

**Supporting Children and Young People  
maintain relationships with their families**

**Policy and Practice Guide**

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## **Introduction: Thinking about arrangements for children seeing their families**

When children and young people are unable to live with their immediate birth family it is important they are able to have an arrangement in place which allows them to understand their heritage, and their history.

Maintaining relationships with family is one of the most common issues raised with young people as they age and become adults. For care leavers they feel they have lost touch/missed out on relationships and at times do not understand why decisions have been made. Moreover maintaining these links help define and refine their sense of who they are which promotes their self esteem and confidence in their identity. As a consequence it is important to start thinking about children and young people seeing their families as soon as the LA starts to consider intervening through removal as it will shape and guide their experience in our care as they grow.

It is therefore essential that whenever there is a proposed plan for a child to be removed from the care of the person with PR, it is essential the allocated worker gives significant thought about how, as the corporate parent, the LA is going to continue to support the child/young person maintain links with their family.

Maintaining relationships can be managed through a variety of ways, supervised and direct meetings between child and parent(s)/family member, unsupervised time with members of the family, telephone, Facetime or SKYPE conversations or letters/emails. It can even be supported through 3<sup>rd</sup> party involvement if children want to know a family member is well but is too worried to talk to them or write to them directly.

However for the Local Authority acting as their corporate parent, a child seeing their family offers an opportunity to observe and assess the quality of the time they spend together. It offers the opportunity to help families make the most of their time together. It can also help the Local Authority make really difficult decisions as to future arrangements of how children maintain links and relationships with their families.

In order to make this time/arrangement as purposeful and positive as possible it is important the team around the child with the family plan for this together. The quality of the information and how this is shared are also key.

The purpose of this document is to outline the process and practice for

- Decision making process for children seeing their families as part of Legal Gateway Planning Meetings
- Decision making process for children seeing their families as part of Public Law Outline Panel
- Referral form for Public Law Outline Panel and Family Activity Base
- Making a referral to the Family Activity Base
- Making a plan for children to see their families.
- Reviewing arrangements for children seeing their families.
- Glossary of terms

## **Legal Gateway Planning Meeting**

The first point the worker will be asked to reflect their decision making about arrangements for seeing/maintaining family relationships is at Legal Gateway Planning Meeting.

Legal Gateway Planning Meeting (LGPM) is the mechanism Rotherham uses to provide workers with the permission to start thinking about initiating proceedings, discharging orders, or making applications for a range of options available to the local authority to support children and young people.

As part of the preparation for LGPM workers are expected to think about and consider arrangements for children seeing their families. As part of this workers should be considering:

- What is the purpose of children seeing their families
- Who is it for
- How often children see their families
- Length of time children see their families
- Where children could see their families

Within these consideration it is essential workers also think about the child's routines, their emotional well being, what would be important to them, alongside consideration of whether direct indirect arrangements for children maintaining relationships with their families would be the most advisable option pending further assessment.

Workers need to be reminded that each child is different and the relationships they have with their families are unique to them and as such in any discussion/ consideration; arrangements must be based on what workers know and understand to be the lived reality with their families. It is also worth considering that it may be necessary to start slowly and increase time together over a period of weeks and months as opposed to start with a high level of frequency and then struggle to reduce.

This rationale for any decision relating to children seeing their families should have been explored with team manager prior to LGPM and recorded clearly in the supervision record. Any change should also be recorded at each stage where there is a change in circumstances or an alteration to arrangements for children seeing their families.

Service Manager will expect SW to offer rationale for their decision making to support children seeing their families during LGPM and this will be recorded on the LGPM form.

## **Public Law Outline Panel (PLOP).**

Unless emergency action to safeguard children/young people is required, final permission to initiate proceedings is taken through Public Law Outline Panel (PLOP).

At this session workers have 30 minute slots to advocate for their decision to initiate proceedings and to gain approval from panel of their care plan for the child(ren)

The purpose of this session is for the worker to be able to rationalise and test out their reasoning for the care plan. Panel members are expected to test out the worker's assessment, analysis and plan.

As part of this discussion panel will be expected to check out thinking and decisions for children maintaining relationships with their families. Part of this will be about the details of times and frequencies. However it will also be exploring workers understanding of their decision making around how children build or sustain relationships with their families, their rationale for arriving at these decisions, research evidence both in terms of the immediate impact of proceedings on the child's relationships as well as over the medium to long term as part of the LA care plan for the child.

To support the analysis and decision making the aide memoire should be used to support decision making.

This tool can be used for PLOP referral form, it can then be updated and forwarded to the Family Activity Base Team as the referral form for service should it be determined that the child will benefit from spending time with their family.

The PLO Panel report is a legally privileged document and as such care needs to be taken with its distribution.

Manager of the Family Activity Base Service will receive the minutes of the meeting and will then be able to start scheduling in possible meetings/dates to support effective planning.

Once the document has been approved it is uploaded onto LCS and is available in the Legal section of the child's file.

## **Quality and Assurance**

Team managers will be expected to make sure any referral to PLOP Panel is detailed and shows consideration of the importance of maintaining relationships and how this will be supported

Chair of Panel and Panel Members will be expected to challenge the social workers rationale and understanding of the arrangements for children maintain relationships with their families during discussions and that this is suitably recording in the minutes

Service Managers will be expected to make sure there is clear rationale on resulting care plans and will only approve if they are confident and assured the SW has evidenced thought and reasoning for their plans.



**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Safeguarding, Children and Families

**Public Law Outline Proceedings Panel  
And/Or Family Activity Base Team Referral**

**Legal advice may be included - this document is then protected by legal privilege and is confidential**

For PLO Panel for consideration of issuing proceedings- complete and return to [PanelAdministrator@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:PanelAdministrator@rotherham.gov.uk), with a current Assessment (no older than 56 days) which includes the chronology and LGPM minutes. A separate chronology may be submitted only if this is needed to supplement the assessment chronology. **A full genogram is required –without this the request will not be considered.**

For PLO Panel for notification of proceedings already issued (retrospective) - complete and return to [PanelAdministrator@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:PanelAdministrator@rotherham.gov.uk)

For Family Activity Base referral only (when Care Proceedings already issued) email to [Contact.Team@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Contact.Team@rotherham.gov.uk) and a copy to the PLO Panel Administrator [PanelAdministrator@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:PanelAdministrator@rotherham.gov.uk),

Please complete ONE form per household. **All sections must be completed (covering the prompts for content) and be authorised by the Team Manager**

<b>Date of Panel Meeting:</b>			
<b>Or Date of Initial Court Hearing and outcome:</b>			
<b>Social Worker: Name and contact details and mobile no.</b>		<b>Team Manager: Name and contact details and mobile no.</b>	

<b>Team:</b>		<b>Service Manager:</b>	
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Child's Name	D.o.B. and age	Gender M/F/U	Address where living	LCS No.	School Attended

**Family Details (Children not the subject of the referral and Adults)**

Name	D.o.B.	Relationship to Child/Young Person- (if needed specify which child)	Address where living	First Language and Ethnicity	Parental Responsibility
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N
					Y / N

1. Please mark with an \* any siblings subject to the same referral.
2. Please ensure details of extended family members are included on the form.
3. **Please highlight above with a %** if there are any household members who are currently residing in the same household as the child on the referral form

**Summary: brief summary of current situation that has led to being considered at this PLO Panel or why Care Proceedings already issued**

Include in your comments the outcome of Assessments – bullet point what we are worried about /what’s working well / strengths – what needs to happen - and Viability Assessments – detail any connected persons considered and outcome. Family Group Conference – has this been held?

*The background is that .....the children have been subject of a Child Protection Plan since July 2017. A period of Pre proceedings PLO meetings have been held between dates...*

*Include as appropriate what led to the court application and what Orders were made with the date made.*

**We are worried about** - (be specific that the LA worries are evidenced ie Domestic Abuse there have been 10 incidents reported between dates, the abuse is perpetrated by... against.... )

**What’s working well**

**Viability assessments** (*detail any connected persons considered and outcome*)

**Children's Views:**

What do the children think about their home/family situation? What do they want to be different there? What do they think about this proposed plan /or if already removed being in alternative care? If the proposed plan is for the children to be cared for in a different place who do they want to see from their family and any other 'important to them' relationships?

**Parents'/Carers' Views:**

What do they think about their current situation? What do they want to be different? What do they think about this proposed plan?

**What needs to happen:**

**If Issuing of Proceedings** – what is your recommendation in terms of Order to be sought? If Panel endorses the decision to issue, what is your timescale for completion of the required documents to issue?

