



FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE PROJECT ACCREDITATION

**Evidencing how your FGC service meets the
requirements of the regulatory framework¹**

October 2014

¹ This document should be read in conjunction with the framework for the accreditation of FGC services which can be seen at <http://www.frg.org.uk/involving-families/family-group-conferences/fgc-standards-and-accreditation>

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Guidance

This document is intended to guide you through the process of gathering and presenting evidence to meet the requirements of FGC project accreditation. It includes information about what the accreditation framework is aiming to achieve, what information projects are expected to provide, how projects should present their information, how this is assessed and tools to assist in evidencing this.

What accreditation is aiming to achieve

The accreditation framework sets out the minimum requirements for an FGC service to be accredited in order:

- to give clear guidance as to how services should operate
- to provide a straightforward means against which a service can be measured; and
- to provide a degree of external scrutiny of practice through a regulatory body which is able to give recognition to quality services.

The framework draws together a number of elements, encompassing:

- A set of standards
- Expectations for the training and support of FGC co-ordinators
- How a regulatory body shall oversee and administer the accreditation of FGC services.

Requirements of projects being accredited

Projects should provide evidence and information concerning three areas. These are:

- I. **Standards:** How they meet the standards
- II. **Coordinator practice and training:** How they have assessed coordinators practice
- III. **Stakeholder Contacts:** Information for the assessor to contact those able to comment on the service

I. The Family Group Conference standards

FGC services are required to provide evidence of their practice against a set of 7 agreed standards. Each standard is further broken down into sub standards setting out more specifically how the standard should be met.

The FGC standards have been developed to assist families as well as professionals to understand what a family group conference is and what to expect if involved in one. They identify the basic requirements that can be expected from those delivering family group conferences.

It is intended that the standards should be integrated into the work of the FGC service and not simply become a bureaucratic process.

An FGC service that successfully applies to be accredited is making a clear pledge as to how it will operate and to which it can be held accountable. The process is intended to demonstrate externally that the service has reached a particular standard, to inform how the service operates day to day, with the standards available to those who use the FGC service whether referrer or family member.

The standards draw on current practice and learning in the UK and internationally. It is adherence to these minimum expectations that the regulatory framework is intended to measure.

A key expectation is that FGC services are required to provide evidence of both their policy and practice in satisfactorily meeting these standards. In demonstrating how you meet the standards you are expected to show how the policy framework (as represented through documents, leaflets and other information) supports your evidence. However it isn't enough to just provide policies, you are also required to show examples of how this policy framework is reflected in your direct practice with families.

To guide you in providing appropriate evidence we have provided a grid with the standards identified and space to cross reference where the evidence to support the standard can be found. **FGC services are required to use this format to evidence their practice**

Some examples of supporting evidence are suggested e.g. family plan, minutes of team meetings etc. An example of how this has been used by a project is included in the appendix.

II. Family Group Conference co-ordinator training and practice

In order for FGC services to meet the requirements of the accreditation framework they will need to demonstrate that the training their co-ordinators have received meets prescribed requirements. Further, a principle agreed early in this work was that a participant's engagement in initial training is not sufficient guarantee as to their competence to practice as an FGC co-ordinator and there needs to be a more robust measure which includes an informed judgement of a person's direct practice.

New FGC co-ordinators must:

- have attended a training programme which is registered²
- Have subsequently met the 'in practice' assessment requirements that the framework sets out, covering how they are observed in their practice, alongside supervision and other support requirements.

For existing FGC co-ordinators this will require that they can evidence that they have similarly met the in-house assessment requirements and how their on-going practice is monitored.

Work-based assessment of competence

The requirements for work-based assessment include:

- The new co-ordinator shadowing and working collaboratively with an experienced co-ordinator including accompanying them to the referral meeting and a family visit as well as observation of the FGC.
- Observation by the FGC manager or an experienced FGC co-ordinator of the new co-ordinator - taking their own referral followed by a review of the new co-ordinator's practice against set criteria.

New co-ordinators will thus be required to have their line manager 'sign off' this process acknowledging that they have undertaken this induction and have the required skills to practice. A format for recording this is included in this document.

² See appendix for requirements for registered training. For details of how training should be registered see FRG website

New practitioners who are not directly employed by an FGC service will still be required to have their practice assessed in a work setting in keeping with the above requirements.

Presenting your evidence

Projects should use the tools included here to create a portfolio of evidence covering the required evidence. Below are some principles that will assist in this:

- Information should be clearly cross referenced so that the assessor and the panel can easily identify where the evidence supporting a requirement can be found.
- Evidence should where possible include both policy and practice examples³
- It's OK to use the same evidence example to demonstrate different standards
- Where possible projects should provide a range of evidence to demonstrate that the project is addressing the standard.
- However, projects should avoid providing too much evidence e.g. many identical pieces of evidence of the same practice standard would be unnecessary and a burden on you. The quality of the evidence is more important than the quantity⁴
- Use your local practice standards and other materials that are shared with stakeholders to demonstrate evidence
- Provide a brief text summary to support evidence for each sub-standard. The form allows for this.
- When identifying stakeholders who can be contacted by the assessor to comment on the project ensure that you have their agreement for this
- Present the evidence in a ring binder format ensuring that all sections and individual pieces of evidence are clearly labelled.

A good guiding principle should be that from your portfolio the reader can clearly see that your project is adhering to the standards and that this is supported by a clear policy framework and reflected in your day to day practice and in information for stakeholders.

Send your completed portfolio by secure post to:

The Administrator
Family Rights Group
Second Floor
The Print House
18 Ashwin Street
London E8 3DL

What participants in the trial said:

'It wasn't difficult just time-consuming'

'It wasn't the evidence but all the cross-referencing'

'We didn't think it would take as long as it did' (in-house service)

³ We recognise for some standards this will be more difficult

⁴ There were portfolios in the trial that were half the size of others but achieved higher scores because the quality of the evidence was better

'Next time it will be so much quicker as I will have much of the information and will know what I am doing' (independent service)

'The anticipation was worse than the actual doing of it'

*'Services found that it was taking between 2-10 working days to bring the evidence together. The majority spent over 5 days putting their submission together and a number reported that it was a time-consuming task.'*⁵

How the work is assessed

	The assessment process
1.	Projects gather and submit evidence in accordance with the requirements.
2.	The assessor considers the information submitted and using a scoring framework make a preliminary judgment as to whether it meets the requirements of the framework.
3.	The assessor submits their recommendation to the assessment panel that will use the same scoring framework to review the assessor's judgement and decide whether the project has met the requirements.
4.	The view of the panel will be communicated back to the project in the form of a report with the scores obtained. If the panel believes there are some gaps in information or that the project needs to do some work to meet the requirements then the project will be invited to address this. ⁶
5.	where necessary information is resubmitted to FRG and reassessed
6.	If the project is unhappy with the conclusions of the panel there will be opportunity to appeal to a separate panel made up of Development Group members and an independent person.

