

**ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES
POLICY**

**ROCHDALE FAMILY GROUP MEETINGS
SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

This policy should be used in conjunction with Rochdale Safeguarding Children Board's Child Protection Procedures.

The following procedures should be applied during the preparation and meeting stages of Family Group Meetings (FGMs):

1. Confidentiality can only be maintained where it does not compromise the safety or welfare of children and young people. The limits of confidentiality need to be stated to every FGM member during the preparation stages, and re-iterated at the start of the meeting.
2. Should any safeguarding issues arise whilst preparing children or family members for the FGM, the preparation should be put on hold, and the RSCB Child Protection procedures followed. The FGM Service Co-ordinator should be notified.
3. Should any safeguarding issues arise during the course of the FGM, the meeting will be put on hold and the RSCB Child Protection procedures followed. The FGM Service Co-ordinator should be notified.
4. Perpetrators of Domestic Violence will not usually be invited to FGMs however Co-ordinators may seek their views in other ways.
5. FGMs may not be suitable in cases where a child or young person is at risk of forced marriage due of the physical danger and potential emotional manipulation they may experience during this type of session with their parents, other members of their family, or community. There must not be any burden on the child or young person to agree to an FGM.
6. All FGM members should be made aware of the safeguarding or welfare concerns that must be addressed by the family plan, at the start of the meeting.
7. Children's safety needs to be ensured in all FGM plans. If Co-ordinators have any concerns that a plan is not safe for a child they should discuss it with the Social Worker, and the family. More time may then be allocated to the family to revise their plan.

8. Ground rules should be set at the beginning of each FGM, which recognise the need to keep meetings child focused.
9. FGMs would not be appropriate in cases where:
 - There are concerns about multigenerational sexual abuse.
 - There is concern about network abuse
 - Where there is suspected professional abuse
 - Where there is a clear requirement for a child protection plan by professionals.
 - Where the child or carers are on Police bail or a file has been forwarded to the CPS for advice.
 - Where it may place a child/ young person, or other family member, at risk.

For Children and Young People attending FGMs

- Anyone used to care for younger children at FGMs, in a professional capacity, must have an Enhanced CRB check and an appropriate childcare qualification.
- Children should be cared for in appropriate safe and clean space with toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Refreshments, toilets and changing facilities should be provided.
- Children & young people attending meetings will be offered the services of an Advocate or other means of support in order for them to have their voices heard.
- Children and young people attending FGMs will be made aware that they can come out of the meeting at any time that they feel uncomfortable, or need to take a break, and can speak to the FGM Co-ordinator for support if needed.

In order to safeguard children, FGM Co-ordinators must have:
Attended Child Protection training
Attended the 3 day FGM training
Completed a FGM Induction
Access to support and supervision in relation to FGMs
Received a copy of the safeguarding procedures for FGMs
A current Enhanced CRB check – renewed every 3 years.
Names & contact numbers of who to contact should a child protection issue arise out of normal working hours.
A mobile phone when carrying out FGM work