



# Working together to make your child safer

*(CS-CIN meetings)*

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A guide for parents and carers



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## 1. What is a CS-CIN meeting

A contextual safeguarding Child in Need (CS-CIN) meeting takes place when there are worries about the safety of a young person, and the risks are coming from outside the family. This is often referred to as **extra-familial harm**.

Worries may be very serious, about **significant harm** to the young person. The harm is usually focused in spaces and places outside the family home, sometimes in the local community and sometimes elsewhere. The harm is from someone or some people who are not members of the household.

The meeting is between:

- a young person's parents or carers
- the young person
- family members and friends, if appropriate
- professionals

The purpose of the meeting is to make a plan which puts support around your child and yourselves, to help keep them safe.

The professionals will be people involved with you and your child. We welcome you bringing family members and adult friends who you think can help, but please remember they will hear your family information.

### **Where the meeting will be held**

The meeting will be held in a meeting room. This has plenty of space to bring everyone together. We can bring people in

on screen if necessary, if there is a reason they can't or shouldn't come in person. But this will need to be agreed in advance with the chair.

## 2. Who will be there

### **You – the parent or carer**

Parents and carers are always invited to CS-CIN meetings. You may be the parent living with the young person, who does most or all of the caring. You may be a parent living outside the household, and may not see them very often. If you have parental responsibility, and see your child, we would expect to invite you.

### **Can my child come to the meeting?**

Yes, it's really important that your child comes. We want to work together with young people in these meetings. Please tell us how you think your child can be supported to take part.

The social worker will put them in touch with an advocate from Barnardo's, who is independent, works for them and can support them at the meeting.

### **Family members, friends, community**

There may be people who are important to you and your child, who are part of your support network. This could be family members, friends or someone important in your community like a religious leader. They may be able to be part of a plan, or you may just want someone to support you in this meeting. Please talk to the chair about this before the day of the meeting, so they can discuss with you and agree attendance. Please remember that this person will hear all

your family information.

## **Meeting chair**

The chair is an experienced social work manager who is not part of your child's social work team. Their job is to run the meeting. They will contact you before the meeting to talk about it, and how they can support everyone to take part.

They would like to talk to your child before the meeting too, and will contact them as well.

## **Social worker and social work manager**

You have already met your child's social worker as this is the person who completed an assessment with you and your family. The social worker will come to the meeting to talk about the work they have been doing with the young person and yourself. Sometimes the social work manager attends.

You may meet a new social worker in this meeting, as assessing social workers stop working with families soon after the first meeting and another social worker takes over.

## **Which other professionals might come**

**Education:** If your child is at school or college, they will be invited.

**Health:** If your child attends school the school nurse will be invited, as well as other health professionals working with them. Your GP will be asked to share relevant health information about you and your child, usually in a report.

**Other professionals** working with you and your child are invited. For example, someone supporting their mental health, or working with them about drug or alcohol misuse, or a Youth Justice worker. Police will be invited if there has been recent involvement with a police team.

Professionals will be asked to come so they can share information about your child, and suggest how they can help with the plan.

## **Reports**

All the professionals invited to the meeting write a report about how they support you and your child, what they think is working well and what they are worried about. The social worker will have written an assessment.

Each professional is responsible for their own report and for sharing this with you. This should be two working days before the first meeting, and five working days before any other review meeting.

## **Contribution forms**

You and your child will be asked to complete contribution forms. Like the professionals you will be asked to share what you think is working well and what you are worried about. You don't have to complete these forms but we hope you will do so.

# **3. What happens at the meeting**

The chair will settle you into the meeting room and answer any questions you have before anyone else joins you.

The chair asks everyone to introduce themselves at the start of the meeting.

They will ask the social worker to say why they are worried and explain why the meeting is needed.

They will ask you, your child and your family members what you think. They will ask what works well in your family, what you are worried about and what additional support you need.

The professionals will share their views.

They will ask what would help to keep your child safe and well. The chair will give everyone a chance to speak.

## Using a scale

Everyone in the meeting including you and your family will be asked to use the scale below to think about how safe your child is.



## The plan

Everyone at the meeting will think about what may help, and agree a plan of what needs to happen next to support you to keep your child safe. It is important the plan is right for your child, you and your family.

You will all be asked to give your views about whether the plan you make should be a CS-CIN plan, to help to keep your child safe from exploitation risks outside the family. The plan is a voluntary plan, so you do need to be in agreement.

## The words we use

When we describe your child's experiences, we will not use language which could suggest that they are in some way responsible for exploitation they may suffer, or crimes they may be victims of. Language like this will always be challenged. We should reflect the pressures children are put under. We need to be clear that they themselves do not have control of abusive or exploitative situations. We need to be clear about how badly affected children are.

## 4. What happens after the meeting

### Making a record of the meeting

A written summary of the meeting and the plan will be typed by the chair during and after the meeting. It will be sent to you with the reports from the social worker and other professionals involved, and your and your child's contribution forms.

### Progress meetings and visits

If a contextual safeguarding plan is made there will be regular **progress meetings**, when family and professionals will meet to look at the plan. You will all review the progress of the plan



and if it is helping to reduce the concerns.

The social worker will meet with your child at least every two weeks, and see you regularly as well.

## **Review meetings**

A Review CS-CIN meeting will be held three months later, to see if the plan has helped to make changes and make your child safer. There may be further review meetings agreed after that, if you and those attending agree this is needed.

## **5. How to prepare for the meeting**

You will get the reports before the meeting so you can read them. Please let the social worker know if you need help to do this.

Please tell the social worker if you or your child have additional needs they should know about, so they can support you in the best way possible.

Please do think before the meeting about the strengths of your family, as well as what you are worried about, and what might be helpful for you and your family.

It would be very helpful if you could complete the parent /carer contribution form for the meeting, although you do not have to. Please do this 2 days before the meeting so it can be shared in advance with the chair and others who are invited.

## 6. Your right to complain

The chair will try to resolve any concerns you have about the meeting. Please speak to them or write to them as soon as possible after the meeting if you wish to raise something.

To make a complaint using a secure form, you can use Haringey complaints service's online feedback form, at <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/council-feedback/childrens-social-care-complaints-procedure>

If you can't access this link or form, call 020 8489 3424. You can also ask the chair to send a link to you.

Barnardo's is funded by Haringey to provide a free independent advocacy service to help young people who wish to complain about social care services.

### **Barnardo's:**

*Freephone: 0800 085 8287*

*Telephone: 020 8768 5058*

*Email: [advocacy2@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:advocacy2@barnardos.org.uk)*

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