

Family Group Conference Service

Family Group Conference



What is a Family Group Conference (FGC)?

It's a family decision making process, facilitated by independent Family Group Conference Convenors, who enable families to make decisions for their own children which address concerns raised by professionals.

It is a **voluntary** process where recommendations can be made for the family to be offered an FGC but their choice in this respected by professionals.

Information for families can be found at the following link [Family Group Conference Leaflet](#)

Who can make a referral?

Professionals within Early Help, Social Care and other Lead Professionals through Multi Agency Action Meetings (APMs).

Phase 1 of FGC roll out particularly targets Early Help, Duty & Assessment, Care Management and Children in Care.

How is a referral made?

Referral forms are available by emailing the FGC Service Inbox, from the Dudley Connect Website (under Family Group Conferencing) and from the Centre for Professional Practice website by accessing [Family Group Conference Referral Form](#)

What are the timescales?

FGC National Standards advise that timescale from allocation to the FGC being held is 6-8 weeks. This can vary dependent upon family engagement, locality and number of invitees to prepare. To see the pathway for family group conferences please access the following link [Family Group Conference Referral Pathway](#)

What are our expectations of the referrer?

Referrers complete the referral form, share it with family/person with Parental Responsibility and gain the parents' consent through signature on the form and return to the FGC Co-Ordinator via the FGC Service Inbox – fgc.service@dudley.gov.uk

The referrer needs to be available on the day of the FGC to offer information and answer questions at the start of the meeting and to consider the Family Plan at the end. The Referrers' acceptance of the Family Plan may be subject to relevant checks being made to ensure the Plan promotes the safety and wellbeing of the child.

What are the expectations of the FGC Convenor?

FGC Convenor meets with the referrer to clarify information.

FGC Convenor meets with family to identify the family's choice of invitees.

FGC Convenor prepares all invitees, sharing the information on the referral form.

The FGC Convenor engages with the child/young person to promote the voice of the child within the FGC, considering use of advocacy and finding innovative ways of representing their views.

The FGC Convenor will always convey any safeguarding issues to the referrer.

What else does the FGC Team offer?

An **Initial Family Response Meeting**. This may be required more quickly than an FGC and we strive to offer a small scale family meeting within 72 hours of an emergency situation i.e. emergency accommodation. This service can be accessed by contacting the FGC team on **01384 815142**.

The FGC offer also includes consultation for Practitioners regarding the use of the **5 stage Restorative Family Meeting (located in the Restorative Practice Training Manual)**.

We will support the practitioner to facilitate Restorative Family Meetings within their own families.

Our Vision

For every child in Dudley MBC to have the right to an opportunity to have a Family Group Conference at every stage of their journey within Early Help and Social Care.