

# Your Child Protection Case Conference Information for young people





## What is a Child Protection Case Conference?

A Child Protection Case Conference is a meeting about you and your family, held by Barnet Council's Children's Service department.

The meetings are arranged when we think that you may be at risk of harm or abuse.

If professionals who work with you or your family believe you are at risk of abuse a Child Protection Plan may be made for you

The **aim** of the meeting is to make sure that you are **safe**, and that you are getting **all the help you need**.

The meeting is **confidential** and the information will only be shared with those who need to know. Your social worker can explain more about this to you but information about you will not be given to your friends or the public.



## What is decided at the Conference?

The **purpose** of the Conference is to decide whether you should have a Child Protection Plan. The Chairperson will ask everyone at the meeting what they think about this before making a final decision. The meeting cannot decide where you live or arrange for you to go into care.

If a plan is made, a social worker will work with you and your family to make sure you are safe.

The plan will list who the people are who should help to make sure you are safe and will include your parents or carers. These people are called the **core group**. The core group will work together on the plan to improve your care and safety. You should be shown a copy of the plan so you know what has been decided. The plan will usually involve your **social worker visiting you regularly** to make sure you are safe. It may also include you getting **help with school, your health or other help** you need.

We regularly **review** whether you still need a protection plan. There will be another conference within **12 weeks of the first one**, and then about every six months after that. At every conference we will discuss whether you still need a protection plan or whether we can help you in another way.

## Working with your family

Most children who have a protection plan need one for **less than two years** and **stay living with their family** during this time.

Having a plan **does not mean you will be taken away from your family**. It is usually only a Court that can decide it is not safe for you to live at home and make the decision that you have to live elsewhere.

Your social worker will know that your family is very important to you and will want to **work with them** to make life at home for you **happy and safe**.



The social worker will explain to you and your family what needs to change to make sure you are not at risk.



## What does at risk mean?

Children and young people can be **at risk** when they are being **hurt by someone they know** or are **not being looked after properly**. If this is serious or goes on a long time it can affect you, for example, make you unhappy or make it difficult for you to concentrate at school.

Your social worker will talk to you about the kind of harm he or she feels you are at risk of and how he or she is worried this may be affecting you.



## Who attends the Conference?

Everybody who may have something useful to say about whether you are at risk should be invited to the meeting. This will include:

- your **parents** or **carers**
- your **social worker** and their manager
- your **doctor** or **school nurse**
- your **teacher** or **Head Teacher**
- any **other professionals** who know your family well.

The meeting is run by the **Conference Chairperson**. This is someone who has not been involved with your family before, so that they can be **independent**.

Your social worker will tell you the names of who has been invited.

## Can you attend the Conference?

If you are **old enough to understand the meeting** you may be invited (this would normally be from about 12 years old). Speak to your social worker about this.

You might only be able to come for **part** of the meeting.

You can **ask to bring someone along** to help you give your point of view (talk to your social worker about who you would like to bring, but this should **usually** be an adult).

You don't have to go to the Conference if you don't want to.



## What if you don't want to attend the Conference?

You can **write your views down** on the form that comes with this leaflet, and these will be **read out**.

You can **meet the Chairperson** before or after the meeting, and they will tell you about what happens.

Whether you attend the Conference or not, you should be sent a **copy of the decisions made** at the meeting, so that you know what plans have been made about your safety.





## What happens at the Conference?

At the meeting, we will talk about **what everybody thinks about your safety**, including any concerns that people have, and any ideas about how to make sure that you are **no longer at risk**.

Everybody who comes to the meeting will have the **chance to speak without being interrupted**, including you (if you attend) and your parents. We have to look at everybody's point of view about the situation, and what should happen to make sure you are safe.



## Having your say

Remember that everybody at the Conference has a **duty to listen to your views** about what is happening. They will take account of your views and what you want, and this may affect their decision about what should happen next. **But remember they are also responsible for ensuring that you are safe.**

You can **ask questions** at any time in the meeting. The meeting can become quite complicated, but if you **tell us you don't understand** what people are saying, we will make sure that it is **explained** properly.

If you find the meeting difficult or upsetting, **you do not have to stay**. You might want to go out for a short break and then come back.

Remember that **you might not agree with what people say** at the meeting, but everybody who is there should want **the best for you**, and try to understand your point of view. Even if you are not happy with

the decision, it is important that your point of view is heard and that the decisions are explained properly to you. If you are not happy, try to understand why the decisions have been made.

## Preparing for the Conference

Preparing for the meeting will help you to **think about what you want to say**. If you don't think about it first, it can be very hard to speak in front of everybody. Try to **speak to someone you trust** about what you want to say.



Your social worker will offer you a form to fill in before the meeting where you can write down what you want to say. Writing your ideas down will **make sure you don't forget anything**. You can read it out yourself, or have someone else read it out for you. If you don't want to come to the meeting talk to your social worker about who you would like to read out the form for you.

## What if you don't agree with the plan?

If you **don't agree** with the decisions made at the Conference, or if you think that you have **not been listened to**, you should speak to your social worker after the meeting. Tell them what you are **concerned** about and ask them how they can **help** you.



If they are not able to help, you can make a **complaint**. Ask for a complaints form from your social worker, or the Conference Chairperson and they will help you fill it out.



You can complain about anything you are unhappy with including the decision to make a protection plan or that a plan will no longer be made for you.

## Any questions?

If you have any **questions**, please contact your social worker or the Conference Chairperson.

Social worker's name

tel:

Chairperson's name

tel:

## Treating everyone equally



Barnet Council believes all young people should be treated equally regardless of their race, religion, disability, gender, age or sexuality.

If you would like this leaflet translated into another language, please contact your social worker who will arrange this.