection plan is reviewed in 3 months at the next Child protection conference and then every 6 months.

If a child protection plan will not bring expected results and a child's social worker will have serious concerns about the child's welfare and safety, Children Services can have a **legal planning meeting** to decide what actions need to be taken to protect the child.

A **pre-proceedings meeting** is organised to discuss with parent(s) what needs to be improved/changed in order to keep their caring responsibilities for the child. A parent who receives a **letter before proceedings** should immediately seek legal advice from a solicitor who is a member of the Children Law Accreditation Scheme – the current list can be found on this website <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/support-services/accreditation/children-law/>. Legal representation is free of charge.

A decision is made to start **care proceedings**, which aim to obtain a court order which allows removal of children from parents' care. A social worker will notify parent(s) about this in a **letter of issue**. Parents should seek legal advice  
  
<<< as before

Parent(s) have an opportunity to receive further help and can work with services to improve the situation of the child. The case review will be undertaken at the next meeting after 6-8 weeks.

**Care proceedings** are instigated by Children Services to protect a child. The court can issue a **care order** which will give Local Authorities parenting responsibilities for the child, including the right to decide where the child lives or a **supervision order**, which gives Local Authorities the right to monitor the needs and progress in the child's situation and they must provide support to the child and family.

Parents can access legal representation free of charge throughout court proceedings.