The role of the assessor is:

- to judge whether the information demonstrates that the project has met the requirements and to score the evidence
- To contact the stakeholders for information from them about how the project meets the requirements
- To submit their assessment to the panel

The role of the panel is to:

- Oversee the assessment of the assessor and provide a 'second' view
- Give guidance as to where there are gaps in evidence and how these should be met
- Make a final decision on whether the project meets the requirements

The Panel

The panel is made up of the assessor, two development group members who are experienced FGC project managers and a family member. The assessor and the panel make their decisions in accordance with the

⁵ From the evaluation of the trial

⁶ The development group has been keen that the framework is perceived as enabling and supportive and where projects would benefit them the opportunity for peer support to assist projects in meeting the requirements this will be offered.

scoring guidance below. This is intended to remove bias and maximise consistency whilst providing a fair and transparent framework enabling clear feedback to be given. Each element of the standards evidence is scored on a scale of 1-5.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Evidence fails to meet the requirements	Some of the evidence meets the requirements but not sufficient to be accredited	Most of the evidence meets the requirements but there are still sufficient gaps needing to be evidenced	The project has provided sufficient evidence to meet the requirements but there are some omissions	The project has provided a full range of evidence to meet the requirements

- A score of 1 or 2 will not be sufficient to meet the requirements for accreditation and will require the project to address the gaps in order for the project to be accredited.
- A score of 3 may also require the project to re-submit, this will depend of the assessor’s judgement and the extent of the overall scores attained.
- A score of 4 or 5 will be sufficient to meet the requirements.
- Where the score is less than 5 the assessor should make a comment concerning the gap in evidence. This will form part of the feedback to the project. Where the assessor has recommended action to address the gap this should also be recorded
- Feedback will be broken down into **recommended actions** (where the evidence has not obtained a score of 5 but has been accepted as meeting the requirements) and **required actions** (where the evidence has not been accepted as meeting the requirements)

Projects will be expected to address required actions in order to be accredited

What participants in the trial said:

‘It was a bit scary but rigorous’. (Large in-house service)

‘It was a robust process’ (Service manager)

‘I thought it was fair. The report made some really useful points that made us look at the service and things that are good practice... so it was very balanced.’ (small in-house service)

‘All in all quite happy with how it went, I’m glad we have done it.’

‘Our manager was quite positive and pleased we had passed it. We developed an action plan with points we needed to address,’ (medium size independent service)

‘We will develop an action plan based on ours as we don’t want it to get lost as the comments are really valid and relevant.’ (small in-house service)

‘On the whole the process was challenging but the recommendations were helpful.’ (Service manager)

‘We can see where we have missed something and how we don’t do that every time’.

Tools to evidence the requirements.

The following documents are required to be submitted. Beyond this projects can evidence their work in whatever way feels effective. There are some examples in the appendix of how other projects have completed these documents.

DOCUMENT CHECKLIST	COMPLETED
1. Standards grid	
2. Coordinator self-assessment form (one for each coordinator)	
3. List of coordinators employed by the project	
4. Family member consent form	
5. Stakeholder contact form	
6. Final checklist form	

1. STANDARDS GRID

MEETING THE STANDARDS

- Under the heading ‘Evidence provided’ there are some examples of evidence that may support this standard. These are not obligatory and you may have other sources of evidence.
- All evidence supplied needs to be rendered anonymous so that individuals cannot be identified.
- Where possible evidence should cover your policy framework i.e. what your project says it does in local policy documentation (leaflets, practice standards etc.) and examples of how you are doing this in practice (minutes, plans, children’s’ input etc.)
- Cross reference documents so that they can be easily identified

STANDARD 1. The FGC co-ordinator is independent	Evidence provided	Cross reference (e.g. Sections 3.2)	Comments (use this to add any supporting comments)
1.1 The FGC service will be delivered by an independent co-ordinator who will have no other professional role with the family and will have no involvement in any professional decision making or allocation of resources for the child/young person or vulnerable adult or family.	<i>Job Description; practice standards; leaflets</i>		
1.2 The co-ordinator will be managed by someone who has no previous or current involvement in any decision making for the child/young person or vulnerable adult.	<i>Local practice standards Leaflets; job description</i>		

<p>1.3 The FGC Service will ensure that the Independent co-ordinator will be trained in the FGC model and in the skills necessary to independently undertake the role</p>	<p><i>Evidence of using accredited training providers</i></p> <p><i>training certificates</i></p> <p><i>self-assessment forms (see later in this document)</i></p>		
<p>1.4 All co-ordinators should be in receipt of relevant and adequate professional practice consultancy/oversight to maintain the integrity and quality of their role.</p>	<p><i>Supervision notes</i></p> <p><i>job descriptions</i></p> <p><i>supervision policy</i></p> <p><i>Self-assessment forms</i></p>		

STANDARD 2. The FGC should respect the family's consent to proceed	Evidence provided	Cross reference	Comments
<p>2.1 The co-ordinator will ensure that there is informed consent given by an appropriate person with the legal authority to agree to have the FGC and that there is understanding that this consent can be withdrawn.</p>	<p><i>Referral form</i></p> <p><i>practice standard</i></p> <p><i>supervision note</i></p> <p><i>Signed referral form</i></p>		
<p>2.2 The co-ordinator, with the child/young person and carers will explore who from their own network they wish to invite to the conference. The agreement as to who attends will be negotiated with the family.</p>	<p><i>Practice standards</i></p> <p><i>coordinator toolkit</i></p> <p><i>invite letters to family members</i></p> <p><i>genograms</i></p>		

STANDARD 3. The FGC should be family led and include ‘private time’ for the family to make a plan in response to concerns.	Evidence provided	Cross reference	Comments
3.1 The family group conference (FGC) process is a strength based way of working, which acknowledges the positives as well as addressing the needs and challenges in a family.	<i>Guidance to referrer</i> <i>Leaflets</i> <i>local toolkit</i> <i>practice standards</i> <i>Family plans</i> <i>Referrer’s information</i> <i>Referral forms</i>		
3.2 Families should be supported to be active decision makers about their family members.	<i>FGC plans</i> <i>referrer agendas</i> <i>local toolkits</i> <i>practice standards</i> <i>supervision group notes</i> <i>e-mails and correspondence</i> <i>practical support in attending</i>		
3.3 The FGC usually involves the extended family network and can include non-family members as identified by the family.	<i>Invite lists</i> <i>genograms</i>		

	<i>correspondence</i> <i>FGC plans</i> <i>Evaluation forms</i>		
3.4 The FGC will happen at a date, time and venue that have been agreed by the family and all participants.	<i>Correspondence</i> <i>practice standards</i> <i>invoices for venues</i> <i>invite letters and correspondence</i>		
3.5 Families should always have private family time within a safe and supportive environment in order to make decisions and plans.	<i>Practice standard</i> <i>leaflets and information for all participants</i> <i>FGC plans</i> <i>Crèche bookings</i> <i>Safety assessments</i>		
3.6 The FGC will seek agreement as to how the plan will be monitored and reviewed.	<i>FGC plans</i> <i>Correspondence</i> <i>practice standards</i>		
3.7 Families should have the opportunity to be involved in the development of the family group conference service.	<i>Evaluation forms</i> <i>service user groups</i> <i>interview panels</i> <i>consultation exercises</i> <i>Evaluation reports</i>		
3.8 Participants can raise concerns or provide feedback about their involvement with the FGC process and this will be dealt with in a	<i>Evaluation forms</i>		

constructive way.	<i>Evaluation reports</i> <i>complaints policy</i> <i>evidence of circulating evaluation information to others</i> <i>local training and promotion</i>		
3.9 Family members will be informed of the complaints policy of the service where needed.	<i>complaints policy and leaflets</i>		

