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**Practice Guidance**

**Core Groups**

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# FLOW CHART FOR FREQUENCY 0F CORE GROUPS

INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE

OUTLINE PROTECTION PLAN

CHILD IN NEED PLAN

10 days

3 months

FIRST CORE GROUP

- chaired by Team Manager

6 weeks

CHILD IN NEED REVIEW MEETING

2nd CORE GROUP - TM

to attend

JOINT REPORT

Single assessment

4 weeks

REVIEW CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE

6 weeks

CORE GROUP

6 months

6 weeks

CORE GROUP

6 weeks

CORE GROUP -

TM to attend

SINGLE ASSESSMENT (completed by RCPC)

4 weeks

REVIEW CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE

# What to do…

**Core Group Membership –** At the first core group it is important to ensure that all of the agencies working with the child and family are represented on the core group and are a part of the creation, implementation and review of the protection plan. Core group members may be opted in and out as appropriate as the needs of the family change and agency interventions may cease or begin.

**Chair and note taker** – there should not be an expectation that the same practitioner both chairs and minutes core group meetings. Both tasks cannot be undertaken effectively and robustly at the same time. At the beginning of each core group members should determine who chairs the meeting and who will take the minutes. These tasks should be shared amongst core group members as each person has a significant role and an equal responsibility towards the production, implementation and progress of the protection plan. The individual writing the minutes should provide a written copy to the social worker within 5 days or alternatively provide the social worker with the hand written minutes at the end of the core group meeting for the social worker to take away to be typed up. The Social Worker will be responsible for disseminating the minutes along with the agreed updates to the protection plan to all core group members including the family. The Social Worker, as Lead Professional, should be in attendance at each core group, however if an unavoidable situation arises the core group should still proceed following the agreed format.

Remember-there should be **one** shared set of minutes for all agency records.

**Update Outline Protection Plan and agree detailed Protection Plan –** The outline protection plan is a draft. The purpose of the first core group is to develop and implement the plan, focusing on the detail. The plan should clearly identify what the need is for the child; what outcomes are desired for the child; and what actions are required; how will the actions be undertaken; who will be responsible for undertaking the action; and when it will be achieved or reviewed for progress. Remember the plan needs to be SMART (Specific-Measureable-Achievable-Realistic-Timely)

**Progress of Protection Plan and updates required to Protection Plan –** The purpose of the subsequent core group is to review and update the protection plan. The protection plan is the heart of the child protection process and must remain the focus of the core group. The core group should review the progress made towards implementation of the actions and how far these are securing the desired outcomes for the child. What is going well should be highlighted and any barriers or concerns regarding the implementation or progress of the plan should be documented in the minutes. The core group should agree any updates required to the plan should an action be completed and a need met; or to review an action; or should a new need arise not already contained in the plan.

The social worker will formally update the plan and send to core group members along with the minutes of the meeting. The updated plan and minutes will be shared with the family and child by the social worker.

**Reports provided by non-attendees –** Each core group member is responsible for the production of written information to the core group for discussion and dissemination with the minutes if unable to attend a core group meeting. The written information should pertain to the agency’s role within the protection plan and should review how far they are progressing with implementing the action and achieving the outcomes for the child, what is working well and what is not; and updates that may be required to the plan. It is not acceptable for an agency to not attend a core group meeting and not provide any written information to the social worker via secure email or hand delivered to the social work office.

**The Voice of the Child –** Within each core group there should be a focus on what life is like for the child living in their current home circumstances. Core group members should consider the impact the protection plan is having on the child in improving their outcomes and provide evidence as to why this is the case. Direct work undertaken with the child and their wishes and views about their life and future should be shared.

**Agencies written contributions to Joint Report to be discussed and submitted** – At the final core group before the Review Child Protection Conference each core group member should provide a written account to the social worker to be included in the Joint Report. The written information should pertain to the areas in the protection plan designated to the core group member/agency. The account should detail how far planned outcomes have been achieved or partially achieved; what actions/services were the most effective; and identify if there are continuing or newly identified needs.

**Multi agency analysis for RCPC Pre-meeting Report to be discussed and agreed –** at the final core group before the Review Child Protection Conference all core group members should analyse the implications of the information obtained on the child’s future safety, health and development. There should be an identification of risk; strengths and protective factors and an analysis of the implementation and success of the protection plan. There should be agreement by core group members regarding the recommendation to be made to the Review Child Protection Conference on whether the child still requires a protection plan. If core group members are unable to agree on a recommendation then this is to be noted within the Report and a further discussion held at the Review Child Protection Conference facilitated by the independent chair.

**Completion of the RCPC Pre-Meeting Report –** the social worker will collate the written contributions from the core group members and produce a draft joint report on the electronic report format. This will be distributed to the core group within 5 working days and discussed with the parents. Any amendments or additions will be feedback to the social worker within 5 working days to allow the final report to be available 5 days prior to the Review Child Protection Conference.

# FLOW CHART FOR JOINT REPORT PROCESS

Core group held. Agencies submit written contributions to social worker. Analysis agreed in core group

Social worker inputs agency submission into review report and analysis agreed at core group

Draft report sent to all core group members and parents for consideration and approval. Do not finalise report on ICS.

4 weeks prior to RCPC

Within 5 working days of core group

By PDF via secure e- mail, secure post, collection by professional

– by hand to parents

Core group members review RCPC Pre-Meeting Report and inform social worker of any inaccuracies or amendments required

Social worker to make amendments and finalise RCPC Pre-MeetingReport and send to Team Manager for authorisation.

