

WIGAN CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & THEIR FAMILIES STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP & WIGAN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Please note this is a controlled procedure. Any procedure appearing in paper format is uncontrolled and must be checked against the Internet version prior to use.

PROCEDURE FOR CHANGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MEETINGS (REFERENCE: PROCEDURE CHANGE MEETINGS)

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Wigan Safeguarding Children Board)

Issue: 1

Revision: 0

Revisions (since issue)

Section	Brief Description	Date	Issue	Revision	Approved By
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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- 1.1. Support the implementation and operation of Change for Children and Young People Meetings ('Change Meetings') within integrated processes and practice arrangements to improve outcomes for children and young people in Wigan Borough.
- 1.2. Describe agency and inter-agency working practices by members of the Children's Workforce (see Section 5) involved in Change Meetings within the context of the Change for Children and Young People System for Wigan Borough.
- 1.3. Ensure that organisations of the Children, Young People and their Families Strategic Partnership and Wigan Safeguarding Children Board fulfil their duties

and obligations in this area of work as prescribed in legislation and national and local guidance.

2 SCOPE

This procedure applies to all managers and every member of the Children's Workforce within the geographical boundary of the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan.

3 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY

This procedure applies to all managers and members of Children's Workforce in Wigan, and all service users, regardless of their social identities of ethnicity, physical cognitive and/or sensory abilities, gender, sexuality, spirituality (Faith), age and/or class.

4 SAFEGUARDING

This procedure should be read alongside the Wigan Safeguarding Children Board procedures – Link www.wigansafeguardingchildrenboard.co.uk

5 REFERENCES

- Children Act 2004
- Statutory guidance on the role and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services
- Statutory guidance on the duty to co-operate and on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004
- Statutory Guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve the well-being of children
- CAF: Implementation Guidance for Directors of Children's Services in Local Areas
- CAF: Guide for Service Managers and for Practitioners
- <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices>

5 DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS

Please see Supporting Document: [Definitions and Indicators \(Ref: SD Def and Ind\)](#)

6 CHANGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MEETINGS DEFINITIONS

Change for Children and Young People Meetings (Change meetings) are central to early intervention by managers/practitioners from two or more disciplines/agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people.

6.1 The purpose of change meetings is to either:

- 6.1.1 Use information collected through a 'common assessment' to: identify any additional/ unmet needs a child/young person may have; prioritise actions by workers/agencies to meet those needs; and, agree how partners will work together to review the CAF action plan; or
- 6.1.2 Discuss whether a 'common assessment' is relevant and appropriate in collecting and recording information to identify any additional/unmet needs a child/young person may have, and plan how the 'common assessment' will be carried out.

- 6.2 Change meetings are **NOT**:
- 6.2.1 An alternative/different name for 'Child in Need' meetings. The Children Act 2004 **has not** extinguished the statutory duties to provide services for 'Children in Need' placed on the local authority by Section 17 of the Children Act (England and Wales) 1989.
 - 6.2.2 "Professionals' Meetings' – those forums – from which parents and young people are excluded - where, in the past, managers and practitioners from different disciplines/agencies came together to gossip about parents and their perceived deficiencies, and/or the perceived deficiencies and 'failures' of other disciplines/agencies.

7 STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE MEETINGS

Research and evaluation have identified a number of things that contribute to effective meetings with children, young people and families and managers and practitioners from different disciplines:

- 7.1 Organise meetings at times and in places that do not add to the difficulties of young people or parents, for example:
 - 7.1.1 Do not organise meetings at times that may conflict with parents leaving children at school, or collecting children at the end of the school day.
 - 7.1.2 If a parent is in employment, avoid organising meetings that may require the parent to take leave of absence/cause possible problems with an employer
 - 7.1.3 Is the venue suitable and accessible for everyone who might attend the meeting – for example a parent who may have a condition such as agoraphobia, or anyone who may have a mobility impairment (e.g. a wheelchair user).
 - 7.1.4 A particular venue may lead to non-attendance by a young person or parents because of feelings/anxieties they have about that venue – for example a child may have strong feelings about a clinic where they had a painful medical procedure, or parents may have had negative experiences at a school.
- 7.2 Communicate effectively in ways that actively include children, young people, parents/caregivers and colleagues from other disciplines/agencies:
 - 7.2.1 Do not use terms or language that may be confusing (or be prepared to explain in plain English what such terms mean),
 - 7.2.2 Do not use acronyms without ensuring they are clearly understood by everyone present – for example, do not assume everyone know what 'CAF' is, explain that it is the Common Assessment Framework, and what the Common Assessment Framework is.
 - 7.2.3 Do not use imprecise language or 'business-ese' – for example, parents might understand 'contribution' to their child's assessment as a financial requirement; and 'thinking outside the box' and 'blue-sky thinking' may not be helpful.
- 7.3 Create circumstances where children, young people and their families feel as though practitioners are working with them, not doing to them – one means for ensuring this is that the young person/parent agrees to an achievable task within the CAF Action Plan. Children, young people and their families should be actively involved in making informed choices about the services they need and are offered.
- 7.4 Ensure that the meeting is not 'adversarial'. This means parents are not treated as 'bad parents' or feel 'blamed' – so everyone at the meeting should take responsibility and action to ensure a positive solution focus

7.5 Setting date & time for review meetings

8 PROCESS

- 8.1 The practitioners involved with the child/young person/family should co-operate closely with their colleague who co-ordinated the 'common assessment', and/or the lead professional in organising a change meeting.
- 8.2 Detailed procedures for Change meetings are under development and review.

