

# Practice Guidance for conducting a Multi-Agency Meeting



## Introduction

This guidance has been produced by the NCSCP in response to several Serious Case Reviews (SCR) where it has been identified that meetings convened by multiple services have not been effectively planned or conducted, and have contributed to poor outcomes for the children and young people involved.

## What is this guidance for?

This guidance whilst **not** designed to replace agreed local procedures specifically covering Child Protection or Children Looked After processes. It is designed as a generic tool for **ALL**, to support practice in relation to any multi-agency meetings that practitioners may convene both within and outside the processes detailed above.

The reasons for meetings may vary and the focuses of them differ between agencies, however the key principles for successful meetings can be applied across any setting. Agencies may find this tool useful to quality assure any meetings they currently hold or to support the design of new processes, recording templates and action plans.

## Planning and preparation for meetings

Good preparation and planning for meetings contributes to their effectiveness, it is essential that anybody planning a multi-agency meeting ensures that:

- You are clear about the purpose of the meeting and what you hope to achieve, give the meeting a title.
- You are clear about who needs to attend, their role and contribution to the meeting, and convey this to them.
- Adequate notice is given to all those expected to attend. Planning and agreeing a cycle of meetings can support full attendance. Be clear about the time and venue for the meeting in communications.
- Those attending have any relevant information or papers / reports / etc in advance of the meeting.
- You have adequate support to facilitate the meeting.
- There is clarity about parental and young person involvement in advance of the meeting, and that the following has been agreed:
  - Are they expected to attend?
  - Who will invite them?
  - Do they need support to attend and engage in the meeting?

## Conducting Meetings

### Essential components of a multi-agency meeting

- Welcome to and introduction of those present
- Full explanation of the meeting, including;
  - Identification of type of meeting being held
  - Clear explanation of the purpose of meeting, why it is being held and what it aims to achieve
  - Clarification of who the meeting is about / identification of the child / young person to be discussed
  - How the meeting will be conducted and how everybody will contribute, including how the child / young person's views will be represented.
- Clarity in relation to consideration of any siblings
- Identification of needs/ goals
- Identification of any further assessment required
- Next Steps / actions required, including:

- Very clear actions defined
- Allocation of tasks
- Timeframes for actions to be completed in
- Contingency if actions are not achieved
- Consider and agree who information should be shared with
- Review date is agreed.
- The meeting should (if not already in place) consider if a **Common Assessment Framework** should be initiated.

**Important practice note:**

**If safeguarding concerns are raised by information shared during the meeting, those present must agree who and how the safeguarding referral will be made.**

**Review Meetings**

If agencies have met previously to discuss this child **in addition to the above components** subsequent meetings **must** consider previous actions agreed.

**Recording of Multi Agency Meetings**

- An accurate record of the meeting must be made
- It should be made clear at the beginning of the meeting:
  - Who is recording the meeting?
  - The format for the recording. (Templates are a useful tool to ensure that all essential areas are covered.)
  - How the meeting record will be disseminated, and within what timescales.
  - How (if not present) feedback to the parents / carers or young people will be completed.
- Recordings should include an **Action Plan** of any tasks agreed, who will complete them and the timescales for completion.
- Contingency plans, if for any reason the action plan tasks cannot be achieved.
- Details of who will take the lead in co-ordinating the action plan
- Details of all those present at the meeting, and any apologies.
- Date of any subsequent meeting.

**Post Meeting**

The activity following a meeting can enhance the overall effectiveness of the meeting and should be considered as important as any preparation and the actual meeting. The person who called the meeting must ensure the following activity is undertaken – this may be through nominated attendees at the meeting.

- The parents / cares, and young people are provided with feedback if they were unable to attend.
- The actions and expectations of any tasks for the parent / carer or young person are fully explained and their understanding checked.
- The record of the meeting including actions is completed and distributed in a timely and secure way.
- Arrangements are made for any follow up meetings.
- If required a safeguarding referral is made.