

Minutes from CAF Implementation meeting

Date: Wednesday 19th September 2007

Venue: Room 8 – Civic Offices

Present: Fran Boto, Bernadette Chapman, Odette Vidale, Angela Goodwin, Dawn Crisp, Lucy Titheridge, Catherine Watkins, Grant Landon, Sharon Godwin, Sue Overy, Jean Kirby, Lynne Rigg

Apologies: Denise Poole, Emma Bradshaw, Sally Goodman, Dawn Crisp, Rose Rhule, Gill Wong,

1. **Introductions/New Members** – Sharon Godwin is a new member of the group representing Children's' Day Care.
2. **Child and Family Support Meetings** – Catherine and Lynne talked to the group about the content of the CFMSM training courses they have been running. The key points were;
 - The CFMSM training is comprised of a series of slides outlining the CFMSM process followed by a role play replicating an actual meeting.
 - There have been five sessions so far and they will continue on a regular basis. The feedback has been very positive.
 - There is a poor understanding of the Child Concern Framework in Sutton. Further, borough wide training would be helpful
 - The training makes clear that a CAF should always be completed in conjunction with a CFMSM when child/young person is at Stage 3 of the CCF and may be completed when at Stage 2. CFMSM reviews should be completed on the CAF review form and a copy returned to the CAF administrator
 - The lack of up to date guidance is a problem at the moment. Also it would help if people were clearer about who they should talk to in their agencies for advice and support.

Actions: Grant will forward draft guidance to Catherine and Lynne for comment ASAP. Grant will raise the issue of Child Concern Framework awareness/training.

3. **Odette Vidale** – Odette mentioned that two CAF forms completed by Health Visitors and sent to RAS had been returned. Lucy said that when CAFs are sent to RAS as a referral they should clearly state why a referral is being made to RAS and what has been tried unsuccessfully already. She said that RAS workers should make clear the reasons why a referral has not been accepted and suggest alternative options. Odette also said that there is some confusion about social services referrals/CAF as Merton require a CAF to refer in to RAS. Grant said that it was likely that LBS would replace the inter-agency referral with a CAF but that this had not happened yet. In the meantime it is possible to use either an Inter Agency form or a CAF to refer in to RAS but as always the completion of a CAF should not delay to Child Protection referral. Odette said that there is a problem with the family composition box on the CAF form. **Action: Grant will look at this and fix**

4. **Fran Boto** - Fran reported that lots of CAFs have come into Contact/Impact and Short Breaks. This seems to be working well. Fran also mentioned a section of the form that was not working. Grant will investigate
5. **Bernadette Chapman** – Bernadette said that CAFs were being completed but that some staff are still struggling. Several new Health Visitors are starting on October 1st. Bernadette/Odette will ensure that they attend CAF training
6. **Sue Overy** – Sue has written to schools advising that from this term it will be necessary for staff to complete a CAF to refer to their service. Some schools have responded positively whilst others have expressed concern about the amount of work that this will involve. Sue said that Connexions will adopt a flexible approach to this and will support staff to complete CAFs and complete them themselves in some circumstances. The success of this will be monitored over the term. A Connexions Top Sheet has also been developed which will be put onto the SCYPP website.

This letter led to a wider discussion about the use of CAF to refer in to some services. In some circumstances this is proving problematic because some people are simply seeing the CAF as a referral form rather than an assessment. It was agreed that this needs to be challenged and that the message needs to be that CAF is an holistic assessment and needs to be completed as such before being used to support a referral. Being clear about this is a real challenge for CAF leads and it is clear that people completing CAFs need continued advice and support.

A further discussion ensued about the recent changes to the Behaviour Support Team and the development of the new referral form for School Support Services. There was general concern about the shift to CCF Levels 1 and 2 only that BST has made. It was agreed that further information is required. **Action: Grant to obtain further info about changes to BST and distribute to the group.**

7. **Catherine Watkins** – Catherine's service now has staff members in post who will begin working in schools immediately. Currently 19 schools are accessing the service. A simple referral form has been developed for the service which schools will use. Once a referral has been made Catherine's team will complete CAFs and facilitate CFSMs where required.
8. **Sharon Godwin** – The CAF has just started to be used to support a referral to Children's Day Care. As yet none have been received but Sharon is expecting that they will begin to receive them soon. The Domestic Violence and Webster-Stratton Services are continuing to receive CAFs but these are often of a very poor standard. Grant said that he is continuing to monitor CAFs and does feedback to professionals who have completed them.
9. **Jean Kirby** – Jean said that quite a lot of disabled children are now having CAFs completed and are staying with Contacts/Impact and Short Breaks rather than going to the Children with Disabilities Team. This is having a positive impact on their workload.
10. **Angela Goodwin** – Angela said that the number of referrals to her service had decreased since CAFs have been used. She also said that a number of CAFs that have been received have been of a low standard and clearly

completed as referrals rather than assessments. Her team have been trialling the new CAF review form but Angela has not yet used it herself.

11. **Lucy Titheridge** – RAS are now keeping a record of all CAFs received and will monitor those that are rejected. Lucy has developed a checklist for RAS workers to ensure that they remember to check whether a CAF has been completed and, if a referral has been rejected to advise that it may be appropriate to complete a CAF and/or hold a Child and Family Support Meeting.
12. **Lynne Rigg** – Lynne said that new London Child Protection Guidance has been published but she has not yet seen a copy. It is not yet known whether there is any mention of the CAF. She also said that lots of people had asked her for example of CAF and CFMS minutes. It was agreed that it would be useful to make examples available. **Action: Grant will add example CAF(s) to the Guidance.**
13. **Training** – Grant advised that there were still some gaps for the Autumn term and asked for volunteers. Jean Kirby and Sue Overy said that they could do some.
14. **Flowchart, Amended CAF form, CAF Review Form.** – Grant distributed a CAF flowchart and copies of the amended CAF and the new CAF Review. He asked people to read and feedback any comments or suggestions.
15. **CAF Administrator** – Grant advised that Ann Stevens would be moving over to Carshalton Library very soon and would be line managed by him. This should help to ensure consistency.
16. **Date of Next Meeting - Thursday November 15th @ 3pm in Civic Room 2**

Grant Landon