

**Brighton & Hove LSCB**  
**Multi-Agency Audit of Network Meetings and Core Groups**

**Feedback from Parents**

As part of the multi agency audit of Network Meetings and Core Group, parents were asked for feedback about their experience of the meeting and the support they have received from their social worker and other professionals.

Altogether, six parents were consulted which is 30% of the audit sample.

<i><b>Relation to the child</b></i>	<i><b>Number</b></i>
Mother	5
Father	1

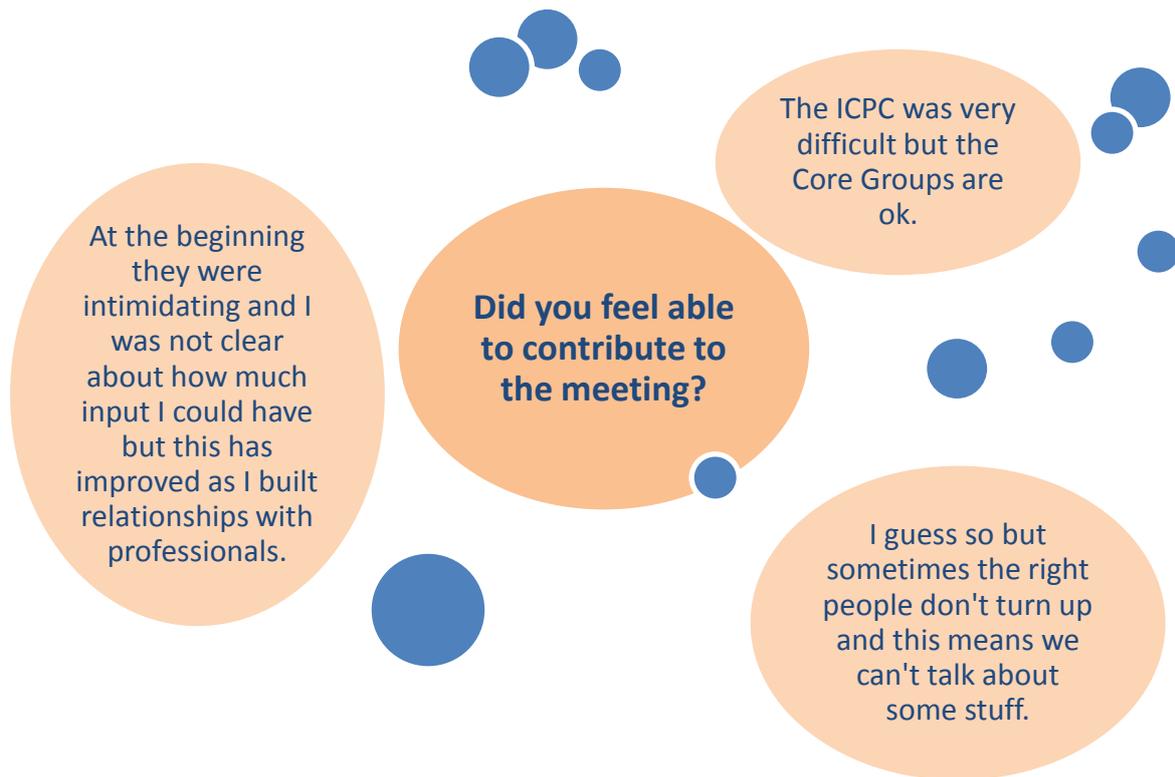
Parents were asked a number of questions via a telephone interview conducted by the Practice Development Lead, Children's Social Work. The questions were used as prompts in a dialogue between the interviewer and the parent rather than as simple yes/no responses.

Overall, the feedback from parents is very positive. Where parents have reported that they are not satisfied with aspects of this work, the interviewer has sought further information from parents so that we can learn from this and share it with professionals.

The findings from these conversations are presented below;

**1. Do parents feel able to contribute to the meeting?**

All of the parents felt that they were able to contribute to the meeting. One parent felt that whilst the meeting was intimidating at first, this improved once she had developed a relationship with the professionals. Another parent thought that it was easier to contribute at the Core Group than at the Initial Child Protection Conference and one parent felt that sometimes the right people did not attend the meeting and this meant that certain things could not be discussed.



## **2. Do parents feel that people listened to what they had to say?**

Four of the six parents felt that people listened to what they had to say at the meeting. One parent did not feel listened to and she explained that her confidence in social workers had been knocked after the Initial Child Protection Conference & that after this time she had lots of different social workers. One parent said that sometimes she felt listened to but on other occasions, she felt 'backed into a corner by their professional views'. Another parent said that although most of the time people listened, her views did not always lead to actions or changes.



### 3. Were parents told about the meeting in good time?

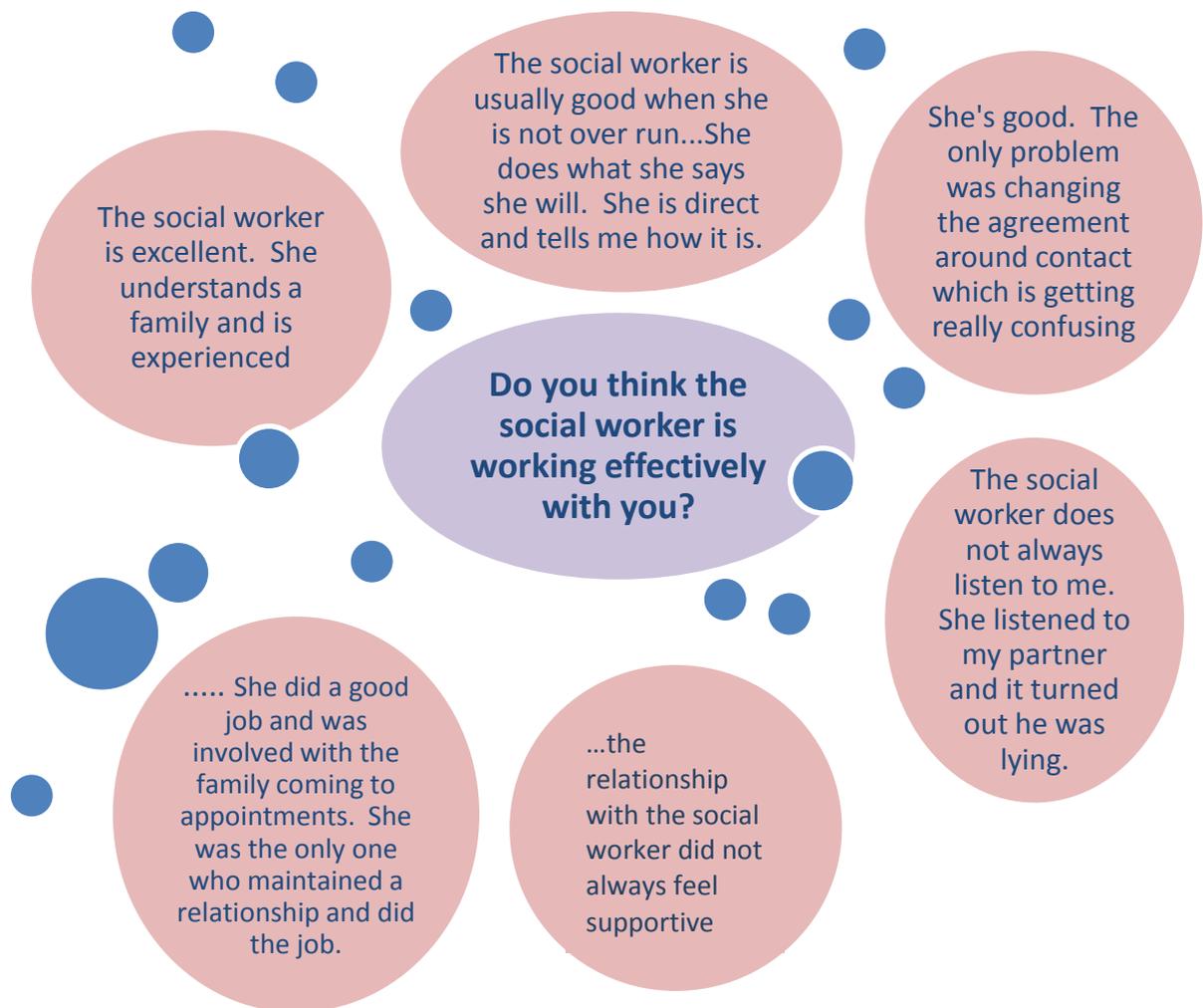
All but one of the parents said that they were told about the meeting in good time. The parent who felt that she had not been told about the meeting in good time, explained that this was because last summer the meeting was re-arranged and she was not given the new date in time. She said that this improved after she told the social worker that she needed more notice.