Team Manager to review and authorise report

Within 5 days, via Team Manager secure e-mail, or anonymised or internal email

Within 2 working days

Within 3 working days

Social worker to provide a copy of the final report to parents/carers and child (if appropriate) and to notify the Safeguarding and Review Unit

5 days prior to RCPC

# AGENDA FOR FIRST CORE GROUP

1. IDENTIFICATION OF NOTE TAKER
2. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES
3. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING AND EXPLANATION TO FAMILY MEMBERS ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE CORE GROUP
4. CONFIRMATION OF CORE GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND RECORDING OF CONTACT DETAILS ON PROFORMA
5. CHECK MEMBERS HAVE A COPY OF THE OUTLINE PROTECTION PLAN
6. ASSESSMENT: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CORE GROUP MEMBERS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPLETION
7. CHILD’S VIEWS
8. PARENT’S VIEWS
9. REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST OUTLINE CHILD PROTECTION PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DETAILED PROTECTION PLAN

( Agree key action points with timescales)

1. ANY FURTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO THE CHILD’S SAFETY AND WELFARE
2. DATES, TIMES AND VENUES FOR CORE GROUP MEETINGS UNTIL SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE

# AGENDA FOR SUBSEQUENT CORE GROUP

1. IDENTIFICATION OF NOTE TAKER
2. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES
3. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING
4. REPORTS PROVIDED BY THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND
5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/MATTERS ARISING
6. CHECK MEMBERS HAVE A COPY OF THE PROTECTION PLAN
7. CHILD’S VIEWS
8. PARENTS/CARERS VIEWS
9. PROGRESS OF ASSESSMENT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPLETION
10. REVIEW OF PROGRESS OF THE PROTECTION PLAN AND

UPDATES REQUIRED ( agree key action points with timescales )

1. ANY FURTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO THE CHILD’S SAFETY AND WELFARE
2. DATES, TIMES, VENUES FOR FUTURE CORE GROUPS

# AGENDA FOR THE CORE GROUP PRIOR TO REVIEW CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE – PRODUCTION OF THE RCPC

# PRE-MEETING REPORT

1. IDENTIFICATION OF NOTE TAKER
2. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES
3. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING
4. REPORTS PROVIDED BY THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND
5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/MATTERS ARISING
6. CHECK MEMBES HAVE A COPY OF THE PROTECTION PLAN
7. CHILD’S VIEWS
8. PARENTS/CARERS VIEWS
9. [FIRST REVIEW CORE GROUP] – PROGRESS OF THE

ASSESSMENT: (Date for completion and arrangements for providing a copy to family members, core group members and independent chair )

1. WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JOINT REPORT
2. REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS OF THE PROTECTION PLAN AND

UPDATES REQUIRED (agree key actions with timescales)

1. IDENTIFICATION OF RISK FACTORS/PROTECTIVE FACTORS
2. MULTI-AGENCY ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATION TO REVIEW CONFERENCE
3. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE JOINT REPORT
4. DATES, TIMES, VENUES FOR FUTURE CORE GROUPS

## FORMAT FOR NOTES: FIRST CORE GROUP NOTES OF CORE GROUP MEETING HELD (TIME, DATE, VENUE)

1. NOTE TAKER (name, agency)
2. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

(Who attended (name, agency)

Apologies

1. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING AND EXPLANATION TO FAMILY MEMBERS ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE CORE GROUP
2. CONFIRMATION OF CORE GROUP MEMBERSHIP/RECORDING OF CONTACT DETAILS
3. DO CORE GROUP MEMBERS HAVE A COPY OF THE OUTLINE CHILD PROTECTION PLAN?
4. ASSESSMENT: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CORE GROUP MEMBERS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPLETION
5. REVIEW OF PROGRESS OF OUTLINE CHILD PROTECTION PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DETAILED PROTECTION PLAN – AGREE KEY ACTION POINTS WITH TIMESCALES
6. ANY FURTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO THE CHILD’S SAFETY AND WELFARE
7. PARENTS/CARERS VIEWS ON THE PROTECTION PLAN
8. VOICE OF THE CHILD
9. DATES, TIMES, VENUES FOR CORE GROUP MEETING UNTIL SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE

## AGENCY CONTRIBUTION TO RCPC PRE-MEETING REPORT FOR REVIEW CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE

**Name of Child/ren**

**Report provided by (name, agency)**

**Chronology of agency involvement since the last conference**

(*Include information about significant events with dates and details of outcomes)*

## Review of Progress of the Protection Plan

*(Use the headings from the plan to provide information with regards to the actions for which you have responsibility. How far have the expected outcomes been achieved? What actions*

*/ services were most effective? Are there continuing or newly identified needs?)*

## Updates Required for the Plan

*(Key actions with timescales)*

## Any Other Relevant Information

**Risk Factors / Protective Factors**

(*Refer to child protection conference minutes – are there new or different risk factors? Any changes in the protective factors?)*

## The Voice of the Child

**Parent / Carers Views**

**Analysis**

*(What is your understanding of the family history and context? What are the needs of the child/ren and family? What is the predicted impact on the child/ren if these needs are not met? What is the assessment of how able the parents are to meet these needs? What help will they receive?)*

## Recommendation

*(Should the child/ren continue to be subject to a Protection Plan or not?)*

# CORE GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND CONTACT DETAILS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAME** | **AGENCY** | **CONTACT DETAILS**  **(address, telephone number, e-mail address)** | **HOW WILL INFORMATION BE**  **SHARED SECURELY?** |
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