**All cases** - Are there further viabilities to do? Are there any assessments outstanding?  
What is the plan for the child/ren?

**Contact - Maintaining Links and Relationships**

Who has been identified as important for the children to maintain their links with? What are the proposed plans for this to happen? Frequency and duration to be considered. What is your rationale for the proposed plan. Has a Together or Apart assessment been completed for siblings?

If a Plan has been agreed at Court already specify what this is

**Early Permanence Placement (Fostering to Adopt):** Having considered the guidance, comment on if this child meets the criteria as suitable for an Early Permanence Placement?

**Manager's Comments** (Please indicate your authorisation of this request and any additional comments)

**TM Name :**

**Panel Discussion**

**Legal Threshold Discussion – Solicitor's Advice**

Is S31 Threshold Criteria met **Yes / No**

If **Yes** advice given:

Other Options discussed if Proceedings under S 31 are not agreed:

### **Panel outcomes / Decisions**

**After PLO Panel** a copy of this Public Law Outline Proceedings Panel Referral form will include the notes of the meeting and will be filed, by the PLO Panel Administrator, on the child's record in LCS:> Legal pathway > Documents

**NB** If the allocated worker has not started a legal episode they will be required to do so immediately

**For Family Activity Base referral only** (when Care Proceedings already issued) The FAB referral must be added by the social worker to the child's record in LCS documents

**Court and Planning for children maintain relationships with their families.**

Social Workers are expected to outline their rationale in the care plans presented to court as part of proceedings. The care plan should detail the reasons and rationale for choosing the frequency and expectations for children seeing their families.

The initial and future care plan sets out the LA plan for the child and should be clear in our expectations for families as the application proceeds through court.

A key component when writing the care plan is to ensure the following is included,

**‘Contact will be kept under active review to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the child. Should parents fail to be punctual for contact, fail to attend contact consistently or should there be concerns regarding the quality of the contact, consideration will be given by the Local Authority as to whether the frequency or duration of contact should be reduced.’**

The LA then has the capacity to make changes to the arrangements including reducing the times children see their families if, for example, it is considered that it is not meeting the needs of the child(ren) or if parents are not attending consistently without returning the court for permission, unless the court has specifically ordered this in the particular case.

It is still important that legal advice is sought before changing any arrangement.

Parents can still have the right to request to return to court if there are concerns as is the case with any aspect of care planning.

The LA cannot however suspend any arrangement where children see any member of their family for more than 7 days without the permission of the court and can only suspend any arrangement for up to 7 days if it is necessary in order to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare. Again, legal advice should be sought in these circumstances

Legal advice suggests the importance of maintaining open communication with the Guardian so they are informed and included in the rationale for decisions.

Legal advice also suggests the importance of maintaining open communication with the child(ren) Independent Reviewing Officer. This makes sure the IRO has oversight and can ensure the arrangements for children seeing their families are robust, in the best

interests of the child and take into account the immediate and long term needs of the child in terms of care planning and the child(ren) understanding of who they are, their roots and history

IRO's should be looking at the arrangements and benefits of child(ren) seeing their families at each review and making every effort to record the views and wishes of the children as part of this process.

### **Accessing support through the service:**

### **Making a referral for children to see their families:**

#### Preparation:

Social worker must talk to the family about what the LA does to support children seeing their families when they are unable to stay at home with their parent(s)

As part of this discussion the social worker needs to be clear about what the family members can expect from these arrangements. Social worker will also need to talk about what the expectations of family members will be when they see their children.

Social worker can leave written information for the parent(s)/ family members to read.

In these conversations there are key messages which must to be shared with family members:

#### Key messages for families:

Team who will supervise the time with children are not social workers

Parent(s) will be introduced to the person/people who will be supervising before the first session with the children

This person/people will be observing and watching the relationship and interactions between child and parent

They will try and be as unobtrusive as possible

They may offer advice and help to make the time with the children as valuable as possible.



Parent(s) are able to have access to what supervisors write through solicitors and they can be made available to the court.

Seeing members of their family is really important for children, so it is essential family members are reminded to make it as positive as possible for the child.

Parents must be made aware that in planning for the time children see their families the LA will do everything it can to avoid upsetting the routine of the child. For example no child will miss school to see their parents or no child will be expected to travel long distances from their placement address when it is less demanding for the parent to travel. This may mean parents may have to wait a bit longer to see their children or they may be expected to travel a bit further to see their children.