STANDARD 4. The central focus should be the child or adult who is the subject of the FGC and they should be offered support in their involvement including an advocate.	Evidence	Cross reference	Comments/Action
4.1 Those for whom the FGC has been organised, whether child, young people or vulnerable adult, should be supported to have their families and other significant people fully involved in planning their future	<i>Leaflets</i> <i>evidence of supporting family to attend;</i> <i>evidence of the subject being consulted as to family involvement</i> <i>practice standards</i>		
4.2 The voice of the child / young person or vulnerable adult who is the subject of the FGC will be central to the FGC process and should be sought and heard at all stages of the process.	<i>evidence of child's contribution</i> <i>practice standards re advocacy</i>		

4.3 The co-ordinator will seek to ensure that advocacy is offered for those young people or vulnerable adults who require it both during the preparation and in the FGC itself.	<i>practice standards re advocacy</i> <i>evidence of use of advocate for child/vulnerable adults</i>		
4.4 Where a child/young person/vulnerable adult choose not to be, or are unable to be present at the FGC, the co-ordinator will ensure that any resulting family plan is appropriately shared with them and it is clear as to how this will be done.	<i>Family plans;</i> <i>practice standards</i>		

STANDARD 5. The FGC service should ensure that the family has all necessary resources, including adequate preparation, relevant information, and a safe and appropriate environment to make its plan	Evidence	Cross reference	Comments/Action
5.1 Families have the right to clear, appropriate information about the family group conference process	<i>Leaflets</i> <i>other written information</i> <i>website</i>		
5.2 The co-ordinator will assist the professionals in preparation for their role in the FGC process and will ensure where possible that the family have all the relevant information both about concerns and resources needed to make a plan	<i>evidence of meeting with professionals</i> <i>local practice standards</i> <i>local training</i> <i>evidence of guidance to referrers</i> <i>Evidence of referrer information provided to</i>		

	<i>families for the FGC</i>		
5.3 The co-ordinator will use a range of creative methods to ensure that all contributions are sought and shared, and will ensure that where possible the views of those unable to attend are shared at the meeting.	<i>evidence of family contribution to conferences</i> <i>family plan</i>		
5.4 Everyone participating in the FGC will be prepared and supported throughout the process, and the coordinator will usually meet with all prior to the meeting.	<i>Evidence of visits to family members</i> <i>Evidence of support for family to attend</i>		
5.5 The FGC Service will ensure that the safety of family members, referrers and service providers will be planned for and all necessary provision put in place. The FGC service is responsible for ensuring that health and safety issues are addressed throughout the FGC process	<i>local health and safety policy</i> <i>supervision discussion</i> <i>Safety and risk planning for FGCs</i>		
5.6 Families have the right to have safe plans agreed and resourced. If there is to be a delay in agreeing the plan the family need to be informed of the reasons and a timescale agreed.	<i>Decisions from FGC</i> <i>Leaflets</i> <i>local practice standards</i> <i>evaluation forms</i>		
5.7 The co-ordinator, at the end of the process, will ensure that all participants have understood what has been decided.	<i>FGC plans</i> <i>evaluation forms</i>		

STANDARD 6. The FGC should respect the family's privacy and right to confidentiality	Evidence	Cross reference	Comments
<p>6.1 The co-ordinator will ensure there is appropriate agreement to share any information with the wider family network and professionals in accordance with the information sharing policy. An exception to this would be information that if not shared would place a child or adult at significant risk.</p> <p>It is the referrer's responsibility to ensure that they have agreement to share any information that they are presenting which is of a confidential nature.</p>	<p><i>information sharing policy</i></p> <p><i>guidance to referrer</i></p> <p><i>supervision notes</i></p> <p><i>agreement in family plan</i></p> <p><i>form for family to sign</i></p> <p><i>safeguarding policy</i></p> <p><i>Evidence of information sharing of a child protection nature</i></p>		
<p>6.2 The family plan is the only written document to result from the FGC. The co-ordinator will ensure that all participants receive a copy of the plan as soon as possible after the meeting in accordance with the timeframe set out by the project.</p>	<p><i>Copy of FGC plans</i></p> <p><i>local information recording policy</i></p> <p><i>local practice standards</i></p>		

STANDARD 7. The FGC should be sensitive to the family's culture taking account of ethnicity, language and religion.	Evidence	Cross reference	Comments
<p>7.1 Where possible family should be offered the option of holding the FGC in the first language of the family and in matching the family with a coordinator from their own cultural background. Attention will be given to any significant cultural issues.</p>	<p><i>Leaflets</i></p> <p><i>evidence of interpreters</i></p> <p><i>evaluation forms</i></p>		

	<i>materials in different languages</i>		
	<i>evidence of ethnic breakdown within coordinator group</i>		
	<i>Family plans</i>		

2. COORDINATOR SELF ASSESSMENT CHECK LIST

This should be completed by all coordinators. All sections should be completed unless the form designates otherwise. Once completed the form should be signed by the project manager.

NAME OF COORDINATOR		
ACTIVITY		Y/N Dates
Attended coordinator training	Dates of training	
	Certificate <i>If you don't have a certificate can you provide either confirmation from your manager that you have completed 3 day training or a letter from a previous employer to this effect.</i>	
Shadowing of FGC practice <i>To be completed by coordinators who have undertaken FGC coordinator training within the last 12 months. Coordinators must have the opportunity to shadow within 12 months of initial training and must take a referral within a further 12 months otherwise will be required to re-shadow a case or have re-training.</i>	Meeting with social worker	
	Initial meeting with family	
	Attended Family Group Conference as an observer	
Observed FGC practice <i>To be completed by all coordinators. In order to be accredited all of the project's coordinators will be required to have their practice observed over the duration of the period of accreditation (3 years).</i>	Observed in managing meeting with referrer	
	Observed managing initial FGC visit by project manager or delegated person	
	Observed managing full FGC	
	Evidence of discussion of learning from observed practice <i>The appendix has some formats for evidencing this. Alternatively projects can use their own materials</i>	
Practice group/supervision meetings attended in last 12 months <i>All coordinators should attend at least 4 meetings a year</i>		
Have received and read key relevant policies	Child and adult safeguarding	
	FGC Practice standards	

	Recording and information management	
	Lone Working	
	Supervision policy/professional consultancy	
Any policy documents not seen		
Please sign and date	Coordinator	
	Manager	

4. FORMAT FOR GETTING FAMILY MEMBER CONSENT TO BE CONTACTED

Agreement to be contacted to discuss the work of Family Group Conference project.

..... Family Group Conference service is currently being assessed as to whether it meets the national requirements to be an accredited service. As such we are interested in how the service meets agreed standards. These are:

Standard 1	The FGC co-ordinator is independent
Standard 2	The FGC should respect the family's consent to proceed
Standard 3	The FGC should be family led and include 'private time' for the family to make a plan in response to concerns.
Standard 4	The central focus should be the child or adult who is the subject of the FGC and they should be offered support in their involvement including an advocate.
Standard 5	The FGC service should ensure that the family has all necessary resources, including adequate preparation, relevant information, and a safe and appropriate environment to make its plan
Standard 6	The FGC should respect the family's privacy and right to confidentiality
Standard 7	The FGC should be sensitive to the family's culture taking account of ethnicity, language and religion.

..... the FGC project manager has nominated you as a person who would be willing to be contacted by telephone by the person assessing the FGC project to discuss your views concerning how the service meets these standards based upon your experience of the service.

We are very interested in your views and would like to discuss these with you. We expect that this will only take 15 minutes of your time and we are happy to contact you at a time that is convenient to you.

