

Multi Agency Meeting Guidance

Multi Agency Meetings are a key element of the process of successfully working with children and young people who (through the use of the Common Assessment Framework **or** an Initial Assessment) have been identified as having unmet needs and require support from **more than one agency/service** to meet these needs. Any child protection concerns/issues, any specialised assessments and subsequently identified needs should follow the established protocols and processes.

This guidance has been separated into the following sections:

- **What is it?**
- **The process**
- **Underlying principles**
 - Lead professional role
 - Tools to assist the meeting
 - Non attendance
- **Review**
- **Conflict resolution**
- **Recording**

What is it?

1. A multi agency meeting that is tasked with designing a personalised package of support
2. It seeks to address the identified and unmet targeted needs
3. There is an agreement to appoint an ongoing lead professional
4. The meeting is centred on the needs and voluntary engagement of the child/young person – it is done **with the child/young person**, not done unto.
5. It is convened by the person/practitioner who has initially identified unmet needs that will require support/interventions from more than one agency/service. (e.g. via a CAF or Initial Assessment)

Aim

The overarching aim is to produce a timely and well co-ordinated package of support/interventions that enable a child to achieve the five outcomes of ECM

The Process

1. The process begins at the point at which a child/young person has been assessed, using the common assessment framework, as requiring a multi-agency response.
2. The process is based upon need and early intervention and is therefore focused on children and young people before they reach the threshold for Social Care or other specialist interventions.
3. However, the process could also be used / should be considered for children/young people who;
 - a. Are in receipt of specialist interventions but have other unmet (targeted/middle of the windscreen) needs.
 - b. Are coming off the Child Protection register (at the point of de-registration)
 - c. After an initial assessment are not going to receive a service from social care but still have unmet needs.
 - d. Have a Child In need Plan
4. **This process is also applicable for all children and young people whose needs are de-escalating (moving down the windscreen of need).**

Underlying principles

- The child/young person's needs and rights must come first
- The child/young person and where possible the family, should be present at the meeting
- The parents' or carers' rights must be considered
- Meetings follow the same format, pro-forma's are provided so plans are clear, understandable and provide consistency
- The child/young person's welfare, well-being and outcomes are everyone's responsibility
- The meeting needs to be helpful, timed to suit the child/young person, and only as long as it needs to be.
- Those professionals / practitioners who are already or are likely to be a part of the 'personalised package of support' should be present, those that aren't shouldn't be!

Lead Professional Role

- The convener of the meeting is the temporary 'lead professional' until the meeting has been held.
- The child/young person/family (and practitioner concerned!) should agree to an alternate lead professional or where appropriate the continuance of the existing one. This should be completed where possible at the meeting.
- Where parents/relatives/carers/a young person has been assigned the role of lead professional they should have a designated practitioner/professional contact and support person identified at the meeting

Meeting Tools

A range of tools have been developed to assist agencies wishing to convene and chair a multi agency meeting:

- standard letters of invitation
- chair's opening statement
- agenda for initial meeting
- CAF 'detailed action plan'
- Review form
- Child/young person friendly assessment materials

These tools have been produced so that a consistent approach is maintained across Bracknell Forest

Non-attendance at the TAC meeting

- **The underlying principle of the meeting is that the child/young person is present.**
- Parents should be encouraged to attend and be involved throughout the process.
- For older 'Fraser competent' young people, who have signed the CAF for themselves, parental/carer presence is not necessary but should be explored.
- If a young person / child does not wish to or is unable to attend a meeting the lead professional (who may be the CAF completer at this stage) will agree the best way in which to ensure the meeting receives their views

If the child/young person/family does not attend, the group must then consider how best to engage them in the process.

Consideration may be given to:

- Agreeing a plan of engagement, agreeing how this will be monitored and when the meeting should be reconvened.
- What actions can be put in place in the meantime to mitigate any concerns?
- If the concerns are increased by the parents' non-engagement then consideration should be given to invoking Child Protection procedures
- Where a family do not attend a meeting and an engagement plan has been agreed, a copy should be forwarded to the CAF Co-ordinator

Review

A date within 12 weeks of initial meeting should be set to review the plan to ensure services are meeting the needs of the child or young person and should be held in the same way as an initial meeting

At the review meeting, consideration should be given as to:

- whether the services outlined in the initial Action Plan have met the child/young person's needs,
- whether they need to continue,
- whether new needs have been identified and additional services are now required.
- this will be recorded on the review form and copies sent to the same distribution as the 'detailed action plan' (also to CAF Coordinator)

Conflict Resolution

On occasions there may be situations that arise when agencies disagree as to the "threshold" of a particular child/young person, if a consensus cannot be agreed as to whether a child requires specialist and/or child protection interventions then the CAF Coordinator should be notified, it may be appropriate for an Independent Chair to attend the next meeting.

There may be occasions during a meeting when actions/decisions are made that a member of the group disagrees with. In this instance the following action should be taken:

- Discussion with the chair following the meeting where a resolution is agreed by both parties.
- If this does not resolve the situation then contact the CAF Coordinator to try and find a way forward.

Recording

- The purpose of the 'detailed action plan' is for agencies to have a consistent method of recording and reviewing interventions and outcomes for children/young people and in addition it allows families to have a clear understanding of the agencies involved with their child/ren, their roles and responsibilities.
- Children, young people and or their families should have copies of all recordings. (Unless otherwise agreed with an individual, e.g. a young person who does not wish to have parents or named others involved.)
- All recordings (including the detailed action plan) should be held on the child/young person's personal file, within the agency chairing/convening the meetings.
- Copies of the 'detailed action plans' should be forwarded to the CAF Coordinator where a file will be created for each child/family being supported within the CAF framework. In addition, each agency/practitioner who is a part of the interventions, should also receive a copy.
- When a review has taken place, copies of this should also be forwarded to those listed above.

