



# Child Protection Planning Meetings and the Child Protection Register

Information for Parents and Carers

Safer Shetland - Working together to Keep Everyone Safe in Shetland

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[www.safersheland.com](http://www.safersheland.com)

# CHILD PROTECTION PLANNING MEETINGS

## INTRODUCTION

A child protection planning meeting is a discussion about a child's future safety, health, and development with family members, the child (if appropriate), and professionals involved with the family. This can be a worrying time for parents, the information in this leaflet will answer any questions you have about the meeting. You will have a short meeting with the Chair just before the meeting to ask any questions and to talk about the process. The Chair is the person who runs the meeting, an independent senior social work manager.

## WHAT IS A CHILD PROTECTION PLANNING MEETING?

Following government guidelines, a child protection planning meeting is a discussion between all agencies concerned about protecting children to make plans to keep children safe.

It is usually held after a child protection investigation or where there are concerns about an unborn baby. The child protection planning meeting will decide if your child's name should be placed on the child protection register.

## WHAT HAPPENS AT A CHILD PROTECTION PLANNING MEETING?



The chair will open the meeting with introductions, explain the reason for the meeting and ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute.

The planning meeting will:

- Share information about concerns and things that are going well
- Gather information about how things are for you, your child and any other relevant family members
- Decide if their name needs to be on the child protection register
- Decide if a referral needs to be made to the Reporter to the Children's Panel
- Make recommendations for a child protection plan, or if the decision is not to place your child's name on the register, other types of support.

A child protection planning meeting cannot make legal decisions. If the conference feels legal action is necessary, a referral will be sent to the Reporter to the Children's Panel who will decide if a hearing is needed.

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## WHO WILL BE AT THE PLANNING MEETING?

Your child's social worker will be there and usually their manager attends. Other people with knowledge of your child and family may be there. Depending on circumstances, this could be teachers, a health visitor or a GP, or someone providing a service to you as an adult. A police officer will usually attend. This is because the police have a responsibility to provide any relevant information, where there are concerns about a child's safety and welfare. There will be someone taking down notes of what is said (minutes), these will be shared with everyone in attendance

## WILL I BE INVITED TO THE MEETING?

Usually both parents are invited to a child protection planning meeting. You can bring someone for support, a close friend or advocate (Advocacy Service 0330 440 9000). If you decide to bring someone, this should be discussed with the social worker and agreed by the Chair, prior to the meeting. Please remember when choosing a supporter that there will be confidential information shared at the meeting.

Sometimes there may be part of the meeting that you cannot attend, for example the agencies may be discussing private information about someone else - the Chair would explain this if it happens.

## WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO GO?

You may find it difficult to come to the Planning meeting but *it is still important that everyone there knows your feelings, wishes and views*. You could put something in writing or ask your child's social worker to pass on your views. If you are able to attend the meeting that will help everyone work together to make sure your child is safe.

## WILL MY CHILD GO TO THE PLANNING MEETING?

It is very important to hear your child's views so they are welcome to attend. Your child's social worker will discuss this with you and your child. *Only children who are old enough*, and not likely to be upset, should consider going to the conference. If they attend, it may not be appropriate to be there for the whole meeting.

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# CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

## WHAT IS IT?

Shetland, like every area in Scotland, has a confidential list of children who may be at risk of harm. A child's name may be placed on the Register under a number of categories or concerns. They include:

- neglect
- physical injury
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

The Register is kept by children's social work and information is restricted to people within agencies responsible for Child Protection.

## HOW LONG WILL MY CHILD BE ON THE REGISTER?

If your child's name is placed on the child protection register, there will be a date set for a review planning meeting within 6 months. The review will discuss how well the protection plan is working and consider if your child's name still needs to be on the Register.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The child protection planning meeting will have named a key worker (social worker) for your child. They will also have named a core group of people who will meet with you regularly to put together a detailed Child Protection Plan and monitor its progress.

You will receive a copy of the minute taken at the Planning meeting.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT?

Talk to your child's social worker; they can give you advice and information on what to do, depending on what it is you are unhappy about.

If your complaint is about the child protection planning meeting, you should contact the Chair of the meeting on 01595 744 000.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Shetland inter-agency child protection procedures can be found at [www.safershetland.com/child-protection](http://www.safershetland.com/child-protection) or scan code here

Children's Reporter - [www.scra.gov.uk](http://www.scra.gov.uk)

For legal advice:

Citizens Advice Bureau: call 01595 694 696 or online  
[www.shetlandcab.org.uk/services/lawand-courts](http://www.shetlandcab.org.uk/services/lawand-courts)

Law Society of Scotland: [lawscot.org.uk/](http://lawscot.org.uk/)

