

- Once the family has agreed a plan, you and the Coordinator will return to the room and confirm your support of the plan.
- Professionals should not accept the plan if they believe it places the child at risk of significant harm.
- If requests are made for resources that cannot be agreed immediately then the professional will inform the family as soon as possible thereafter.
- The Coordinator ensures the plan is recorded and a copy goes to all of those invited to the FGM.

The Family's plan forms the basis of the future work with the child/ young person and the family. Professionals should support and implement the plan.

Contact Details:

Family Group Meeting Service
Watling House Area DC2, High Street North,
Dunstable, Beds. LU6 1LF

Tel: 0300 300 5788

Email: familygroupmeetings@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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**Central
Bedfordshire**



A guide for professionals

Family group meeting

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What is a Family Group Meeting?

A Family Group Meeting (FGM) is a meeting where family members and friends make the main decisions. It is arranged and facilitated by the Family Group Meeting Coordinator, who is not involved in making decisions about the child.

FGMs are a means of enabling families to find solutions to their own problems within a professionally supportive framework.

A family is defined as the child, the parents, extended family members and family friends.

Why should I refer?

FGMs have been proven through research to help produce better outcomes for children and young people by keeping them within their family or community.

FGMs are based on the belief that families can usually find their own solutions to their difficulties and that children and young people have a right to have their families involved in their future planning. Feedback from children and young people who have attended FGMs has shown that they find them far better way of getting their wishes and feelings heard.

Who can refer?

Only a Social Worker can make a referral at present, but, Health Visitors, Teachers, Education Welfare Officers and other professionals can consult with a Social Worker who will then consider making a referral.

Referral criteria

The service is intended to help any child in the following situations:

1. Where there is an unresolved family conflict which may lead to the child or young person becoming Looked After.
2. There is a real chance that a meeting could assist in the child leaving care to return to the care of their family or friends.
3. To prevent significant harm.
4. Assist with contact for children and young people who are Looked After.
5. To enhance the welfare of children and young people who are defined as children in need.

How to make a referral

Contact the Family Group Meeting Manager, at the Family Group Meeting Service on the telephone number below for an initial discussion. A referral form will then be completed at the referrer's office between the Social Worker and the FGM Manager. The Coordinator will arrange the venue and time of the meeting.

Your role as a professional before the meeting

- Obtain the family's agreement to having a Family Group Meeting.
- Complete the Family Group Meeting referral form with the FGM Manager.
- Complete a report on the family (see guidelines) which outlines the concerns and reasons for wanting a Family Group Meeting.
- Share this report with the family a week before the meeting.
- Liaise with the FGM Coordinator in preparation for the Meeting.

At the meeting

- Share the report with the family at the beginning of the meeting.
- Provide additional information in a manner that is clear, concise and understandable.
- Explain what type of help and resources are available to help the family.
- Answer any questions that are asked of you.
- The family will then have private family time to discuss how they are going to help the child/ young person. You and the Coordinator will leave at this point.