#### 4. Do parents think that the social worker is working effectively with them?

Parents were asked to rate the service they received from their social worker. One parent rated it as outstanding, two rated it as good and three rated it as 'ok'. Parents provided some very good examples to support their response (see below). Overall, parents feel that an effective social worker is someone who;

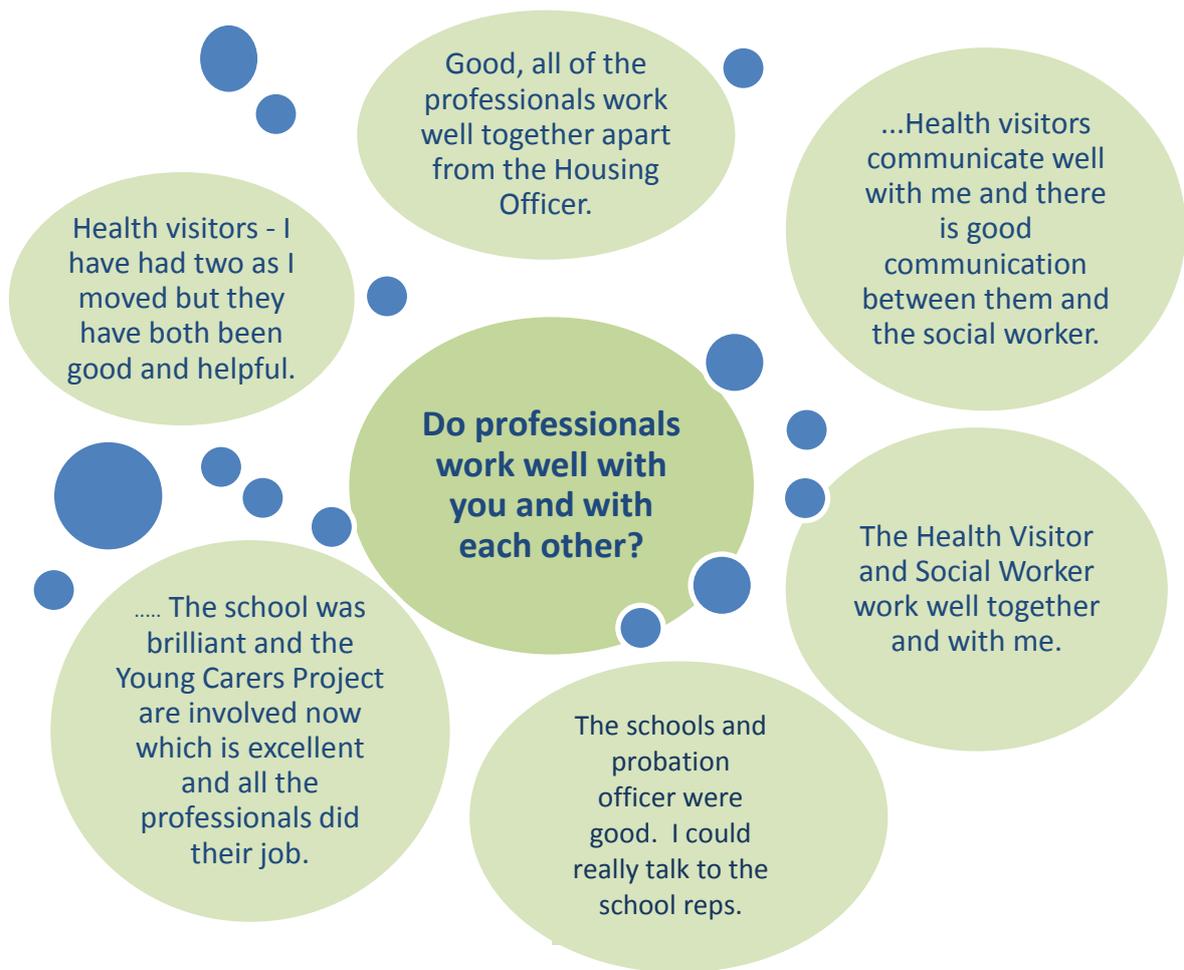
- Explains things to me & makes sure that I understand
- Understands me and my family
- Is supportive
- Listens to Me
- Develops a relationship with me
- Treats me with respect
- Works closely with me and my family
- Knows about me and my family\*
- Does what they say they will
- Tells me how it is
- Maintains a relationship with me and my family

