



Core Groups and Core Group Meetings

A guide for children and their families



If there are concerns about the safety of a child, parents and professionals work together to identify the difficulties, and to find solutions.

A meeting called a 'child protection conference' will be held and this is when families and professionals join together to think about the child and the adults in the family, and make a plan to support the parents and to help them to keep the child safe. The 'safety plan' is checked and supported by the 'core group'.

We understand that the child protection process can at times feel overwhelming for parents who do not understand what is going on. By listening to parents, we are finding ways to help families understand what it's all about. This leaflet aims to help parents understand what a core group and core group meeting is and what to expect.

What is a core group?

A 'core group' is the name given to the family and professionals who work together to make sure the safety plan is followed and is working.

Who is part of the core group?

At the first child protection conference, everyone agrees who should be involved in the core group. This will always include the family and social worker and may include other professionals who are working with the family such as teachers, nursery keyworkers, health visitors, domestic abuse workers, drug and alcohol worker or housing support workers. There may be other professionals working with the family that will be part of the core group.

Responsibility of core group members

It is very important that parents attend the core group meetings to work with the professionals and let people know how things are going and if the right support is being offered. Parents, often along with wider family members, are usually the best people to understand their child's needs and we know from speaking to parents that when they are listened to and heard, more positive changes take place. It is important that the family and professionals share any worries they have as everyone is working together to make life better for children and their families and if the safety plan is not working, the core group will look at what else might be needed to help the family.



How often are core group meetings held?

Core group meetings are held 10 days after the first child protection conference and then every 4-6 weeks. This makes sure the right support is put in place for the safety plan to work and families understand what it is they need to do.

What happens in a core group meeting?

The core group talks about the child's safety plan, what is working well and if there is anything that needs to be done differently. Families should be clear about what help they are receiving, from who and by when. All families have strengths and these should also be shared at the core group meetings. The meetings also give families the opportunity to say if they have any worries or if something is not working well for their family, as they know their family best.

The social worker will bring the safety plan to each meeting to remind everyone of what the worries are and what we need to do together to make everyone less worried.

Recording of the core group meeting

The social worker will keep a record of core group meetings, which will be shared with the family and professionals as soon as possible so everyone knows what has been agreed and what they need to do next.

Follow us



If you would like the information in this document in a different format, please call 020 8303 7777 and ask for Communications/Graphics. The reference to quote is: 607580/10.19