Child Protection Conferences
A guide for children and young people

www.merton.gov.uk
1 What is it?

A Child Protection Conference is a meeting that is arranged when there are worries about your safety. Sometimes it may be that you have been hurt in some way or that you or your siblings may be at risk of being harmed.

The Child Protection conference is a meeting where people who care about you decide how to help your parents look at ways to keep you safe and to make a plan, where necessary.

The people who attend this meeting will share information or concerns they may have about you or they may speak about things happening in your life.

2 Who will be there?

Your social worker will talk to you about who they may need to speak with and who will be invited to the meeting. People invited to the meeting usually know you for example, your teacher, social worker, doctor, school nurse and your parents. The police, youth workers, and family workers may also attend the conference.

An Independent Chair will lead the meeting and give everyone a chance to speak and ask questions.

There will also be someone there who takes notes of everything said at the meeting. Everyone who attends the meeting will receive a copy of these notes.
Depending on your age and understanding you may also be invited to the meeting. You can choose whether you would like to attend or not. To help you decide, and to talk to you about things you would like to say at the meeting, a special person called an advocate can support you. This is a person different to your social worker.

If you are too young or unable to attend you can tell your social worker anything you would like the people at the conference to know about you and he or she will give your views at the conference.

3 **Where will it be held?**

This meeting is normally held in a meeting room at Social Services offices. The meeting room needs to be quiet and private.

4 **Can I have my say?**

Ahead of the meeting, your social worker will talk to you about how you would like to share your wishes and feelings.

An advocate is someone whose job it is to make sure that children and young people have their say. Once a decision has been made for a Child Protection Conference to take place, an advocate will contact you and your parents prior to the meeting.
If you decide to attend the conference, the chairperson of the meeting will speak to you before the meeting starts. They will explain more about the meeting and listen to any worries you may have.

It’s okay if you decide that you don’t want to come to the meeting or if you don’t want to stay for the entire meeting. It’s also okay if you don’t want to talk during the meeting. Your advocate can talk on your behalf or read something that you have written.

5  **At the meeting**

Everyone at the meeting will introduce themselves and say how they know you and your family. Each person will then give information about you and your family. Once all the information is shared and if people agree that they were right to be worried about you and what is happening in your life, an important decision will be made. The decision will be whether people feel that you need to have a Child Protection Plan or not.

6  **What is a Child Protection Plan?**

If people at the meeting decide that they are worried about your wellbeing then you will have a Child Protection Plan. This is an important plan put together to ensure that you are kept safe from harm. A Child Protection Plan gives your parent/s or carers and all the professionals
working with your family different tasks. Everyone is required to carry out his or her tasks as this will help you and your family to make sure that you are protected.

7 What happens after the meeting?

You and your family will have an allocated social worker to help you.

Your social worker will visit you and your parents at home at least once every 4 weeks but it will probably be more often than that. The social worker will speak to your parents and will ask to speak to you alone as well. This is so that they can make sure that you are safe and give you the opportunity to talk to them about anything that may be worrying you.

If there are still concerns about the care you are receiving then Social Care will consider other ways of keeping you safe. They will also consider whether you can continue living at home.

After the Child Protection Conference, a smaller meeting called a Core Group will be held. This usually takes place about 10 days after the conference.

The Core Group meeting is where everyone working with your family meets and makes sure that people are completing the tasks in the Child Protection Plan. The Core Group will also discuss the progress your parents/carers are making and whether more tasks need to be
added to the Child Protection Plan. The Core Group will make sure that your family is getting the help that they need to make things better. This meeting is normally chaired by your social worker or a manager from Social Care.

Core Group meetings will usually take place every 6 weeks. Your advocate can attend these meetings as well.

8 **Will I have a Child Protection Plan forever?**

No, after 3 months of having a Child Protection Plan, another meeting will be held. This is called the Review Child Protection Conference. At this meeting everyone will once again share information about you and your family. Usually this will be the same chairperson as before. People will look at what has happened to your family since the last meeting. They will then decide whether things are getting better and if you still need a Child Protection Plan.

If the people at the conference decide that your family still needs help to keep you safe from harm, then another Child Protection Plan will be drawn up.

A Review Child Protection Conference will take place every six months or until it is decided that there is no longer a need for a Child Protection Plan.
9 How can I have my say about the conference?

If you think that things went well or if they could have been done better or differently, you can talk to your social worker or ask to talk to the independent chair.

It is important to let us know what you think!

If you are really unhappy with the meeting or the decisions made, ask your social worker how you can make a complaint.

You can also speak to your advocate or the Children’s Participation Officer at Merton about your concerns.

10 Important contact numbers for the leaflet

Advocacy Service – 0800 389 1571

Children’s Participation Officer – 0208 545 3569

Worsfold House – 0208 545 4201

Social worker’s name and contact number

Winter 2009
Request for document translation

Child Protection Conferences – A guide for children and young people

If you need any part of this document explained in your language, please tick box and contact us either by writing or by phone using our contact details below.

Nësse ju nevojitet ndonjë pjesë e këtij dokumenti e shpjeguar në ghuhe në amtare ju lutemi shenojeni kutinë dhe na kontaktoni duke na shkruar ose telefononi duke përdorur detaljet e mëposhtme.

Si vous avez besoin que l’on vous explique une partie de ce document dans votre langue, cochez la case et contactez-nous par courrier ou par téléphone à nos coordonnées figurant ci-dessous.

만일 본 서류의 어떤 부분이라도 귀하의 모국어로 설명된것이 필요하다면, 상자속에 표시하고 우리에게 전화나 사신으로 연락하십시오.

Aby otrzymać część tego dokumentu w polskiej wersji językowej proszę zaznaczyć kwadrat i skontaktować się z nami drogą pisemną lub telefoniczną pod poniżej podanym adresem lub numerem telefonu.

Caso você necessite qualquer parte deste documento explicada em seu idioma, favor assinalar a quadrícula respectiva e contatar-nos por escrito ou por telefone usando as informações para contato aqui fornecidas.

Haddii aad u baahan tahay in qayb dukumeetigan ka mid ah laguugu sharxo luqaddada, fadlan sax ku calaamad bee sanduufa oo nagula soo xirir warqad ama telefoon adigoo isticmaaliyaa maciixmaadka halkan hoose ku yaallaa.

Si desea que alguna parte de este documento se traduzca en su idioma, le rogamos marque la casilla correspondiente y que nos contacte bien por escrito o telefónicamente utilizando nuestra información de contacto que encontrará más abajo.

Your contact:
Name ................................................
Address ..................................................
Telephone ...............................................

Children’s Strategy and Development Team
Merton Council
Merton Civic Centre
4th Floor
London Road
Morden
SM4 5DX

Ref: 053160