

## 5. Implementation of Child Protection Plans

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### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 When a conference decides that a child should be the subject of a child protection plan, a qualified and experienced LA children's social worker must be appointed as the lead social worker to co-ordinate all aspects of the inter-agency child protection plan.
- 5.1.2 The core group is the forum to co-ordinate this multi-agency work and the membership will have been identified at the initial child protection conference.

### 5.2 Core group

#### Responsibilities

- 5.2.1 The core group is responsible for the detailed formulation and implementation of the child protection plan, previously outlined at the conference. Agencies should ensure that members of the core group undertake their roles and responsibilities effectively in accordance with the agreed child protection plan.

All members of the core group are jointly responsible for:

- Collecting information to assist the lead social worker in completing the assessment;
- Participating in the compilation and analysis of the assessment;
- The formulation and implementation of the detailed child protection plan, specifying who should do what, by when;
- Carrying out their part in implementing the plan including the commitment of identified resources;
- Monitoring and evaluating progress against specified outcomes for the child of the detailed child protection plan;
- Making recommendations to subsequent review conferences about future protection plans and the child's needs being met stipulating specific outcomes;
- Attending core group meetings and reviewing progress to ensure that there is no drift in achieving the aims of the Child Protection Plan;
- The core group must ensure that the child protection plan sets out the frequency for all core group members to see the child and the frequency of all contacts;
- All action points must be clearly recorded, analysis of the risk of harm to the child should be made and all the information should be shared with the lead social worker and the core group. All core group members are responsible for keeping a record of the outcome of the meeting.

- 5.2.2 If the lead social worker or any other involved professional has difficulty obtaining direct access to the child, the LA children's social care manager / child protection adviser should be informed, as well as other core group members. This must result in a plan of action agreed between core group members and the police including consideration of convening a review conference.

## Membership

- 5.2.3 Membership of the core group will have been identified at the initial child protection conference and must include:
- The lead social worker/ first line manager. Which one of these professionals chairs the core group is dependent on the complexity of the case;
  - The child if appropriate (see [Child Protection Conferences Procedure, Involving children and family members](#));
  - Parents and relevant family members;
  - Professionals involved with the child and / or parent;
  - Foster carers or residential care staff who will have direct contact with the family.
- 5.2.4 Core groups are an important forum for working with parents, wider family members, and children of sufficient age and understanding. Where there are conflicts of interest

between family members in the work of the core group, the child's best interests should always take precedence.

## Timing

- 5.2.5** The core group meeting will convene immediately following the initial child protection conference where it is decided that the child/children should be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- 5.2.6** The first core group will be chaired by the manager of the incoming team and the date of subsequent meetings, will be set, which must be at least four weekly.
- 5.2.7** Where a meeting needs to be rescheduled, this must be confirmed in writing to all concerned by the lead social worker.

## 5.3 Formulation of child protection plan

### Purpose of child protection plan

- 5.3.1** The purpose of a child protection plan is to facilitate and make explicit a co-ordinated approach to:
- Ensure that each child in the household is safe and prevent them from suffering further harm;
  - Promote the child's health and development (i.e. welfare);
  - Provided it is in the best interests of the child, to support the family and wider family members to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child.
- 5.3.2** It must be clarified for parents:
- What the causes for concern are that have resulted in the decision that a child needs a child protection plan;
  - What needs to change and contingency plans if not;
  - What the intended outcomes of the intervention and services are;
  - What is expected of them as part of the plan for safeguarding the child.
- 5.3.3** Review of progress on achieving the outcomes set out in the child protection plan and consideration as to whether changes need to be made should be an agenda item at each review conference and core group meeting. Contingency plans should be made, if there is no evidence of change in relation to the child's safety and welfare.

- 5.3.4 The child protection plan may be used as evidence, in any legal proceedings, of the efforts that have been made to work in partnership (this must be made clear to parents).

For further details about the development of the CP plan, the interventions and services including the decision making see [Best Practice for Child Protection Conferences Procedure](#).

### **Detailed child protection plan - written agreement**

- 5.3.5 The lead social worker must ensure that there is a record of the core group meetings and must ensure that they formulate the detailed child protection plan in the form of a written agreement. Each Local Safeguarding Children Board should ensure that standard arrangements for the recording of the written agreement are in place.

- 5.3.6 The child protection plan / agreement should take into consideration the wishes and feelings of the child, and the views of the parents, insofar as they are consistent with the child's welfare. The lead social worker should make every effort to ensure that the child/ren and parents have a clear understanding of the planned outcomes, that they accept the plan and are willing to work to it.

The completed child protection plan / agreement should be explained to the child in a manner which is in accordance with their age and understanding. The child should be given a copy of the plan written at a level appropriate to their age and understanding, and in their preferred language.

- 5.3.7 Professionals should ensure that the parents understand:

- The evidence of the child suffering significant harm, or likely significant harm, which resulted in the child becoming the subject of a child protection plan;
- What needs to change;
- What is expected of them in the plan to safeguard the child.

- 5.3.8 If the parents' preferences have not been accepted in the plan / agreement about how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, the reasons for this should be explained. Parents should be told about their right to complain and make representations, and how to do so.

- 5.3.9 All parties should be clear about the respective roles and responsibilities of family members and different agencies in implementing the child protection plan / agreement.

- 5.3.10 Copies of the notes and the written agreement should be circulated to core group members within five working days of the core group meeting. Implementation of the child protection plan must begin immediately.