We value your opinion and what you say will influence our assessment of the project and your views may feature in the feedback we give to the project.

If in agreement can you please complete the attached slip and return it to the family group conference project manager. We will then make contact with you within the next few weeks. We are happy to answer any questions you may have about this.

Name	Telephone	Mobile	Best time to contact you
I agree to be contacted to discuss the work of the family group conference service. I understand that my views may be communicated back to the FGC project.			
Signed			
Date			

5. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE THE ASSESSOR CAN CONTACT TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON THE PROJECT'S WORK.

The assessor will contact at least one person from each group.

Please ensure that the person has given their written permission to be contacted prior to making contact.

CONTACT	Name		Contact number
Family Members (2)			
Young people (2)		Age	
		Age	
Referrers (2)			
Coordinators(2)			

6. FINAL CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION

FINAL CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION <i>Please ensure that you have ticked all of the boxes on this form before submitting. Attach the forms in the corresponding colours for each of the three headings</i>		
Contact info	Project manager name	
	Tel number	
	Mobile number	
	E-mail	
	Address	
	Web address of project (if you have one)	
Standards checklist <i>Please tick that you have attached the evidence grid for each standard</i>	Standard 1	
	Standard 2	
	Standard 3	
	Standard 4	
	Standard 5	
	Standard 6	
	Standard 7	
Training checklist <i>Please ensure that you have a completed a grid for each coordinator</i>	Completed assessment grid for each coordinator	
	How many	
Stakeholder Contact	Have you completed the contact information form for referrers, coordinators, family and young people?	

APPENDIX

THE FOLLOWING TEMPLATES ARE AVAILABLE FOR USE BUT ARE NOT A REQUIREMENT.

CHECKLIST FORM FOR COORDINATORS FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF AN FGC.

This format is to be completed by the coordinator in the course of completing an FGC and can be a focus for discussion between the observer and the coordinator.

ACTIVITY	COMMENTS	Signatures and Date
I have established the reason for the Family Group Conference with the referrer.		
I have ensured that those able to agree to the FGC have given their informed consent.		
I have established the reason for the Family Group Conference with the Child/YP and family.		
I have met with the key people and prepared them for the meeting.		
I have prepared the professionals for giving information at the meeting including ensuring that there is agreement for information to be shared.		
I have offered the young person(s) an advocate if appropriate.		
I have offered a vulnerable adult an advocate if appropriate.		
The family are clear who is coming to the meeting and why.		

The family have chosen a time and venue for the meeting.		
The family have received any relevant information prior to the meeting.		
I introduced everyone at the meeting, made sure everyone was clear about the task and agenda.		
I chaired the information stage of the meeting and ensured any questions were answered clearly.		
I chaired the feedback time and sent everyone a copy of the plan within a week.		
The family had private family time to make their plan.		
I offered the family an opportunity to have a review.		
The family was empowered by this process, and their needs and opinions were listened to. Comment in any difficulties you faced during this process.		
I was sensitive to the family's culture.		
What strengths did you show during this process?		
Which area would you like to do better in next time?		

PREPARING FOR A FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE

This tool can be used by a coordinator when preparing for an FGC, and once completed as a focus for discussion with their manager.

Preparing for a Family Group Conference
Explain / demonstrate the issues that need to be taken into consideration when planning an appropriate agenda.
Manager feedback:
Explain / demonstrate the skills required when making the first contact with the family and arranging subsequent meetings
Manager feedback:
Explain / demonstrate why potential participants may resist an fgc and some strategies for working through it.
Manager feedback:
Explain / demonstrate how the co-ordinator can encourage and prepare the child for their participation in the conference
Manager feedback:
Understanding How to Manage a Family Group Conference

Explain the importance of setting a specific format and ground rules for the conference

Manager feedback:

Demonstrate the key skills a co-ordinator will need when chairing the information sharing section of the conference

Manager feedback:

Demonstrate and analyse strategies that could be used to overcome potential challenges in chairing the meeting

Manager feedback:

Demonstrate the skills a co-ordinator requires to ensure a controlled and welcoming ambience

Manager feedback:

Explain how to manage the final stage of the family group conference to enable the family to prepare a plan of action

Manager feedback:

Demonstrate the role of the co-ordinator during private family time.

Manager feedback:

Demonstrate the role of the co-ordinator in eliciting agreements in response to all agenda questions and in clarifying the referrer's response

Manager feedback:

Explain/demonstrate the role of the co-ordinator in planning and managing a review of the family group conference

Manager feedback:

USING RESEARCH AND READING

This tool can be used either by a coordinator who wishes to develop their individual learning or as a tool for coordinator group discussion and instigated by the project manager.

This tool can be used when you are reading or doing research.

Name of article or book/ research. Author, publisher and date:	
Key Points from the book:	
What struck me most from my reading / what I have learned:	
How this changes the way I look at a piece of work I have done:	
How I will use this learning with current pieces of work:	
An aspect of my coordinator practice that will change or I will think about differently as a result of this reading:	

ENQUIRY AND ACTION LEARNING WORKSHEET

Complete the following after you have been allocated an FGC case and before any action is taken. This can be used for discussion with your manager.

Knowledge Base	Notes
What areas of knowledge (i.e. theory, legislation, policies, research, anti-oppressive practice, etc) are relevant to this case?	
What are the areas of priority in terms of progressing with this case and how have you decided upon these?	
Skills Base	
What skills are needed to work with this case?	
What skills do you already have?	
What can you do to acquire and practice those skills that you will need to deal with situation but do not yet have?	
Values Base	
What is the wider context of the situation? Are there any organisational, legal, resource, political or ethical issues that should be considered?	
Are there any anti-discriminatory or anti-oppressive aspects of the situation to be explored?	

Does the situation raise any personal issues for you? If so, how should these be dealt with and by whom?	
After completion of the intervention	
Review your own notes above. What is your present perception of the situation and does this differ from your initial perception above?	
What are the key learning points for you?	
What do you now feel confident about with regard to your practice?	
What areas of your practice with regard to knowledge, skills and values do you need to further develop?	
...and how might you get the opportunity to do this?	
What gaps are there in your knowledge and skills that you still need to explore that you feel you did not have the opportunity to do, or were not relevant to that particular situation?	
How did the experience fit into the overall pattern of your learning, and help you relate theory to practice?	

PLANNING A PIECE OF WORK

Before you begin a new piece of work with a family, take time to plan your work.

In what ways may the service users' experience of services effect how they perceive me and the idea of having a FGC?	
How will I attempt to address this?	
What is the legal context for this work? Which agency policies will I be working to?	
From the information I have, what new knowledge will I need to enable the process to progress?	
What steps will I take to gain this knowledge?	

GUIDELINES FOR STRUCTURED REFLECTION

Context Set out the circumstances in which you came to be involved in the piece of work you are about to do.	
How did your agency come to be involved with this work?	
What information did you have about the identity and circumstances of the service users (or others) you were to work with.	
What information did you have about their concerns?	
What other people or agencies were involved at this stage?	
How and why did you decide to take it on?	
Purpose and Plan	
In beginning the work how did you plan your involvement?	
How did you decide this?	
How did you decide you could best achieve this?	

What legal and policy frameworks informed your purpose and plans?	
What previous experience, other knowledge did you draw on?	
What other information or preparation did you think you needed?	
Process	
Discuss what happened in implementing your plans – what you did, what others did, how you responded to them, how you worked together.	
Say what you felt in the course of the work and how this affected your thinking, purpose and plans (i.e say something about the process of your reflection <i>in action</i>).	
Evaluation	
How effective was your work?	
Say what you know about the opinions of different parties in the work – yourself, the service user, the agency, anyone else who seems relevant.	
What was achieved or not achieved and why?	

