

Children Protection Meetings

A Guide for Parents and Carers



Tameside Safeguarding

Children
Board

Who is this information for?

The information in this leaflet is for parents and carers who may be involved in Child Protection Meetings. Everyone involved in Child Protection Meetings is there to do what is best for your child, to help you in looking after and protecting them. We want to involve you as much as possible in all the decision making about your child.

What is a Child Protection Meeting?

There are three main types of Child Protection Meetings:

- Initial Child Protection Conference
- Core Group Meeting
- Child Protection Review Conference

Each meeting is arranged to make sure that everyone is doing what is best to make sure your child is protected from harm.

As a parent or carer can I attend a Child Protection Meeting?

It is important that you attend the meetings because you know most about your child and we need to work with you to keep your child safe. You may bring a relative, friend or solicitor to give you support at the meeting. It is also possible for you to have an independent Advocate to speak on your behalf with you at the meeting. If you would like more information about this or if there is a reason why you can't attend a meeting please tell the Social Worker.

Can my child attend the Meetings?

The adults in the child's life have the responsibility for safeguarding the child. In specific circumstances, where a child has expressed a wish to attend, this will be considered after discussion between the social worker and chair person of the meeting.

Your child can also be encouraged to share their views and wishes in a variety of ways other than attending conference, for example, by completing the consultation booklet Tell Us About Yourself with their social worker or by writing a letter or speaking to a trusted adult prior to the conference. Talk to the Social Worker about how this can be done.

What is an Initial Child Protection Conference?

Initial Child Protection Conferences are the first meetings to take place. They are usually attended by the Social Worker, Health Visitor, School Nurse, Police and Teacher. Others who are working with your family will also be invited. The chair person of the meeting is an Independent Reviewing Officer. A record of the meeting is made by an Administrator and you will receive a copy of this record.

What is a Core Group Meeting?

Core Group meetings take place if the Initial Conference decides that there should be a Child Protection Plan for your child. They are usually attended by a smaller group of people working with you and your family.

What is a Child Protection Review Conference?

Child Protection Reviews are usually attended by the same people who attended the Initial Conference and the Core Group meetings. These meetings review what has happened since the Initial Conference and decide if there is still a need for a Child Protection Plan.

What happens at Child Protection Meetings?

At Initial Child Protection Conferences and Child Protection Reviews:

- Everyone attending the meeting can read the reports before the meeting starts
- The chair person will see you when you arrive to explain what will happen
- When the meeting starts, everyone will introduce themselves
- Then there is a discussion about what has happened in your child's life and how the risk of harm can be reduced
- We hope you will take part in this discussion. It may help you do this if you write down your views and ask that these are shared at the meeting
- Based on the reports and discussion at the meeting the conference will decide whether there should be a Child

Protection Plan, who should attend the Core Group meetings and if there are other things that should be done to best protect your child

- A Child Protection Plan describes what needs to be done by you and workers to protect your child from harm. It is drawn up if the Child Protection Conference decides that your child is at risk of significant harm
- If it does decide that your child is at risk of significant harm then all relevant agencies will be informed that a Child Protection Plan exists
- If your child is made the subject of a Child Protection Plan it will be under the category of one or more of the following: Physical Abuse; Neglect; Emotional Abuse; Sexual Abuse.

Core Groups are usually chaired by the Social Worker and you will receive notes of the discussion. Core Group meetings take place for as long as there is a need for a Protection Plan for your child. They should meet every four to six weeks. Parents and carers usually find that these meetings are very helpful in supporting them to look after their child. We want this to be the same for you so it is very important that you attend the core groups. If everything goes well and the Child Protection Review decides that there is no longer any need for a Child Protection Plan then Core Groups will no longer take place. This does not mean that all support for you and your family will then end. If you wish to discuss what further support will be available then please speak to any member of the Core Group.

What if I am unhappy with what happens at a Child Protection Meeting?

If possible you should first speak to the chair person of the meeting about why you are unhappy. But if you don't think you can do this then you can either

- Appeal against a decision made at the meeting or,
- Complain about what happened at the meeting

To appeal or complain please contact TSCB at the address at the bottom of the page.

Information in other languages and formats

If you would like a copy of the information in this leaflet in another language or in large print, Braille, audio tape, CD, DVD then please contact Tameside Safeguarding Children Board at the address shown below. Information about TSCB is also on the Internet at:

www.tameside.gov.uk/childprotection

Tameside Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB)
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Tameside Safeguarding Children Board Members

Better Choices (Connexions Service)

CAFCASS

Greater Manchester Police

Greater Manchester Probation

New Charter Housing Trust

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Tameside Council

Tameside 3rd Sector Coalition (T3SC)



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