The team will do what they can to help make the time with the child as positive as possible

The team will stop any agreed session or not allow it to happen if there is a worry that any adult who arrives to see the child is believed to be under the influence of substances or in some significant level of emotional distress.

Should parent(s) present as angry/aggressive/challenging in their manner to the point of concern for the welfare of the people present will be warned once to adjust their behaviour. If this is not heeded, the parent/adult will be asked to leave and the children will be returned to their placement.

#### Moving to the next stage:

Once the social worker has prepared the parent/family the social worker can make the initial referral to the team requesting a worker and space for parents and children to see their families.

Social worker to provide a comprehensive PLO Panel/ Referral form forward to the service for consideration

Social Worker will then call the service and request a formal set up meeting. The people who should be invited to this meeting are:

- Representative from the Family Activity Base Team
- Social worker (chair)
- Family
- Foster Carer/Carer for the child

## Planning Meeting

Any planning meeting needs to take place within 5 days of the initial order being made. Arrangements for children seeing their family can also be agreed as part of the 72 hour planning meeting for any new placement as long as all relevant parties are present.

The Service will not consider any arrangement until this meeting takes place. If there is no commitment to undertake the meeting the referral will be returned to the worker.

Between the order being made and the planning meeting the social worker will be observing and supervising the time with families.

The purpose of this meeting is to determine

- What arrangements will be in the best interests of the child – this must include who will be taking the child to and from the time with their family, arrangements for bringing food, arrangements for communication, frequency and times etc.
- What would work for the child and their family ie activities for the time together/any additional support around modelling positive parenting etc
- Arrangements for communication between carers and family including the use of the communication book
- What the worries are and what will be expected from everyone to lessen/reduce those worries.
- Agree expectations for everyone participating in the arrangements eg –lateness, telephone calls to confirm attendance, making sure medical/DWP appointments are outside of these arrangements wherever possible.
- Agree arrangements and review schedules if there are any issues/difficulties.

## **Transporting children**

Bringing children to and from the time they spend with their families is important. It can capture their worries and hopes for the session and it can offer observations and discussions as to how the child is feeling.

The person caring for the child on a day to day basis is, in the vast majority of cases, best placed to bring the child to see their family and then take them home again. There may be instances where this may not be appropriate and should be discussed at the placement planning meeting.

## **Expectations:**

For all children under school age carers will be expected to bring and collect children from the venue the child is seeing their family.

For school age children carers should be collecting children from the sessions where they see their families

For secondary school age children (from year 10) and where it is safe and appropriate to do so, young people can be encouraged to use public transport.

Where the child is long term matched carers should be supervising/supporting arrangements for children in their care see members of their family.

There will be occasions where alternative arrangements will be needed to bring children to and from the venues where they see their families and should be discussed at either the placement meeting and/or the set up meeting for arranging the sessions. The issues where alternative arrangements are required could be:

- Where it is essential the address and identifying features of carers and their transport remain confidential
- Where there are large numbers of children from different families in the same placement
- If the young person requests it
- Where it is in the best interests of the child

## Managing lateness/non attendance

Parents arriving late/not arriving for time with their children can be difficult to plan for, however in supporting how this is managed the following points can offer clarity of approach for workers.

If parent(s) are more than 15 mins late – the child will be returned to placement and the arrangement cancelled

If parent(s) has called to say en route and it is clear that their arrival is going to mean they are going to be longer than 15 mins late for the time with their child, this is too late and the child will be returned to placement and the arrangement cancelled

If parent(s) frequently call(s) on set days to say they are unable to attend – arrangements to be reviewed within 10 working days of this observation.

If parent fails to attend or calls to say unable to attend for 50% of the times they are due to see their children over 10 working days – arrangement must be reviewed within 10 working days. There are a range of options which must be considered:

- Subject to approval by Assistant Director arrangement can be suspended with a view to returning the issue to court for consideration (within 7 days of the decision to suspend being made)
- Arrangement can be reduced significantly
- Arrangement to continue with additional safeguards in place to support child/young person or parent(s) attend

It is within the gift of the LA to reduce/ alter arrangements if the initial care plan has made this clear. It is important however to ensure that the allocated legal officer to the case is notified if there are any issues with arrangements so that the parents and children's legal representatives can be made aware.