<p>How does this relate to your original purpose and plan, or any revision of it?</p>	
<p>Distinguish between the work you were responsible for and that which was carried out by others.</p>	
<p>Reflection Use this section to reflect <i>on</i> action.</p>	
<p>Discuss what you learnt from this piece of work, and reflect on you own intervention – in particular, your use of values, theory, methods and strategies etc.</p>	
<p>This might refer to a discussion of your own practice, and areas for development that the work has suggested to you,</p>	
<p>as well as issues around policy and practice that were highlighted for you.</p>	
<p>List any actions you will take to progress your learning</p>	

Expectations concerning the training of coordinators and how these should be reflected in your project's submission to the accreditation process

One aim of the accreditation programme is to set a clear benchmark concerning the training of coordinators. Currently there is an array of providers of FGC coordinator training with no recognised and shared quality standard. The project accreditation programme therefor has set some expectations concerning the training that coordinators have received. We are not, however in a position to accredit individual coordinator training programmes as this would be onerous and beyond the remit of this programme. Instead we have provided some guidance as to what an acceptable training programme should include and the skills of those delivering it.

It is the responsibility of those submitting to the project accreditation framework to satisfy the process as to the suitability of the training their coordinators have received.

The accreditation programme recognises the two current externally accredited training programmes as being of a sufficient standard – those accredited by the Open College Network and the FRG/University of Chester post graduate programme.

If the training you provide to your coordinators (or the route through which they have been trained previous to your employing them) is not one of these programmes then the onus is on you, in your submission, to evidence that your training meets the same requirements regarding how it is delivered and who is responsible for this. Guidance concerning the requirements of coordinator training is listed below. Where the training is considered not to meet these requirements the panel may recommend that in future training meets these requirements.

FGC Training course requirements

a) Trainer skills

The three-day co-ordinator training, which new FGC co-ordinators will be required to attend if the FGC service is to be accredited, must fit with specific requirements set out below.

In addition at least one of the trainers delivering the course must be able to demonstrate sufficient experience and skills in FGC practice. They will need to either:

- Be a registered trainer on the Open College programme;
- Be an Associate Tutor on the post graduate certificate course (University of Chester / Family Rights Group);
- Demonstrate sufficient experience of co-ordinating a minimum of 10 FGCs; experience of delivering training; project management experience and demonstration of a thorough understanding of the FGC principles and standards

b) Requirements for registration of initial 3-day co-ordinator training

In delivering the 3 day FGC co-ordinator training programme you will need to demonstrate that:

- It is able to meet specific and identified learning objectives
- It includes the wider context to the FGC model – Children Act 1989, New Zealand Model, UK history, current legal framework/legislation
- It considers current UK experience and research
- It provides a detailed explanation of the model and its values and principles to include:
 - When FGCs are appropriate and when they are not,
 - Referral, preparation/who is family,
 - Meeting, implementation and review,
 - Role of independent co-ordinator, concept of independence
 - Issues and anxieties: people's concerns about the process
 - Practical arrangements for co-ordinators, including health and safety: childcare for meeting, food, transport, venues etc.
 - Co-ordinator skills in preparing for the meeting-clarifying the referral/meeting referrer, identifying and preparing family/engaging family, negotiating who should attend and any exclusions, meeting the needs of children/young people
 - The role of advocates in the process
 - Practicalities of the FGC-language, avoiding jargon, ground rules
 - Dealing with conflict
 - Child Protection
 - Dealing with resistance: professional and family resistance
 - Dealing with the unexpected
 - The legal context
 - Involve a detailed role play of an FGC
 - There is an agreed format and content; that incorporates the views of service users (this may be through their active participation or through other media possibilities e.g. dvd)
 - All participants will receive a copy of the FGC toolkit or similarly approved manual/materials
 - It involves a minimum of 18 hours of engagement time with trainees ideally over a period of 3 days

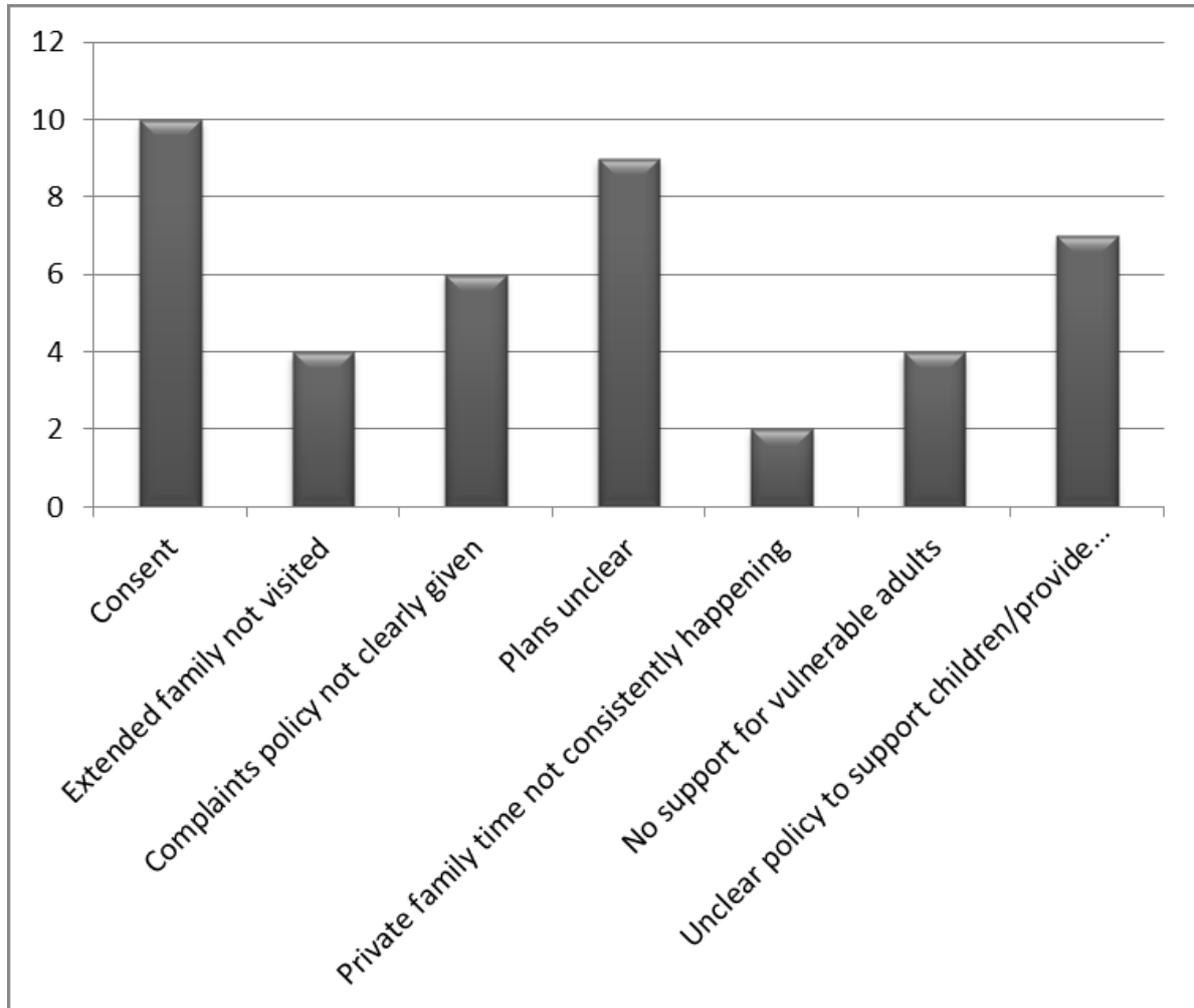
 - There should be a ratio of no more than 15 students to each trainer
 - Training should include a range of teaching methods
 - It should use standardised evaluation forms with evidence of views expressed
 - Participants receive a certificate in order for them to be able to evidence this at a later date.