RECORD KEEPING – RECORDING CHANGE MEETINGS (and reviews)

- 8.3 The notes/record of a Change Meeting should be brief, solution focussed and action oriented – using a standard meeting record (see Change System Guidance pack).
- 8.4 It can be challenging to effectively chair a Change Meeting and keep a record. It may be helpful for one of the participants to chair and one to keep notes. Between them, the chair and note keeper should:
 - 8.4.1 Competent and capable of working effectively with children, young people, parents and other managers/practitioners to collect information about the development, circumstances and behaviour of the child/young person – and plan, deliver and monitor a programme of services from different agencies to meet identified/unmet needs
 - 8.4.2 Able to constructively challenge children, young people, parents and other managers/practitioners about progress being made in a specific case,
 - 8.4.3 Able to respond effectively to complaints (from children, young people, their parents/caregivers or other practitioners), and understand escalation routes - if necessary to improve outcomes for the child/young person,
 - 8.4.4 Able to provide feedback to their respective line managers about training and support opportunities for staff that emerge from this process (e.g. chairing meetings, keeping solution focussed, action orientated records).
- 8.5 The Chair (or Lead Professional, if different) and record keeper need to ensure that the agreed Action Plan is monitored – is the Action Plan and services having the outcomes intended for the child/young person?:
 - 8.5.1 The Chair/record keeper should send a copy of the review notes within 20 days of the CAF being written, to the Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator at 7 Worsley Terrace, Gateway House, Standishgate, Wigan, WN1 1XW.

8.6 ACTION PLANNING

- 8.6.1 The action plan agreed between children, young people, families and practitioners involved with individual/the family at the change meeting should be based on the needs identified through the Common Assessment Framework process
- 8.6.2 The action plan should be solution focussed, and action orientated
- 8.6.3 The action plan as a whole, and each item, should be S.M.A.R.T. – the action plan an tasks should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Specific.

8.7 ARBITRATION IN THE CASE OF DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN AGENCIES ABOUT CHANGE MEETINGS

- 8.7.1 Members of the Children's Workforce will not be expected or required to individually resolve complex, difficult inter-agency issues in connection with change meetings

- 8.7.2 Responsibility for resolving any disagreement about any of these (or other) issues remains with the line managers of the workers involved in the particular case.
- 8.7.3 If line managers cannot reach agreement in resolving such issues, they must promptly involve the Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator in reaching a decision.
- 8.7.4 In exceptional circumstances, if a line manager disagrees with the decision reached with the Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator, they can lodge an appeal with the Executive Group of the Children, Young People and their Families Strategic Partnership.
 - 8.7.4.1 The decision of the Exec. Group will be binding on all organisations involved.

9 RESPONSIBILITIES

9.1 Director of Children and Young People's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services

- 9.1.1 To work with the Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator to ensure the implementation and monitoring of this procedure.

9.2 Chief Officers of the organisations of the Children, Young People and their Families Strategic Partnership and Safeguarding Children Board

- 9.2.1 To identify the Senior Managers in their organisation who will champion the implementation of Change meetings in their organisation.
- 9.2.2 To ensure information about the purpose, organisation and practice of change meetings is actively disseminated within their organisation
- 9.2.3 To promptly address issues raised by feedback about their organisation's implementation of change meetings.

9.3 Senior Managers

- 9.3.1 To require managers of operational teams within their span of control to identify members staff to receive training and take on the lead professional/change co-ordinator role
- 9.3.2 To ensure managers of operational teams within their span of control have put in place effective arrangements (aligned and integrated with existing policy, procedures and practice) for the management support and supervision of staff taking on the role of lead professional. This includes ensuring access to training and ongoing support for such staff; workload monitoring, and the quality assurance of practice.
- 9.3.3 Review all existing operational procedures to include the role of the lead professional/CAF/change meetings

9.4 Team Managers

- 9.4.1 To identify members of their service team who will take on the role of lead professional/change co-ordinator.
- 9.4.2 To put in place effective arrangements for the management, support and supervision of members of their team taking on the role of lead professional/change co-ordinator. This includes:
 - Identifying staff with the skills and experience to access training and ongoing support to undertake the role
 - Actively monitoring the workloads of team members taking on the role

- Ensuring arrangements for support and supervision that are flexible to meet the need of staff taking on the role
- Ensuring arrangements are in place to quality assure interagency practice by staff taking on the role.

9.5 Members of the Children's Workforce

9.5.1 To attend training and ongoing support to take on the role of lead professional/change co-ordinator.

9.5.2 To report promptly any issues or difficulties that impact on their role as lead professional/change co-ordinator.

10 MONITORING

The Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator will monitor the implementation of the role of Lead Professional/Change Co-ordinator in Wigan - as described in this procedure - by the organisations of the Children, Young People and their Families Strategic Partnership.

11 EVALUATION

The Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator will commission regular audits to explore and report on the compliance of the organisations of the Children, Young People and their Families Strategic Partnership with this procedure, and use that information to identify areas for service development and improvement.

12 REVIEW

A review (and where necessary, revision) of this procedure will take place at least annually by the Children, Young People and their Families Operations Group at a designated meeting. The Director of Children and Young People's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services will work closely with the Change for Children and Young People Co-ordinator to authorise and implement changes intended to improve practice in the area of work covered by this procedure.

13 FORMS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Retention Period</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
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14 CHANGES TO THIS PROCEDURE

14.1 To suggest changes or modifications to this procedure please contact the named author.