

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ROTHERHAM: MULTI-AGENCY AIDE MEMOIR FOR VIRTUAL WORKING

The Government restrictions during the Coronavirus pandemic **do not stop the prevalence of neglect, harm and abuse for children; but it does help to conceal it.** As multi agency practitioners carry out virtual work with children and families, vigilance is needed to ensure that we understand the lived experience of children and families in Rotherham.



Plan: Virtual interactions with children and families need **careful prior planning**, to help you to understand **what life is like for the child** and to help you **see the world through the child's eyes**. It is important to **set dedicated time aside** to decide your key objectives for the virtual contact. **Pre-prepare the interaction** with questions and suggestions that will help you to achieve those objectives. **Take time to develop** these questions so that you can explore the things that concern you most.



Think: During virtual visits, seek to explore a **'day in the life'** of the child; so that they are able to tell you about what happens on a typical day **from when they wake up, to when they go to bed whilst in lockdown**. This can reveal what the child experiences on a day to day basis and help you to understand how they are feeling. Be alert to how the child responds, what they describe and how parents/carers (when they are present) react to the conversation and the questions posed; as this can be revealing. Use innovative, age appropriate ways to engage the child to make the session fun. Use COVID specific resources that have been designed to assist with engagement. Following the virtual intervention; take time to reflect and analyse your findings. Record in detail your understanding of the child's lived experience; and note the specific things that either concerned or reassured you.



What Next? Record your analysis on your given case management system carefully. What did the virtual contact reveal? Decide on what has changed and what needs to happen to support the child and record this. Think about how you can help to address the issues that you have identified, or praise family members if things what you observed were positive. Consider whether you require more information and how you will go about getting this.; or whether you need to involve more professionals.

Remember that you are the eyes and ears for vulnerable children during the pandemic. Please, stay alert, use your experience and professional judgement and remain vigilant.