Key areas of practice identified as needing work in the trial (taken from the evaluation of the trial)

The trial has been successful in identifying the following areas of practice which are now being reviewed by the 13 services:-

- Family plans. A number of services were advised to review how they record and communicate their plans.
- Training of co-ordinators. A small number of services train their co-ordinators in-house. This was commented upon in reports and in response both services hoped to be able to secure funding for external training or to have their training registered.
- How supervision is managed and recorded. This was highlighted in a number of reports and was an issue services were going to re-visit.
- How service user evaluation is recorded and used to change practice. A small number of services were advised to review this.
- Having to use existing forms within organisations. Some services did not have any choice or control over the paperwork that they had to use.
- Wording of leaflets. One services received feedback relating to the text of their leaflet for families. Up until this point they had not been able to alter what was a corporate leaflet. However following the report their organisation agreed to re-drafting and printing the leaflets immediately. Another service changed the wording of their complaints leaflet following the report.

The following table identifies some other areas of practice subject to required actions:



An example of the standards checklist as presented by one of the trial projects

- This information has been rendered anonymous
- Please note that one of the key feedback points to this project was the need for more practice examples

STANDARD 1. The FGC co-ordinator is independent	How met	Where evidenced (Page and document number)
<p>1.1 The FGC service will be delivered by an independent co-ordinator who will have no other professional role with the family and will have no involvement in any professional decision making or allocation of resources for the child/young person or vulnerable adult or family.</p>	<p><i>(Job descriptions; supervision group discussions; local practice standards)</i></p> <p>BLANK FGC service has a 'pool' of independent FGC coordinators who are self employed and subcontracted to the service on a case by case basis.</p> <p>They are therefore not employed by BLANK and have no involvement in Local Authority decision making, or the allocation of resources for children and their families.</p>	<p>JOB DESCRIPTION top of page 3</p> <p>CONTRACT Page 6 2.) Page 9 17.)</p> <p>PRACTICE STANDARDS: <i>standard1 1-4 page11/12</i></p> <p>BLANK COOD CHECKLIST page 24 visit to parent /primary carer</p> <p>LEAFLET: section re how is it (fgc) different from other meetings</p>
<p>1.2 The co-ordinator will be managed</p>	<p><i>(Local practice standards; leaflets)</i></p>	<p>Dissertation</p>

<p>by someone who has no previous or current involvement in any decision making for the child/young person or vulnerable adult.</p>	<p>The FGC service is managed by the 2 FGC managers who work on a job share basis. The manager's role is solely to manage the FGC service and they have no additional responsibilities in decision making in other areas of Children's social care.</p>	<p>extract p 17</p>
<p>1.3 The FGC Service will ensure that the Independent co-ordinator will be trained in the FGC model and in the skills necessary to independently undertake the role</p>	<p><i>(Evidence of using accredited training providers; training certificates)</i></p> <p>All of the FGC coordinators have received appropriate training in the FGC model and the skills that they need to coordinate FGCs.</p> <p>The majority of the FGC Coordinators have completed the London Consortium Accreditation Programme and are now accredited Coordinators under the awarding body of the Open College Network. Achieving accreditation status has enhanced and developed their skills as FGC Coordinators.</p>	<p>EVIDENCE: LIST OF SUPERVISION DATES Page 35</p> <p>coord checklists p 34</p>
<p>1.4 All co-ordinators should be in receipt of relevant and adequate professional practice consultancy/oversight to maintain the integrity and quality of their role.</p>	<p><i>(Supervision notes; job descriptions; supervision policy)</i></p> <p>BLANK FGC coordinators meet for group consultation for half a day, every 10 weeks</p>	<p>SUPERVISION DATES p35</p> <p>SUPERVISION MINUTES page 36-45</p>

STANDARD 2. The FGC should respect the family's consent to proceed	How met	Where evidenced (Page and document number)
<p>2.1 The co-ordinator will ensure that there is informed consent given by an appropriate person with the legal authority to agree to have the FGC and that there is understanding that this consent can be withdrawn.</p>	<p><i>(Referral form; practice standards; supervision notes)</i></p> <p>We check at point of referral that the parent/person with PR has given their consent to the referral going ahead, or at the very least consent to see an FGC coordinator. On the FGC coordinator's initial visit the coordinator checks with the family that they are giving informed consent to go ahead with the FGC.</p>	<p>REFERRAL FORM page 71-80</p> <p>PRACTICE STANDARDS page 12-13</p>
<p>2.2 The co-ordinator, with the child/young person and carers will explore who from their own network they wish to invite to the conference. The agreement as to who attends will be negotiated with the family.</p>	<p>The FGC Coordinators visit the parent/person with PR and the child/young person and map out with the family who they think should attend the FGC: This will include members of the immediate and wider family network, friends, community members and anyone else involved or who is important to the child and family. The FGC coordinator encourages the family to think as widely as possible about who needs to be involved. There may be disagreements among family members due to conflict about who should attend in these circumstances the FGC Coordinators will encourage everyone to set aside their differences and attend the FGC for the benefit of the child. When this is not possible the Coordinator may advise that if 2 family members are not prepared to sit in the same room, the person with most involvement attends and that the</p>	<p>BLANK COOD CHECKLIST</p> <p>Page 26 visit to parent primary carer</p> <p>S</p> <p>PRACTICE STANDARDS standard 3 3.) page 12</p>

	<p>other person sends their views in writing.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances a family member may be excluded on the grounds of safety.</p>	
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STANDARD 3. The FGC should be family led and include ‘private time’ for the family to make a plan in response to concerns.	How met	Where evidenced (Page and document number)
<p>3.1 The family group conference (FGC) process is a strength based way of working, which acknowledges the positives as well as addressing the needs and challenges in a family.</p>	<p><i>(Guidance to referrers; leaflets; local toolkit; practice standards)</i></p> <p>The primary aim of the FGC is to empower families to harness their strengths and find solutions in order to promote the welfare of children.</p> <p>Our agenda format for the information provided by the social worker includes a section on the strengths of the family. Families benefits from hearing positive feedback regarding their strengths during the initial part of the FGC and can build on these in the making of their plan.</p>	<p>SOCIAL WORK REPORTS FORMAT p108-109</p> <p>CASE STUDY ANNUAL REPORT p61</p>

