

**Multi-Agency Group Agreement and Expectations of members of all  
Multi-Agency Meetings**

**This agreement and these expectations apply to all group members across the continuum of need however there are specific requirements relevant for child protection core groups and plans which are outlined below.**

**This Multi-Agency Group Agreement sets out the roles, responsibilities and expectations of members.**

**Family Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of initial meeting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of this agreement:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Multi-Agency Group Membership:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>	<b>ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES</b>

**Organisation of Meetings:**

**Frequency of meetings:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Who will book the venue** \_\_\_\_\_

**How a record of the meeting will be kept** \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Meetings	Chair <sup>1</sup>	Minute taker <sup>2</sup>

**Arrangements/Procedure to follow should anyone:**

Wish to call earlier meeting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is unable to attend the meeting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is dissatisfied with the running of the meeting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> In this context the term 'Chair' refers to the person facilitating the meeting, agreeing and following an agenda (see suggested standing items overleaf), ensuring all members have an opportunity to participate.

<sup>2</sup> The role of the minute taker is to take brief notes, capturing: the main points raised in the meeting; any areas of disagreement; decisions made; changes to the plan with reasons. This agreement should include reference to who is responsible for typing up and circulating the minutes and expected timescales.

### Standing Agenda Items:

1. Brief update on any significant events or related matters that impact on the child since last meeting.
  - a. Include voice of the child
  - b. Engagement of parents/carers with the Plan
2. Review of progress against the outcomes identified on the Plan.
  - a. Are there any court orders that need to be taken into account?
  - b. Does the contingency plan need to be amended or invoked?
  - c. Has consideration been given to the longer-term arrangements for the child if progress is not made within the required time-scale? (Permanency planning)
3. Analysis of current strengths, protective factors, concerns, risks.
4. Identification of new tasks/actions with timescales.

You may wish to use the Strengthening Families Approach to Child Protection Conference and Review framework to structure all your multi-agency meetings:

#### Strengths and Protective Factors

Here we are seeking to identify the strengths and protective factors that exist within the family, including extended family and significant others who are able to positively support the family. Strengths and Protective Factors are things parents/carers do on a regular basis which keep their children well cared for and safe.

#### Harm or Danger

Here we are seeking to understand what is the risk, actual harm or danger and what this “looks like”, in relation to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

and the impact on the well-being and welfare of the child

#### Grey Areas

Here we are seeking to clarify things we need more information about or to further assess specific issues. We may have been given information but we are unclear if it is factually correct or concerns that require further assessment

#### Complicating Factors

Here we consider factors that may impact on the welfare of the child or young person and parents or carers ability to provide good enough parenting, stability or meet the emotional and physical needs of the child or young person. These are things which make it harder for everyone to focus on harm and/or more difficult to bring about change.

#### Child or Young Person’s views, feelings, observations

What is life like for them through their eyes?

What are they saying about their experience of parenting and care?  
What do they say needs to happen to make things better for them?

## Core Groups and Child Protection Plan

When a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, it recognises that a multi-agency group formally identified that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and that a child protection plan is needed “... to ensure the child is safe from harm and prevent him or her from suffering further harm; promote the child’s health and development; and support the family and wider family members to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child, provided it is in the best interests of the child.” (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015).

*‘Although the Social Worker has responsibility for leading the inter-agency work with child and family, **the core group should 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**’ Working Together 2015*

This is a formal process and reflects the seriousness of the concerns the conference has determined. The following sets out good practice guidance to ensure that Core Groups develop and implement the Outline Child Protection Plan into a detailed working tool in partnership with parents, carers, children and young people, specifically addressing their involvement in assessment, planning and identifying what support, advice and advocacy is available to them.

1. Child Protection Plans originate from the Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) as Outline Plans to be developed into more detailed plans at the first Core Group meeting, taking into account the recommendations made at the ICPC
2. A copy of the Outline Child Protection Plan is available on Children Assessment and Safeguarding System (CASS) within 24 hours of the ICPC at the same time as the recommendations and decisions made and will be circulated to all those attending the ICPC within 15 working days
3. At the first Core Group, Core Group members must develop the Outline Plan into a detailed inter-agency plan.
4. As the Lead Professional, the Social Worker should attend all core group meetings. If they are unable to attend a pre-planned meeting, an appropriate and fully briefed alternative representative should be identified by Children’s Social Care to chair the meeting or a timely alternative date, within timescales, should be arranged.
5. In **exceptional circumstances**, for example, when there is insufficient time to rearrange the meeting **and** a representative from Children’s Social Care is not

available, the meeting should go ahead as planned, facilitated<sup>3</sup> by another member of the core group and a summary of the discussion and outcome of the meeting sent to the Social Worker as soon as possible after the meeting.

6. See relevant Strengthening Families Approach to Child Protection Review Conferences documents regarding preparation for Review meetings.

### All Multi-Agency Meetings and Plans

1. A SMART Plan should be **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic**, with **Time Scales and Sustainable outcomes**, which are child or young person focussed. The plan should aim to establish permanency for the child(ren) and include consideration of robust alternative arrangements (contingency planning) if there is insufficient progress against the plan.
2. Child focussed outcomes should arise out of the Single Assessment addressing:
  - a. The child and young person's developmental needs
  - b. The parent/carers capacity to meet the needs of the child or young person
  - c. Family and environmental factors that impact on the wellbeing of children and young people including neglect
3. All actions should:
  - a) Identify unmet needs, risk of harm, what needs to change and how it will be measured. This will include selecting and using an appropriate tool.
  - b) Have appropriate timescales to monitor and review progress
  - c) Be constructed in such a way that it is jargon free and clearly understood by parents and carers in order to reduce risk
  - d) Be able to demonstrate sustainable change
  - e) Achieve a level of change that results in the child or young person no longer being deemed to be in need or at risk of harm/significant harm and in need of a Plan
4. Progress towards the desired outcomes should be the focus of each multi-agency meeting. If needs are met and risks are reduced and managed, the outcomes need to be reviewed and amended. If progress is not being made within the required timescales, the contingency plan needs to be actioned.

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<sup>3</sup> In this context facilitating the meeting, involves making sure the agenda is followed and all members are given an opportunity to participate

## Useful Documents:

[Dispute Resolution Process](#) (D) - *This procedure and practice guidance provides all professionals who are involved in the child protection process and specifically in Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) and Child Protection Review Conferences (CPRC), with the information they need in order to;*

- *Share and raise any concern they have that the process and the outcome of the conferences may not be ensuring that children and young people are not being protected*
- *Understand how they should address these concerns in a professional and appropriate way that supports their professional duties and responsibilities, and supports effective joint working.*
- *Support the authority and responsibilities of the Chair of the meetings to ensure that decisions and outcomes protect children and young people*
- *Ensure that line management and designated professionals are involved to ensure that concerns are responded to wherever possible on an informal basis and in a timely way*
- *Escalate when informal resolution is unsuccessful so that the LSCB may support and determine an appropriate resolution.*
- *Be able to be confident that challenge at all points will be taken seriously and that a learning approach will be adopted.*

[Professionals Meetings](#) (P) - *In addition to routine planning meetings, core groups, conferences and reviews, there are occasions when it is not appropriate to involve children and young people or their parents/carers in multi-agency meetings. This guidance explains how and when Professionals Meetings can be convened and managed in the best interests of the child at every level of the Continuum of Need.*

[Information Sharing Guidance](#) (I) - *Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies within Calderdale and across borders is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision. This local guidance identifies the key principles of information sharing and how to respond in specific circumstances.*