

Multi-Agency Working in Care Proceedings

Why is Multi-Agency working so vital to Children's Care proceedings?

Multiagency working in care proceedings refers to the collaboration between various professionals and agencies (e.g., children's services, health professionals, education authorities, police, and legal professionals) involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Information should be shared between agencies with the goal of safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare. Information about a child will help inform reasonable decision making that prioritises the welfare of the child.

What is good information sharing?

Information should be shared between agencies promptly and should be relevant, necessary, and proportionate to the goal of safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare.

Some examples;

- School attendance reports
- Health reports and updates
- Police reports
- Social Care reports and history
- Legal information

Information should be;

- Factual information
- Analysis of concerns
- Professional opinion (level of risk in your setting)
- Support available from the agency
- Limitations of agency (what resources are available)

How should information be shared?

Consent: Where possible and appropriate, agencies should seek the consent of the child's parents or guardians before sharing information. However, in cases where seeking consent would put the child at risk, information can be shared without consent if it is necessary to protect the child.

Proportionality: Only share information that is directly relevant to the case. Avoid sharing excessive or unnecessary details to maintain confidentiality and comply with data protection laws.

Clarity and Accuracy: Information shared should be clear, factual, and up-to-date. Any opinions or interpretations should be clearly distinguished from factual information.

Secure Channels: Information should be shared through secure communication channels, such as encrypted emails, secure portals, or face-to-face meetings. This prevents unauthorized access and ensures that sensitive data is protected.

Sometimes, despite there being significant concerns by professionals and information being shared; the courts may not agree that it is in the best interest of the child for them to leave the family home. Therefore, it is responsibility of professionals to ensure constant information sharing to monitor the risk of harm and to support the welfare of the child. Additionally if the courts are not satisfied with the information shared by professional they may be call to speak directly in court. Therefore is important to ensure that the allocated social worker is provided with regular updates to share with the courts.

