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**CHAIRING CHILD PROTECTION CORE GROUPS**

**2018-2020**

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**CHAIRING A CHILD PROTECTION CORE GROUP**

**PURPOSE OF THE CORE GROUP**

The core group is a small group of inter-agency staff with key involvement with the child and family who meet on a regular basis with the parents, and where appropriate the child. The purpose of the core group is to review, progress and make arrangements for implementing the child protection plan. The core group is a vehicle to coordinate inter-agency support for the family, to manage and reduce risk to the child and to achieve the outcomes identified in the child protection plan

**FUNCTION WITHIN THE REGISTRATION PROCESS**

The core group is responsible for developing and implementing the child protection plan as a detailed working tool within the outline plan agreed at the ICPCC. The core group has delegated responsibility for taking forward the child protection plan and is accountable to the RCPCC.

It is the role of the Practice Lead to chair the core group and the first meeting must take place within 15 calendar days of the ICPCC. It is advisable to arrange the date at the conclusion of the ICPCC if registration occurs, as some of the attendees will contribute to the core group membership. The core group should take place every 4 weeks in between RCPCC. Following de-registration a child’s plan meeting should take place no more than 6 weeks after the RCPCC and will probably consist of the core group members.

**ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

A confident and well prepared chairperson achieves positive outcomes for children and young people. They should consider how the meeting is experienced by everyone around the table and be aware of using jargon or language that is difficult to understand. Often people will sit confused and say nothing about it because they are embarrassed about admitting they don’t understand.

**FOCUS OF THE CORE GROUP**

Each core group needs to focus on the particular circumstances and risk for each individual child. The plan and core group needs to include the following:

* Ensuring safety and protection of the child- actions taken to protect the child from being exposed to/put at risk of further abuse/harm
* Monitoring of the safety of the child- how would we know if the child has been abused/placed at risk again
* Assessment- undertaking deeper assessments of issues contributing to risk using standard tools to ensure we help families make and sustain changes that directly reduce risk
* Supporting Change- focused work to help reduce key risk factors by helping families effect change
* Achieving the best- core groups are also Child Plan Meetings so plans need to include any additional areas of need i.e. Education and health where the child needs additional supports to achieve their potential.
* Contingency plan- all CP plans need to include a “what if?” option should the concerns that lead to registration reoccur or increase.

**QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE TO BE CONSIDERED BY CHAIRPERSON**

* Does the family understand what is expected from them, what support they will receive by whom and when?
* Does the family know what will happen if the required changes don’t happen?
* Does each member of the core group do all they can to contribute to the protection of the child?
* Can the family understand what needs to change/happen for the core group to recommend de-registration?
* Do actions actually help make the child safer and improve outcomes?

**PROPOSED AGENDA**

It is important to set the scene and where possible do not have the family walk into the room last and be faced with the professionals already seated.

**Welcome** the group, do introductions and note apologies. In order to help the family contribute meaningfully ask them how things have been over the last 4 weeks and how they are feeling about the worries and concerns leading to CP registration. Ask them about the child and how he/she is, if they are not in attendance.

Use the **chronology** as a focus for any updates and changes first from family and then other group members. How have any changes impacted on the child in terms of presentation or behaviour. This draws away from going around the table asking for individual updates and places the family at the centre, allotting them some control in the meeting.

Review the **plan** and check it is being implemented and any changes noted on the plan. Any changes will need to be recorded on the plan and if they are considered significant this will need to be taken to RCPCC. Then chair will ask agencies to give recommendations around continued registration or de-registration as appropriate.

Review the current **assessment of risk** looking at what is progressing well and any areas of concern or drift. Has the risk identified at ICPCC the same or have they decreased or increased. Ensure the family understand what is meant by this. It may be appropriate or useful to use the resilience matrix on a flip chart to demonstrate risks, resilience, protective factors etc. . . .

Review the **contingency plan** for relevance and being fit for purpose and ensure the family understand the need for this and when it would be implemented.

Ensure the **family and child’s views** are sought either directly or via advocacy and recorded on the plan.

Any changes/updates should be made directly onto the plan or chronology so a minute of the meeting as such is not required, however the chairperson may want to take some notes/action points. National Guidance asks for a record of the core group which can be the updated/proposed plan. Ensure a date and time for next core group is set and thank everyone for attending.