<p>3.2 Families should be supported to be active decision makers about their family members.</p>	<p><i>(FGC plans; referrer agendas; local toolkits; practice standards; supervision group notes; e-mails and correspondence)</i></p> <p>Before the FGC all family members identified as those who are attending the FGC are visited or spoken to by the FGC Coordinator who will inform them about what an FGC involves, and what their role is in the process. Family members are actively encouraged to come forward and offer a realistic level of help and support.</p>	<p>FGC PLAN ANON 110-119</p>
<p>3.3 The FGC usually involves the extended family network and can include non-family members as identified by the family.</p>	<p><i>(Invite lists; genograms; correspondence; FGC plans)</i></p> <p>As outlined in 2.2 the family are encouraged to think widely about who needs to attend the FGC. In BLANK FGCs always include the immediate and wider family and often family friends, and members of the community will attend. Examples of this include church members and community/cultural organisations such as BLANK (Somali community support group).</p>	<p>FGC PLAN ANON P110-119</p>
<p>3.4 The FGC will happen at a date, time and venue that have been agreed by the family and all participants.</p>	<p><i>(Correspondence; practice standards; invoices for venues; invite letters and correspondence)</i></p> <p>FGC coordinators ensure that the practical arrangements for the meeting are family friendly and meet the family's needs. If family members work we will accommodate their</p>	<p>Fgc plan anon p110-119</p>

	<p>needs. Timing arrangements will always take into account childcare and other caring commitments. Where necessary FGCs will take place in evenings and weekends and most referring social workers do their best to attend outside of their working hours. We are sensitive to cultural need and will provide a prayer room and take into account religious festivals such as Ramadan</p> <p>We use a wide range of community venues and take into account family preference for where the FGC should be held.</p> <p>Occasionally there is a need to hold the FGC outside London, for example where the majority of the family live elsewhere. FGC in BLANK have been held around the UK and in Portugal</p>	<p>CASE EG ANNUAL REPORT p61</p>
<p>3.5 Families should always have private family time within a safe and supportive environment in order to make decisions and plans.</p>	<p><i>(Practice standards; leaflets and information for all participants; FGC plans)</i>The BLANK FGC service fully adheres to the model of FGC as set out in our practise standards and nationally accepted standards e.g. Barnardos. As such all FGCs have private time built in, where the family once fully informed in the information session, can go on to make their family plan. The FGC Coordinator referring social worker and any other information giver are nearby to assist and inform the family as and when needed.</p>	<p>LEAFLET text ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12 page 50 (number of fgcs 100 ALL had private time)</p>
<p>3.6 The FGC will seek agreement as to how the plan will be monitored and reviewed.</p>	<p><i>(FGC plans; correspondence; practice standards)</i></p> <p>All plans are required to have inbuilt arrangements as to how they will be</p>	<p>PLAN GUIDE</p>

	<p>reviewed and monitored.</p> <p>A review FGC is routinely offered to all families. Family are encouraged to nominate a member to monitor the plan, sometimes in conjunction with the social worker.</p>	<p>page 106 6.)</p>
<p>3.7 Families should have the opportunity to be involved in the development of the family group conference service.</p>	<p><i>(Evaluation forms; service user groups; interview panels; consultation exercises)</i></p> <p>When we hold events we invite family members to contribute : For example in 2012 a kinship carer spoke at a social work conference about her experiences of her FGC take into account feedback from family members when planning for the development of the FGC service.</p> <p>2011 we commissioned an evaluation study of a small sample of families who had experienced a FGC inviting their views regarding their FGC, at point of referral , immediately after the fig, and 3 and 6 months later and their feedback was as follows.(see page ? Annual report).</p>	<p>Annual report section re evaluation study page 62-67</p> <p>F&F Conference Agenda p104 (family member speaks about fgcs</p>
<p>3.8 Services will routinely seek feedback from all participants and these views will be used to inform and develop practice.</p>	<p><i>(Evaluation forms; evidence of circulating evaluation information to others; local training and promotion)</i></p> <p>Every family member attending an fgc is asked to complete a feedback (evaluation) form where they outline their views re the FGC and are encouraged to give written feedback. We take this into account in the development of our service. Feedback was taken from families in our 2011</p>	<p>EVALUATION FORMS page 94-103</p> <p>Annual report section re evaluation study page 62-67</p>

	evaluation study (see above)	
3.9 Participants can raise concerns or provide feedback about their involvement with the FGC process and this will be dealt with in a constructive way.	<i>(Evaluation forms; complaints policy)</i> We welcome all feedback from fgc participants. While this is almost always positive, occasionally issues arise where a family member does have concerns, and we always respond promptly and sensitively to any concerns raised	EVALUATION FORMS page 94-103
3.10 Family members will be informed of the complaints policy of the service where needed.	<i>(complaints policy and leaflets)</i> . While feedback is almost always positive, occasionally issues arise where a family member does wish to make a complaint. Our FGC leaflet for families advises families that they can complain as well as giving contact details for the department dealing with complaints.	LEAFLET

STANDARD 4. The central focus should be the child or adult who is the subject of the FGC and they should be offered support in their involvement including an	How met	Where evidenced (Page and document number)
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advocate.		
<p>4.1 Those for whom the FGC has been organised, whether child, young people or vulnerable adult, should be supported to have their families and other significant people fully involved in planning their future</p>	<p><i>(leaflets; evidence of supporting family to attend; evidence of the subject being consulted as to family involvement; practice standards)</i></p> <p>As a fundamental tenet of family group conferencing, this standard is addressed in the basic skills training our coordinators receive. In addition the LCAP accreditation programme includes a module on inclusivity and how coordinators can support participation.</p>	<p>LCAP UNIT page 120</p>
<p>4.2 The voice of the child / young person or vulnerable adult who is the subject of the FGC will be central to the FGC process and should be sought and heard at all stages of the process.</p>	<p><i>(evidence of child's contribution; practice standards re advocacy)</i></p> <p>The participation of children/young people is an expectation of the service and coordinators receive training in how to support their participation. Advocacy is also a well- established practice.</p> <p>Feedback is always sought from the subjects of FGCs following the meeting and a recent evaluation followed up on views after a longer period</p>	<p>Evaluation summary: Annual report p62-67</p> <p>Guidelines for advocates p91-93</p> <p>Evaluation forms child and young person pages 94 and 103</p>
<p>4.3 The co-ordinator will seek to ensure that advocacy is offered for those young people or vulnerable adults who require it both during the preparation and in the FGC itself.</p>	<p><i>(practice standards re advocacy; evidence of use of advocate for child/ vulnerable adults)</i></p> <p>It is standard practice in BLANK FGC Service to offer advocates, who have received specific training on the role within the FGC process, to young people and vulnerable adults.</p>	<p>Guidelines for advocates p91-93</p> <p>Annual report p 70</p>

4.4 Where a child/young person/vulnerable adult choose not to be, or are unable to be present at the FGC, the co-ordinator will ensure that any resulting family plan is appropriately shared with them and it is clear as to how this will be done.	<i>(Family plans; practice standards)</i> The brief of advocates working with young people specifically includes a one to one session to go through the plan.	Guidelines for advocates page 91-93