If the review and any subsequent actions are unsuccessful and the child is experiencing significant distress it may be necessary to return to court for permission to cease time spent with family for a temporary period pending further assessment. This cannot be suspended for longer than 7 days without the court determining a formal application made by the LA. Any decision to suspend requires permission of Assistant Director.

### Managing child's distress

Should the child and/or carer report or be observed to be in some level of distress prior to, during or after they have seen their family it is essential SW spends time trying to ascertain the reasoning for this and work with carer, and the worker observing the time spent with the family to understand where the distress has come from. If the distress is consistent over 3 arrangements immediate review should be requested.

### Outcome of the planning meeting

Agree expectations for behaviours and punctuality for all parties.

Agree the date the service will take over responsibility

Agree arrangements for talking to each other to share information, to share worries, and positive observations including the use of communications books

Agree dates for review of the arrangement. These dates should be at a minimum of 6 weeks after initial order/meeting.

Agree the amount of times a social worker will be observing the arrangement. As an expectation social workers should be completing at least 3 sessions in any 6 week cycle when the family and child are subject to proceedings.

Agree the conditions for coming to the meeting to meet more urgently/frequently

At the end of this first meeting arrangements for the first session will be shared with the family

At first session – the full schedule will be made available to family for the period to the next review

#### Formal review of arrangements

The formal review of arrangements for children seeing their families' takes place in the child's looked after review. It is in these meetings the Independent Reviewing Officer quality assures and challenges the Local Authority to ensure it is making the best and most appropriate plan for the child's immediate and future care for a child/young person. This includes thinking about what the future for child may look like as they move into adulthood and independence.

The Independent Reviewing Officer must proactively encourage the social worker to revisit arrangements for children and young people seeing their families as part of their role in reviewing the care planning arrangements for looked after children

This includes

'the arrangements for contact in relation to the parents, siblings and other family members or significant others, whether these take into account the child's current wishes and feelings and whether any changes are needed to these arrangements.' (IRO Handbook 2010: 3.38)

The options to consider as part of the review are whether the young person sees their family more or less frequently, or with more or less controls around the time they spend together with their families.

The arrangements for children seeing their families must be revisited at each LAC review in terms of risk and of the child or young person's understanding of their family as this shifts and changes as the child grows and develops. This is particularly important as the relationships the young person has with their family tend to become more important to children as they begin the transition from care to adulthood.

## **Recording**

Recording what happens when a child(ren) sees their family is necessary for a range of reasons.

- It provides a record for the child or their time with their family for them to be able to access when they are ready
- It provides a record for the social worker to use in their assessments and analysis for ongoing care planning
- It can provide a record for the family of their time with their child(ren)
- It can provide a record for court to support decision making

## **What child(ren) tell us about recording of sessions...**

Looked after children report they can be wary of what is being written during these sessions and want to be able to see what has been recorded and to understand why.

In response to these worries the structure for child(ren) seeing their family will be

- Worker or carer brings the child to see their family
- During the Journey they can talk about their worries and hopes for the day
- During the Journey they can talk about what they would like to do
- During the session the worker will sit and observe and make notes
- During the session the child(ren) will spend time with their family

- At the end of the session the child(ren) will say goodbye to their family
- At the end of the session the child will be asked by the person observing the session if they want to see what the worker has written
- At the end of the session the child will be asked by the person observing the session to say how they felt about the session and if they would like to add anything
- At the end of the session the child can be asked to draw a picture or complete 3 Houses about how they feel or think about the session
- There may be times where the child(ren) does not agree with what has been observed. However while the worker may not wish to alter their own record, the child(ren) will be able to add their own views to the recording.
- Should the child(ren) not wish to read or spend time undertaking this activity they can leave in the usual way.

As a result the approach to recording the activities and relationships during the time when the child sees their family will be one of a narrative chronological account which starts in the build up for the child seeing their family through to the point at which the child(ren) returns back to the person who is caring for them.

