

# Effective Core Group Meetings



A guide for  
professionals who  
are Core Group  
Members



## What is this leaflet about?

This leaflet is produced on behalf of Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) for Core Group Meeting members

## Core Group Working

You will have been given this leaflet because you are the member of a Core Group for a child who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan. You will therefore share responsibility for taking action to assist parents/carers to keep that child safe. Please read this leaflet so that you have an understanding of your role. A Core Group that works well together is the most effective means of contributing to keeping a child safe.

## Membership of the Core Group:

Membership should include:

- The Social Worker, who leads the Core Group as the Key Worker
- Family members / carers
- Identified professionals
- The child/young person where appropriate

# Responsibilities of the Core Group

The Core Group is responsible for developing and implementing the Child Protection Plan by:

- Agreeing and developing the Child Protection Plan by identifying the actions to achieve change and timescales required to achieve the agreed outcomes.
- Progressing the Child Protection Plan against the agreed timescales and outcomes
- Continuously evaluating the impact of the Child Protection Plan
- Ensuring the Core Group keeps the child at the centre of their thinking
- Reviewing and updating the risk assessment, including whether change is occurring
- To consider whether other relevant professionals should be invited to contribute to the Core Group's work.
- Sharing information routinely, and immediately, if there are increased concerns about the safety of the child and taking appropriate steps in response to changing circumstances to ensure the child is adequately safeguarded.
- To contribute to a recommendation about whether the Child Protection Plan should continue.
- Ensuring the views of parents, carers, children are heard and taken into account

## Responsibilities of Individual Core Group members

- Attend and participate in Core Group meetings or other relevant meetings (e.g. professionals meeting)
- Carry out agreed tasks and visits within timescales and in accordance with their agency functions. If this is not possible, the Social Worker must be alerted.
- Provide specialist advice, which will inform the Child Protection Plan
- Core Group members are expected to prioritise their attendance at these meetings, as they would a Child Protection Conference. If they cannot attend, apologies and a report must be sent to the Social Worker at least one day prior to the Core Group meeting.
- Communicate regularly with the Social Worker about the implementation of their actions.
- Inform the Social Worker of any significant change in circumstances which might require bringing forward a Core Group meeting or a Review Child Protection Conference.
- Inform the Social Worker if a copy of the Child Protection Plan is not received within 5 working days
- To escalate within their agencies any concerns about the effectiveness of the Child Protection Plan or Core Group functioning





## Process for First Core Group Meeting:

- This will be held within 10 working days of the Initial Child Protection Conference.
- A manager from the receiving team will chair the first Core Group meeting
- The receiving team will take over responsibility for the case at the first Core Group Meeting
- Using the outline Child Protection Plan drawn up at the Initial Child Protection Conference, the Core Group will develop a more detailed Child Protection Plan.
- The Child Protection Plan should include how often the child/young person should be seen by each practitioner, proportionate to the risk, and the timescales for the completion of agreed actions
- The Child Protection Plan should include the agreed contingency plan should there be a lack of progress.
- Notes of the Core Group meeting should be written up and circulated by the Social Worker to all Core Group members within 5 working days.
- The date of the next Core Group Meeting must be agreed. There should be a minimum of two Core Group Meetings between the conferences.

## Subsequent Core Group Meetings:

- The Core Group should meet sufficiently regularly to facilitate effective working together and adapt the Child Protection Plan as circumstances change.

- Subsequent Core Groups will be chaired by the Social Worker unless the level of concern increases when the Team Manager should chair the meeting.
- A Core Group should be held no longer than 8 weeks after a Review Child Protection Conference.
- There should be at least 2 Core Groups held between each Child Protection Conference.
- Minutes of the Core Group meeting need to be circulated to Core Group members and the CP Chair within 5 working days of the meeting.

## **ESCALATION PROCESS:** Concerns related to the effectiveness of the Child Protection Plan

Consideration should be given to the need for further action to be taken where:

- The Child Protection Plan has not been effective in achieving change and reducing the risk of harm sufficiently, or there is an increased risk of harm, to the child
- There is a failure to obtain or retain the cooperation of the parents/carers or child in working on the plan
- There is significant change or unforeseen circumstances

**Action to be taken:** Any of the above must be brought immediately to the attention of the Social Worker, who must inform their manager. A decision will be made regarding the need for any immediate protective action and/or a Section 47 Enquiry and/or a Review Child Protection Conference.



## Concerns related to the effectiveness of the Core Group



Concerns may arise from the following:

- Core Group member/s not carrying out their responsibilities for action as outlined in Child Protection Plan
- Continual absence from Core Group meetings by parents or professionals
- Failure of Core Group members to provide relevant information for Core Group
- Delay and drift with the Child Protection Plan and plans agreed at the Core Group
- Difficulties implementing the actions within the Child Protection Plan due to disagreement among professionals

### Action to be taken:

- Discussion with the Social Worker and Manager
- Discussion between Core Group members
- Involvement of relevant managers and/or Designated Professionals within agencies where issues remain unresolved.

**ALL MEMBERS OF THE CORE GROUP SHARE OWNERSHIP AND ARE RESPONSIBLE, TOGETHER WITH PARENTS, FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CHILD PROTECTION PLAN. THEY MUST CO-OPERATE TO ACHIEVE THE AIM OF REDUCING RISK TO THE CHILD.**



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