STANDARD 5. The FGC service should ensure that the family has all necessary resources, including adequate preparation, relevant information, and a safe and appropriate environment to make its plan	How met	Where evidenced (Page and document number)
5.1 Families have the right to clear, appropriate information about the family group conference process	<i>(leaflets; other written information; website)</i> Provided through leaflets and via discussion with coordinators and advocates.	Leaflet Practise standards standard 5 page 15 Access to social work report p110
5.2 The co-ordinator will assist the professionals in preparation for their role in the FGC process and will ensure where possible that the family have all the relevant information both about concerns and resources needed to make a plan	<i>(evidence of meeting with professionals; local practice standards; local training; evidence of guidance to referrers)</i> All referrals are screened by managers, who will advise referrers if necessary. Before work with families commences, coordinators meet the referrer in person to prepare	BLANK Coordinator checklist p 24 Guidelines for referrers p 88-89

	them for their role and identify information givers and resources	
5.3 The co-ordinator will use a range of creative methods to ensure that all contributions are sought and shared, and will ensure that where possible the views of those unable to attend are shared at the meeting.	<i>(evidence of family contribution to conferences; family plan)</i>	Annual report case eg p 61
5.4 Everyone participating in the FGC will be prepared and supported throughout the process, and the coordinator will usually meet with all prior to the meeting.	<i>(Evidence of visits to family members)</i> This standard is stressed in job description, leaflets and training and monitored via time sheets detailing visits made.	JD p3 2-4 Leaflet
5.5 The FGC Service will ensure that the safety of family members, referrers and service providers will be planned for and all necessary provision put in place. The FGC service is responsible for ensuring that health and safety issues are addressed throughout the FGC process	<i>(local health and safety policy; supervision discussion)</i> Potential issues are identified on referral forms. Regular group practice discussions pick up issues, which are then shared between coordinators.	Referral form page 80 BLANK Coordinator checklist p22
5.6 Families have the right to have safe plans agreed and resourced. If there is to be a delay in agreeing the plan the family need to be informed of the reasons and a timescale agreed.	<i>(Decisions from FGCs; leaflets; local practice standards; evaluation forms)</i> The majority of plans are agreed in principle at the FGC, with confirmation from team manager within 2 working days. . Where there are resource implications, this may take longer but the expectation is within 5 working days. Work currently underway to incorporate FGC process into ICS system, which will allow precise	Plan guide p 106 social work response

	monitoring of this standard.	
5.7 The co-ordinator, at the end of the process, will ensure that all participants have understood what has been decided.	<i>(FGC plans; evaluation forms)</i> Covered in basic skills training and monitored by Evaluation forms and periodic observations	Evaluation forms p 94-103

STANDARD 6. The FGC should respect the family's privacy and right to confidentiality	How met	Where evidenced (Page and document number)
6.1 The co-ordinator will ensure there is appropriate agreement to share any information with the wider family network and professionals in accordance with the information sharing policy. It is the referrer's responsibility to ensure that they have agreement to share any information that they are presenting which is of a confidential nature.	<i>(information sharing policy; guidance to referrer; supervision notes)</i> Expectation of referrer to gain consent in guidelines and on referral form. We use FRG guidance re information sharing which we have adapted to fit our requirements in our information sharing policy . Coordinator checklist reinforces role of coordinator to verify this issue.	Guidance for referrers p 88 1.) Coordinator checklist p25 2.) top of page
6.2 The family plan is the only written document to result from the FGC. The co-ordinator will ensure that all participants receive a copy of the plan as soon as possible after the meeting in accordance with the timeframe set out by the project.	<i>(Copy of FGC plans; local information recording policy; local practice standards)</i> Standard timescale set for distribution of plans .Payment dependent on evidence of plan produced	Plan guide p105-107
6.3 Information received as part of the	<i>(agreement in family plan; form for family to sign;</i>	Information

<p>FGC process will not be shared without appropriate consent. An exception to this would be information that if not shared would place a child or adult at significant risk.</p>	<p><i>information sharing policy)</i> Guidance and training for coordinators . Information sharing policy.</p>	<p>sharing policy 124-128</p>
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<p>STANDARD 7. The FGC should be sensitive to the family’s culture taking account of ethnicity, language and religion.</p>	<p>How met</p>	<p>Where evidenced (Page and document number)</p>
<p>7.1 Where possible family should be offered the option of holding the FGC in the first language of the family. Attention will be given to any significant cultural issues.</p>	<p><i>(leaflets; evidence of interpreters; evaluation forms; materials in different languages)</i> Leaflets and evaluation forms produced in both main community languages. Regular use of interpreting services . Diverse pool self employed of coordinators retained in order to offer coordinator who can speak family language</p>	<p>Leaflet</p>
<p>7.2 The FGC service where possible will offer families the option of a co-ordinator from the same ethnic background as the family and will take account of the family’s views as to their preference for this.</p>	<p><i>(Leaflets; evidence of ethnic breakdown within coordinator group; Family plans)</i> Diverse pool self employed of coordinators retained in order to offer coordinator who can speak family language. Ethnic breakdown of coordinator group, practice standards</p>	<p>Practise standards p16 standard 7 1). And 2.) Cood list breakdown p 121- 123</p>

What do I do if I am not happy with how my submission has been dealt with?

If you are not happy with how we have dealt with your project submission we are interested in hearing your views. All project assessments resulting from panel meetings are returned to projects with a feedback form through which we invite comments on your experience of the process. These will be shared with the development group and we will incorporate any learning from this into how we develop the accreditation process.

However, if you continue to be unhappy with how we have dealt with your submission then you have the option of raising your concerns through the Family Rights Group formal complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure. How you can do this is detailed below.

Family Rights Group Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure

Family Rights Group is committed to being an excellent organisation, whose services reflect the organisation's principles and practices. We involve families and practitioners in steering the direction of the organisation and we listen and respond to the views of our service users, so that we can continue to improve our service.

Complaints

We aim to ensure that:

1. It is as easy as possible to make a complaint;
2. We treat as a complaint any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a response;
3. We treat it seriously whether it is made by telephone, letter, or email or in person;
4. We deal with it quickly and politely;
5. We respond accordingly - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong and information on any action taken etc;
6. We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and monitor them at our Trustee Board.

How do you make a complaint?

1. You can make a complaint by telephone, letter, fax, email or in person. Please tell us:
 - how you would like us to respond, providing relevant contact details.
 - if you are writing or phoning on behalf of someone else.
2. You can make a complaint to our office by emailing office@frg.org.uk or by telephoning 020 7923 2628. We will try to contact you to discuss your complaint within 3 working days. You will be contacted by the relevant service manager.

3. If you are unhappy with our response to your complaint, you or a representative can ask for the complaint to be further investigated by writing directly to the Chief Executive and explaining why you are not satisfied. Please write to or phone: Cathy Ashley, Chief Executive, Family Rights Group, The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL; Tel: 020 7923 2628 email: cashley@frg.org.uk .

4. She will reply within ten working days of receiving your complaint. If it will take longer than this, we will write to explain why. We will not ask you to wait any longer than a maximum of 20 working days (four weeks).

5. If you are not satisfied with the Chief Executive's response, you can contact the Chair of the Trustees, Ms Rita Stringfellow (at the same address). The chair (or in their absence the vice chair) will investigate and respond within three weeks. Alternatively you can contact the [Charity Commission](#) for further advice: Tel: 0870 333 0123.

6 We know that you might want to complain in a different language. If so, we'll try to help by translating the policy if possible, and by using language line throughout the process.

7. Please note we provide a report to the Trustee Board on an annual basis of complaints received.

Compliments

We are pleased to receive unsolicited compliments from people who use our services. These may come in as emails, telephone calls, letters and cards or comments on our discussion boards. When we get a compliment we

- Share it with the staff member who provided the service, where we can identify who that is, and with the whole team providing the service so that all get feedback.
- Consider what it was that prompted the positive feedback, so that we can keep doing it.
- Keep track of all compliments received so that once a year we can provide a report to the Board on compliments.
- If you are willing, publicly but anonymously promote the response you have provided through forums such as twitter, to encourage other potential service users.