**Recording pro forma**

**Name of child:** .....

**Name of supervisor:** .....

**Name of Social Worker:** .....

**Date of visit:** .....

**Venue:**.....

**Time of session**

**Expected Duration:**



**Actual Duration:.....**

### **What happened on the way to see family?**

**Prompts to consider when completing this section (this is not an exhaustive list)**

- Think about what child was doing on arrival at their placement
- What was their mood? Presentation? Anything unusual? Anything that worried you or the carer?
- Feedback from carer about behaviours and any observations since last visit to family and specifically previous night and this morning
- What was the journey like – topics of conversation, observations of behaviours in the car?
- Singing to the radio? Playing games? Chatting? Or quiet?
- Description of presentation
- Was the member of the family waiting for their child(ren)?
- Describe the greeting

## What happening during the session?

### Prompts to consider when completing this section (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Was the child(ren) excited?
- Cuddles? Describe the initial interaction and the hellos.
- How was member of the family looking? What was their presentation like?
- What had been brought for the family to do together during their time together?
- Describe interactions, cuddles, activities, conversations
- Describe activities, basic care, feeding, eye contact, body language, ability to play
- Anything worker role modelled and member of the family was able to show they understood and then demonstrated.
- How was any worries or risks to the child(ren) dealt with by family? Were they prompted to recognise? How well did they anticipate any issues?
- If siblings talk about how family managed the dynamics and gave each child attention?
- Describe any items/memories that were made together during their time together
- Describe photos that have been taken
- Describe the goodbyes

**How did the child(ren) think today went? (Form below developed by LAC Council)**

# LAC Voices!



What did you like/enjoy about today's meeting?



Is there anything you were/are worried about?



What would you like to happen to make things better for you and/or your family at the next meeting?



## What happened on the way back from seeing family?

### Prompts to consider when completing this section (this is not an exhaustive list)

- What happened when the child(ren) got back into the car?
- Describe their presentation/behaviours?
- Were they upset? Did they talk happily about the time they spent with their family?
- Did they not talk about it? Did they sit quietly in the car?
- What happened when they were taken back to their carer?
- How did the care respond to the child(ren)?
- Management of risk during their time together – in terms of family keeping child(ren) safe and any worries posed by family.
- If family had given them any toys to take back – what did they do with them?
- What was this interaction like?
- Did the child(ren) appear happy to be back?
- How were they greeted by their carer?
- How did the child respond to their carer?

## **Glossary of Terms**

### Full supervision

Full supervision includes all of the below

- Observation at all times of all children and with all adults. In practice this means following and observing adults if they are allowed to take the children to the toilet.
- Close supervision of nappy changing, outdoor play and preparation of any food.
- Supervisor will be expected to hear all conversations and ask the family to not whisper
- Supervisor will be expected to record significant conversations

Depending on worries it may also be required that families are asked that any bags for the children are left with reception to be searched prior to them being handed over to the child

It is recommended that all new referrals are subject to full supervision.

### Partial supervision/relaxed

More relaxed supervision would include

- Supervisor would be present in the room, recording and observing what takes place during the period of time the child is seeing their family
- Would monitor trips to the toilet but not necessarily follow

In order for this to be considered the service would require clarity about what needs to be closely observed and what could be relaxed

### Supported arrangements

This is anticipated to be used where there is no perceived danger to the children and where there is a clear permanence plan in place. In these instances

- A room can be allocated at Cranworth
- People will be present in the building

### Activity based:

For children in long term arrangement, where proceedings have been concluded and/or where it has been risk assessed as possible, supervising activities in the community is possible subject to planning, risk assessment and agreement. However the service is unable to accommodate the following activities:

- Swimming
- Cinema
- Theatre

## Flowchart for thinking and planning for children maintaining relationships with their family

What we need to do

What we need to think about.....

Worker is of the view child(ren) cannot be safely cared for by the person with PR

Assessments to include consideration of the quality of relationships child has with members of their family –

Use this analysis and complete LGPM – include rationale for approach to maintaining links with family

Chair of LGPM to check out workers decision making for care plan and arrangements for children maintaining links/relationships

Progress to PLOPP if it becomes clear proceedings are necessary

Attend PLOPP for permission to initiate

Permission to initiate has been granted – make contact with service and send referral/PLOPP form and make a date for planning meeting

Service will not plan for any arrangement until a planning meeting has been held

Think about the network the child would identify and include these people in the assessment of relationships

Think about what the assessment says and what this means for the child's sense of who they are, what they need now from their family and what they may need in the future

Remember family is key to how we understand our place in the world – give this element

Be prepared to explain reasoning for the type, frequency and venue.

Be prepared to think about purpose – assessment? Life story? Making memories? All 3?

Be prepared to think about possible risks and worries for face to face meetings and how these are going to be managed.

Be prepared to talk about how the arrangement will benefit child now and in their future. One size does not fit all – arrangements can be fluid and not fixed