

Explaining Pre-Proceedings



If services have **serious worries** about the **safety** of your child, they may decide to go to put your child on a **pre-proceedings plan**.



What is it?

Pre-proceedings is what happens **before** Children's Services decide they need to go to court.



If it is decided that you need to go to a **pre-proceedings meeting**. You will get a **letter** which will tell you:

- what the meeting is about
- when the meeting will take place



The pre-proceedings letter is very **important** because it will tell you what services are **worried** about and what **changes** they **want** you to make.



The letter will also tell you that you need to find a **family law solicitor** to represent you and give you advice.

Your solicitor can come with you to the pre-proceedings meeting.



You will get **Legal Aid**. This means that you **do not** have to **pay** for your solicitor, it is **free**.



A pre-proceedings meeting is a very **important** meeting.

It is your **final** chance for you to show Children's Services that you can **listen** to their **worries** and make the **changes** that they recommend.



Two things can happen at this meeting:

- Children's Services could give you an action plan.
This will tell you what jobs needs to be done, who needs to do them and when these need to be done by.
- Children's Services might decide that they are ready to go to court if changes are not made.



You should try to speak with your solicitor **before** the pre-proceedings meeting to talk to them about the things that **you** want to say in the meeting.



Pre-proceedings can last up to **6 months**. But it could be shorter or longer than this.



Remember **not** all cases in pre-proceedings go to **court**.