\*This message came from two parents. One parent explained that her social worker was away from the office for a few days and her manager was also on leave. This parent felt that it would be good to have another named social worker or a group of social workers, working together and not 'just a duty worker'. She also said that if a social worker is coming to see her then 'they should at least read my file'. Another parent said that a duty worker came to visit her but went to the wrong door and did not know anything about the case. This parent said that it would have helped if the social worker if the social worker had been someone they already know.



**5. Do parents think that professionals are working well with them and with each other?**

Almost all (5/6) of the parents rated the service provided by professionals as 'good'. One parent who graded the service as 'ok' provided positive feedback about the professionals and the services she had received. The only negative feedback received from parents was about communication. For one parent this related to communication within the social work team. The parent felt that this was not always great and that it 'takes time to get an answer from the manager or for him to make a decision'. Another parent gave an example of how there had been a problem with contact and the social worker not telling them that she could stay at contact. This issue has since been resolved.



## 6. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us?

Some parents used this question as an opportunity to provide further feedback about their experience of the meetings. Others replied by making suggestions about how the meetings could be improved. This is summarised as follows;

### Feedback about the Meeting



- The social worker is good at talking to my daughter
- The meeting is fine. Everyone is friendly and supportive.
- You can give your point of view
- All of the professionals worked together
- I took my support worker or CPN to the meeting which helped
- Everything was quite easy really

- The good progress I made was not always taken into account in terms of planning
- The CP process was very stressful – the issue was the father’s violence but I was made to feel responsible and put under pressure - ‘...you need to focus on the perpetrator not just the mother and kids’

### How Meetings can be improved



- The Core Group should not go ahead if the parent cannot attend
- Parents should be told that they can bring a friend or supporter with them
- Make it less intimidating e.g the room, the tables, the venue etc
- My daughter who is 16 didn't go to the meeting but it would have been good if she had
- I think it is a good idea for social workers to work collaboratively in teams
- It would be a good idea to have peer support for parents. I would be happy to be involved in this
- Involve parents in training about how they talk to parents
- I would join a parent's advisory group.

### 7. Next Steps

The feedback from parents which is set out in this report will be used to help us to improve the work of the Network Meetings and Core Groups. We will aim to achieve this by;

- **Sharing** the learning and good practice with professionals
- **Using** the learning and good practice in future multi agency training on Core Group Meetings
- **Promoting** the learning and good practice to a wider audience via the LSCB QA Briefing and the LSCB newsletter

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