

Family Network Service



Family Network Meetings (FNM)

A guide for
family and
friends

Name of FNM Coordinator

Contact details



Why should we have a Family Network Meeting (FNM)?

- A Family Network Meeting (formally known as Family Group Conference) is an independent service for families who are currently being supported by Warwickshire County Council Children and Families.
- The meeting gives you the opportunity to decide how to deal with any challenges you are facing, in a way that makes sense to you and your family and keeps you safe and well.
- It is a way to bring your children, family and friends together to build on your strengths, problem-solve and make the best possible plan for the children.



How will you be involved?

A trained, independent FNM Coordinator will meet with you and support you to identify who you would like to attend your FNM. This is your meeting and you decide who comes. The only exception to this is that the referrer has to be at the meeting to hear and agree your plan.

Your FNM Coordinator will then meet with all the people you have chosen, to explain how the FNM will work.

Your coordinator will work with you to plan when and where you would like your FNM to take place.

As your coordinator is independent, they will have no other professional role and no involvement in any decision making.

How will the children be involved?

It is really important that the children or young people are involved in the FNM process. Your coordinator may ask to talk to the children to explain about FNM and make sure they are happy and comfortable with the idea.

The children may attend the FNM or they can choose to share their views through the coordinator, an identified key worker or an independent advocate.

An advocate is someone who can support the children at the meeting to put their views and wishes across. It is important for everyone to listen to the children to understand the support that they require.

Every family faces challenges from time to time, this is normal.

What happens at your Family Network Meeting?

Part 1: Information sharing

This part of the meeting will be led by the FNM Coordinator. The children's social worker (or other agreed worker) will be asked to talk about what is going well, their concerns and how they can offer support to you and your family.

Other agencies attending the meeting will then share their offers of support and there will be time for any questions you or your family have. The children's views and wishes will be shared during this part of the meeting.

Part 2: Private family time

The coordinator and other agencies are not present for this part of the meeting. This is to give you the respect and privacy you deserve to have open and honest conversations with your family and network about what needs to happen.

You and your family will have time to talk and create a plan which you feel will improve things and reduce any concerns.

If you need any support, your coordinator can rejoin you. They are not there to make any decisions, just to work with you to put together a plan that suits you and your family.

"FNM brought our family together and allowed us privacy and time to discuss and make our agreed plan."

Part 3: Agreeing the plan

Once you are happy with your plan, the coordinator and other agencies will rejoin and you can share your plan.

As long as it covers the issues, makes improvements to the child's life and helps keep them safe, it should be agreed by the social worker (or other agreed worker).

"It gives you the freedom to make your own decisions and take responsibility."



What happens after the meeting?

Your coordinator will send a copy of your plan to everyone who was a part of your FNM. They may create and send a child-friendly version of the plan for you to read.

You will be offered a review meeting to see what is working well and what might need to be changed or added to your family plan.



“It made everyone think about the solutions and work out together how to make some positive changes. It gives families their independence to plan for the child, and confidence in knowing that they can make changes.”

Feedback and further information

We will send you a link via text message, or email you, to complete a short feedback form about how you felt the meeting went and what we can do to improve the service

You can also complete the feedback form by scanning the QR code using your smartphone camera.



Contact

If you want to speak to a member of the team

T: **01926 414147**

E: **fns@warwickshire.gov.uk**

“It was great how the service is independent to the other people involved.”



Financial support

Financial support may be available to extended family and friends to enable them to support the child and their parents.

The aim of this funding is to unlock wider network support to allow children to continue to live at home with their birth parents. Sometimes families are unable to support due to barriers such as not having a car seat, or beds for children to stay over.

Some ways the funding may be used:

- Car seats to allow wider network members to help with school runs or appointments.
- Sofa beds and bedding to give children somewhere safe to sleep when wider network members are offering to have the child sleep over regularly as part of their support.
- We may fund additional medical equipment (if not available from another service).
- We may fund plane tickets, train tickets, or support with petrol money to help network members get to the child and their family to offer support.

When we are NOT able to offer financial support:

- If a family member or friend holds a Child Arrangements Order or a Special Guardianship Order for the child whom the family meeting is for.
- We are not able to offer parents financial support to care for their children.
- Services that another service normally provides e.g. autism assessments.

When we CAN offer financial support:

- Families must have a family network meeting (FNM) to decide financial support.
- In the FNM families consider how to keep the plan going after the funding has ended.
- The funding can only go to wider network members to help them support the family.
- A parent within the family must have parental responsibility for the child.

How long we can offer funding:

We can offer financial support for up to 8 weeks. At this point families will need a FNM review to see what support is still needed. From the review we can offer financial support for a further 8 weeks meaning a maximum of 16 weeks financial support in total. If families choose not to have a review the funding will end.

Families need to consider how to keep the support going once the funding has come to an end.

A Family Network Meeting was previously known as a Family Group Conference

For more information about Family Network Meetings (FNM) scan the QR Code:



Warwickshire Family Information Service

Contact the Family Information Service (FIS) for a wide range of information relating to children and young people aged 0 – 25 including, but not limited to:

- Childcare
- Money and benefits
- Housing
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Health and wellbeing



Scan me

Freephone call the team on **0800 408 1558**
Monday – Friday **9am – 5pm**
or email fis@warwickshire.gov.uk

Scan the QR code for the website
or visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis

