



A Guide to Child Protection Planning Meetings in the Outer Hebrides

**Information and Advice
Leaflet for Parents and
Carers**

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This information and advice leaflet is to help you and your family understand what you can expect before, during and after a **Child Protection Planning Meeting** takes place about your child.

Why has a Child Protection Planning Meeting been arranged?

Child Protection Planning Meetings are multi-agency meetings and are arranged when there is a high level of concern for an unborn baby, child or young person and professional workers believe that the unborn baby, child or young person has experienced **significant harm** or **may be at risk of being harmed**.

What is the purpose of a Child Protection Planning Meeting?

Child Protection Planning Meetings take place to ensure that all services and agencies involved in an unborn baby, child or young person's life can share information with, and about the unborn baby, child or young person and their family, so that it can be determined whether the unborn baby, child or young person is likely to continue to be at significant risk of harm and whether their name should be added to the **Child Protection Register**.

What information goes to the Child Protection Planning Meeting?

Your child's Social Worker will share with you, explain and help you to understand the **Child Protection Assessment Report** they have written, following a child protection investigation. It will be shared

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with each worker who is invited to the Child Protection Planning Meeting. Your child's Social Worker will have invited other professional workers from other services and agencies to attend, and they will also prepare reports for the meeting. If you think the information in the Social Work report is not accurate, please discuss this with your child's Social Worker or the Chairperson of the Child Protection Planning Meeting.

Getting ready for the Child Protection Planning Meeting

Attending the Child Protection Planning Meeting may make you anxious, therefore we encourage you to bring someone with you for support, this can be a family member, friend or an Advocate. The Chairperson of the Child Protection Planning Meeting will contact you prior to the meeting, to get your views and have a discussion about what will happen on the day.

On the day of the Child Protection Planning Meeting

Please read your Child Protection Planning Meeting invitation letter carefully to make sure you understand it. Almost all Child Protection Planning Meetings take place remotely (online), using Microsoft Teams, although you can attend in-person. You will have been sent an email link prior to the meeting. If there are any issues with this, please speak to your child's Social Worker.

Who will be at the Child Protection Planning Meeting?

At this multi-agency Child Protection Planning Meeting you should expect the following professional workers to be there:

- your child's Social Worker and / or their Line Manager

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- someone from NHS Western Isles, like a School Nurse, Midwife, Health Visitor or GP
- someone who knows your child from their school or nursery, like their Headteacher or Guidance Teacher
- a Police Officer with a special knowledge of Child Protection
- voluntary agencies involved with your family
- a Minute Taker who will produce a Minute of the meeting's main points
- a Chairperson who runs the meeting and makes sure everyone has a chance to speak.

Children and Young People at Child Protection Planning Meetings

In order to be able to attend this meeting, if you need help with childcare arrangements, please speak to your child's Social Worker. A child or young person can have a conversation with the Chairperson, before or during the meeting, to share their views about what is happening in their lives. They can also choose to attend part of the meeting.

What happens at the Child Protection Planning Meeting?

The Chairperson will introduce those present and provide a summary of the reasons for the meeting. Each person will be invited to share their views and provide information. You will always be asked if you agree with what has been said, or if you

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have a different view. After this discussion the Chairperson will identify the strengths and risks and ask those present their opinion on whether your child is considered to be at significant risk of harm and whether, or not, their name should be added to the **Child Protection Register**. If there is significant disagreement, the Chairperson will use his / her professional judgement to make a decision and to decide whether the child or young person's name should be added to the Child Protection Register.

How long does the meeting last? When will I receive the Minutes?

A Child Protection Planning Meeting will generally last between 1 to 1.5 hours. A Minute (note) of the meeting is prepared and should be sent to you after the meeting has taken place. Please read the Minute carefully and speak to your child's Social Worker regarding any queries. You will also be sent the list of tasks which were discussed and agreed at the meeting.

What decisions can be made at the Child Protection Planning Meeting?

The Child Protection Planning Meeting will decide:

- whether your unborn baby, child or young person's name should be added to the Child Protection Register (this is a list of unborn babies, children and young people who need to have special plans in place to make sure they are kept safe and protected from harm); the Child Protection Register information is shared with core services and agency partners, including police and health and, where appropriate, may be shared with education

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- whether to refer the child or young person to the Reporter to the Children's Hearing; this may happen where it is felt that legal measures are needed to protect a child or young person
- the Chairperson will create the start of a **Child Protection Plan** which will be reviewed at regular **Core Group Meetings**

What happens if my child's name is not added to the Child Protection Register?

The Child Protection Planning Meeting may decide that your unborn baby, child or young person's name does not need to be added to the Child Protection Register but may identify that you and your family still need some extra help and support.

My child's name was added to the Child Protection Register – what happens now?

The Child Protection Register is a highly confidential document and access to it is strictly controlled. Your unborn baby, child or young person's name will be added to the Child Protection Register, with a brief note of the main concerns for him or her.

When an unborn baby, child or young person's name is added to the Child Protection Register, the Social Worker must:

- arrange visits to your home, usually weekly, on an announced and unannounced basis
- also arrange to see your child on a one-to-one basis outside of the home
- organise Core Group Meetings – the first within 15 days of the Child Protection Planning Meeting taking place and then every

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4 weeks thereafter

What are Core Group Meetings?

The Core Group is made up of you, your child, the child's Social Worker and other professionals.

At the first Core Group Meeting, the Child Protection Plan put in place at the Child Protection Planning Meeting will be developed into a full Child Protection Plan. This Plan will clearly set out how risks for your unborn baby, child or young person are to be managed and supported, so that the risk can be reduced. You will have tasks to complete, as will the workers involved.

All the professionals working with your family have a duty to work closely with each other and to share information in the best interests of your unborn baby, child or young person. Core Group Meetings are an important way of doing this, but information will also be shared between professional workers out with Core Group Meetings.

How long will my child's name be added to the Child Protection Register for?

Your unborn baby, child or young person's name will be added to the Child Protection Register for a minimum period of 6 months. A **Review Child Protection Planning Meeting** will then take place. If your unborn baby, child or young person's name is kept on the Child Protection Register at this time, it will be for a further period of 6 months before that decision is formally reviewed again, unless an early Review is agreed at a Core Group Meeting.

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What if I don't agree with the decision of the Child Protection Planning Meeting?

If you believe that the decision made at the Child Protection Planning Meeting was not based on relevant and / or accurate information, you may request a review of the decision that was made by writing to the following person within 14 days of the Child Protection Planning Meeting:

Jack Libby
Chief Social Work Officer
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Sandwick Road
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2BW

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Who else may be able to help me?

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Telephone: 0800 019 1179

E-Mail: inbox@cypcs.org.uk

Website: www.cypcs.org.uk

Young Scot

Telephone: 0808 801 0338

E-Mail: info@young.scot

Website: www.youngscot.org

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Who Cares? Scotland

Telephone: 0141 226 4441

E-Mail: hello@whocaresScotland.org

OnLine Enquiry Form:

www.whocaresScotland.org/contact-us/

Website: www.whocaresScotland.org

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Further help and support

The name of your Social Worker / Lead Professional

Their telephone number

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by Contacting Duncan Mackay, Clerical Assistant, Child Protection at: duncan.mackay@cne-siar.gov.uk

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

BSL users can contact us via Contact Scotland BSL, the online British Sign Language video relay interpreting service. Find out more on the Contact Scotland BSL website [**https://contactscotland-bsl.org**](https://contactscotland-bsl.org)