- 5.3.11 Any disagreements should have been discussed at the core group meeting, recorded with reasons and reflected appropriately in the written plan / agreement. It is permissible to rely on electronic signatures or emails confirming acceptance of an agency's responsibilities under the child protection plan, but all such signatures and emails must be collected in the child's LA children's social care record.
- 5.3.12 The child protection plan / agreement should also be on the adult service user's record if the parent is known to LA adult social care or health services.
- 5.3.13 All agencies are responsible for the implementation of the child protection plan and all professionals must ensure they are able to deliver their commitments or, if not possible, that these are re-negotiated.

## 5.4 The lead social worker role

- 5.4.1 It is important that the role of the lead social worker is fully explained at the initial child protection conference and at the core group.
- 5.4.2 At every initial or pre-birth conference, where a child protection plan is put into place, the conference chair must name a qualified social worker, identified by the LA children's social care manager, to fulfil the role of lead social worker for the child.
- 5.4.3 The lead social worker should complete the assessment of the child and family, securing contributions from core group members and others as necessary. They should co-ordinate the contribution of family members and other agencies to plan the actions which need to be taken, put the child protection plan into effect, and review progress against the planned outcomes set out in the plan.
- 5.4.4 The lead social worker should also regularly ascertain the child's wishes and feelings, and keep the child up to date with the child protection plan and any developments or changes.
- 5.4.5 The lead social worker should:
- During the section 47 investigation the child/children must be seen as a minimum weekly between the section 47 visit and the ICPCC.
  - **Once the child/children are subject to a CP plan the visiting frequency will be set at the initial core group. The visiting frequency will be determined by individual need and risk, for the child/children, but can range from a minimum of 7 -15 working days. Any decision to alter the visiting frequency beyond the 15 days MUST be agreed by a Head of Service, however it may be necessary to visit more frequently than every 7 days and this does not**

**require head of service permission**

A CP visit consists of:

- Visiting the child/ren in their home environment
- **See the child on their own on EACH VISIT ( IN ACCORDANCE WITH AGE AND UNDERSTANDING, and establishing from them whether they feel safe)**
- **OBSERVE THE CHILD IN The PRESENCE OF PARENTS/CARERS AND FAMILY SITUATION**
- Explain the plan to the child in a manner which is in accordance with their age and understanding and agree the plan with the child;
- Full observation of the child's environment including, checking cupboards, fridges for food, bathrooms
- Hazards, and other health and safety issues, including potentially dangerous pets
- Garden and outside surroundings, rubbish containment
- Who else lives or frequently visit the property
- See the child's bedroom as agreed in the plan but not less than alternate occasions;
- Undertake direct work with the child and family in accordance with the child protection plan, taking into account the child's wishes and feelings and the views of the parents in so far as they are consistent with the child's welfare;
- Convene and chair / lead second and subsequent core group meetings (if the first core group meeting was chaired / led by their manager). Complex cases as specified in local protocols will continue to be chaired/led by a manager;
- Provide a written record of meetings for all core group members and the LA children's social care manager;
- Ensure that the child protection plan is developed, in conjunction with members of the core group, into a detailed multi-agency protection plan;
- Clearly note and include in the written record any areas of disagreement;
- Produce a written agreement from the protection plan to be maintained on the child's file and circulated to the core group members;
- Obtain a full understanding of the family's history, which must involve reading previous LA children's social care files as well as current records in use in LA children's social care, including those relating to other children who have been part of any households involving the current carers of the child. Additional information should be obtained from relevant other agencies and local authorities;
- Complete the assessment of the child and family, securing contributions / information from core group members and any other agencies with relevant information;
- Co-ordinate the contribution of family members and all agencies in putting the

plan into action and regularly reviewing the objectives stated in the plan.

- The lead social worker must maintain a complete and up-to-date signed record on the child's current file, electronic or manual.

A Child Protection visit is not:

Seeing a child in school ( although this forms a useful part of assessment and planning and assuring ourselves that children are safe)

Seeing a child at contact or only in the presence of parents/carers

## **5.5 Difficulties in implementing the child protection plan**

- 5.5.1 Where any member of the core group is aware of difficulties implementing the protection plan, the lead social worker must be informed immediately and a core group meeting / discussion co-ordinated to agree a reconsidered child protection plan. Alternatively a strategy discussion/meeting should be convened to consider the need for immediate emergency police action to gain access to a premises where appropriate, a s47 enquiry, legal action, and/or to bring forward the date of the review child protection conference. Arranging a legal planning meeting should be considered by the lead social worker with their line manager.
- 5.5.2 Circumstances about which the lead social worker should be informed include inability to gain access to a child who is subject to a child protection plan, for whatever reasons, on two consecutive home visits (the second visit being a second attempt to see the child in close succession of the first attempt).
- 5.5.3 If members are concerned that there are difficulties implementing the protection plan arising from disagreement amongst professional agencies or a core group member not carrying out agreed responsibilities this must be addressed by:
- First, discussion with core group members;
  - Second, if required, involvement of respective managers / child protection advisers (e.g. child protection manager for LA children's social care, designated / named safeguarding children doctor / nurse, teacher or police DCI);
  - If the situation remains unresolved see [Local Safeguarding Children Boards Procedure](#), [Quality Assurance Procedure](#) and [Professional Conflict Resolution Procedure](#).