

One minute guide

Child Protection – Chairing a Multi-Agency Core Group Meeting

April 2021

What is Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)?

Social workers should:

- Be the **lead practitioner for inter-agency work** with the child and family, **co-ordinating the contribution of family members and practitioners** into putting the child protection plan into effect **record decisions and actions agreed** at core group meetings as well as the **written views of those who were not able to attend** and follow up those actions to ensure they take place.

The core group should:

- Further develop the outline child protection plan, based on assessment findings, **and set out what needs to change, by how much and by when, in order for the child to be safe** and have their needs met
- **Decide what steps need to be taken**, and by whom, to complete the in-depth assessment **to inform decisions about the child's safety and welfare**
- **Implement the child protection plan and take joint responsibility** for carrying out the agreed tasks, monitoring progress and outcomes, and refining the plan as needed

Practice Reviews

- Practice reviews continually emphasise the importance of information sharing and collaboration between agencies so that professionals can fully understand any risks a child may be exposed to and take appropriate action to keep them safe.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Everyone should be clear on what their roles and responsibilities are in the core group meeting
- Opportunity to review danger statements, safety goals and bottom lines around children which can support the work of the core group
- Everyone works to the same aim
- Shapes the work which will be achieved by the core group which the family are part of.

Top Tips

- Ensure children's and young people's views are at the fore of your mind
- Prepare properly for the meeting-What work can be shared between members of the core group?
- Give everyone the opportunity to contribute-even if professionals are unable to attend, they can provide information and contribute to the child protection plan through other means
- Give parents/family a brief outline of the points which will be covered beforehand and discuss
- Be assertive in keeping everyone 'on task' and keeping to time
- At the end of the meeting, recap main points and decisions taken
- Finish on time-this values people's time and attendance

Using signs of Safety to support participation from core group members

Why is language important?

- Clear and precise language ensures everyone understands the information and discussion

Language that describes risk and children's need

- Signs of safety methodologies – creates a common and shared language for all to understand
- Avoid the use of acronyms and jargon
- Use Scaling Questions – ask each member of the core group to scale a specific question
 - For example; On a scale of 0-10, how much is child A's education affected by the arguments within the home? Where 0 is not at all and 10 represents, no education progression is being made
- Ask individuals their reason behind their rating and what would need to happen to improve the rating for the child
- Important to understand each member scaling – everyone does not need to agree
- This is important so that all involved can support and keep assessing the situation and how much progress is being made.

Differences in opinion

- It is good to discuss and explore differences in opinions as it builds the best picture to then implement the best interventions for the child

Agree Trajectory

- Agree a plan as a core group – describes and measures the pathway to success

Key Contacts and Further Information

Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership website - <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/lscb>

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Signs of Safety One Minute Guide - https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/33980/signs_of_safety