

# Early Permanence, Putting Children's Needs at The Centre of Care Planning Pre-Birth Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council



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Leader



Trust

Respect

Ambition

Collaboration

Kindness



# Our Pre Birth Offer:

- Blackburn with Darwen accepts referrals at any stage of pregnancy. We recognise that the length of a pregnancy gives limited timescales for effective help and support. We want to ensure that parents can access the support they need at the earliest opportunity
- We give time to identify skilled practitioners who understand how fathers and mothers engage and disengage with services and that re-engagement takes times.
- Specialist case-holding midwives work with parents at risk of separation at birth through the ante-natal and post-natal period. CSC and systemic working practice model minimises changes of case-holding social worker from referral to the final hearing.
- Multi-agency teams- pro-actively providing the right support at the right time to parents, unlocking the potential of family networks
- A system that continuously learns and improves



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# Why we offer this:

- To help and support parents to make and sustain changes ready for their baby at the earliest opportunity
- To help parents to understand risks and concerns
- To help and support parents to create a safe and nurturing environment for their baby
- To help and support parents to have realistic expectations of their baby
- To help and support parents to engage with offer of support and services
- To promote positive social networks and support –Family Group Conferencing
- To help and support parents to build resilience and aspirations-We want the best for families and to help them to sustain change



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# Our Values and Principles

- Child focused practice and ensuring the unborn baby's voice is front and centre of the Pre-Birth work. Unborns do have a voice.
- Empathic-we listen carefully to families & offer a helping hand to create change for children
- Systemic Practice, trauma informed practitioners
- A relational approach we give time to build a meaningful and trustworthy relationship, working alongside parents so that they receive the right help and support they may need and to ensure that effective communication is shared throughout to ensure the right decisions are made for the baby at the right time, and then there is no drift and delay.
- All Families have strengths, and we focus on using strengths to support change
- Rights-based-Families have a right to help and support for their children, and the autonomy to make choices
- The care plan and birth arrangements for the baby are shared with parents and core group professionals by 30 weeks' gestation



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# Our Family Group Conference

Following an immediate needs assessment, a family group conference (FGC) is held and a family plan developed. This seeks to identify ways in which the family network can offer help and support to address the identified needs and concerns and work towards the identified goals. The family plan is integral to any child in need or child protection plan.

A review family group conference/family network meeting is held in the second and third trimesters of pregnancy to consider progress and any remaining concerns regarding the health and well-being of the unborn baby and the parents.

The birth arrangements are discussed and reviewed within a review FGC prior to baby's birth.



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# Embedding Born into Care Guidance

- Blackburn with Darwen accepts referrals at any stage of pregnancy. We recognise that the length of a pregnancy gives limited timescales for effective intervention. We want to ensure that parents can access the support they need at the earliest opportunity
- Reform of our systems taking learning from parents of their lived experiences
- Review of our legal gateway process; careful consideration is given to escalation from child protection to the PLO process before the baby's birth to ensure parents are given sufficient time in pre-proceedings to seek and receive legal advice. This may be particularly important for parents with learning difficulties who may need longer to process complex information
- The timing of child protection and PLO processes allows adequate space for parents to prepare emotionally and practically for a possible separation following the birth and to consider alternative carers for their baby within their family and friend network.
- Relaunch of the PLO; assessments and interventions delivered in pre-proceedings
- Robustness of Legal Advice; the benefits of the blended meeting
- The care plan and birth arrangements for the baby are shared with parents and core group professionals by 30 weeks' gestation



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