**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Transfer in Conferences**

**Introduction**

This guidance covers children with a Child Protection Plan who move **permanent residence** from one local authority to another, either with their main carer(s) or within their extended network.

It does **not** cover:

* Children with a CP plan who are **staying temporarily in a local authority other than the one they permanently reside in, or children who are highly mobile where transfer to a local authority where they may remain for only a short period would not ensure monitoring**. These children are covered by temporary planning arrangements under which case responsibility is retained by the originating authority (see Temporary Transfer Policy below).

Children who are likely to remain in West Sussex for **less than 3 months** will not be accepted for case transfer

**Transfer in Process**

When a request for a Transfer in Conference is received, the following action is required;

1. MASH Practice Manager to ensure that referral includes:
* Date that family are moving to West Sussex
* Circumstance for moving (why are the family moving – new accommodation secured/fleeing violence/residing with family already resident in area etc.)
* Is the move to West Sussex permanent? (**if the move is temporary please follow Temporary Transfer Policy below)**
* Evidence that move to West Sussex is permanent
* Current perception of strengths, needs and risks (this needs to be clear, snapshot of the current situation – are the risks increasing due to the move – are the family moving away from their support network? Are the risks reducing as the family are fleeing violence?
* What arrangements are the current local authority making to visit the child/ren and hold core groups until the Transfer in Conference has taken place.
1. Request the following documents (as a minimum):
* Most recent Assessment
* Most recent Conference Report
* Most recent Child Protection Plan
* Most recent, updated chronology
* Details of family members, genogram and contact information.
1. Transfer in referral to be input onto Mosaic by MASH
2. Children’s Safeguarding Unit (CSU) and Police to be notified of Transfer in Request (referral e-mail and all information identified above, to be sent to;

cpu.team@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk and ws\_psh@sussex.pnn.police.uk). This is to enable CPU and the Police to log the children as being on temporary Child Protection Plans prior to the Transfer in Conference.

1. Referral to be completed by MASH with outcome of CFA. CFA to be allocated to relevant Family Support and Protection Team (CFA). (Please note – there needs to be consideration at this point if the child/ren have specific health/disability needs, trajectory likely to be longer term CIN or risks relating to adolescents – discussion should be held with relevant manager and CFA/Transfer in Conference request to be sent through to relevant team)
2. FSP (or relevant) social worker to contact CSU by phone (0330 222 3337) to organise the Transfer in Conference. Upon receipt of the request for a Transfer in Conference this should be arranged –and treated as any request for an ICPC.
3. A Transfer in Conference should be held within 15 working days of the agreement between the two authorities. This should be based on the principle that the child is now normally resident in the receiving area. (Pan Sussex Child Protection Procedures 5.4.3) and ordinarily the decision should be made within 1 day of the request being made by the local authority requesting the Transfer in Conference.
4. The FSP (or relevant) allocated worker in West Sussex will provide a list to the SCU of professionals to be invited. The Lead Social Worker from the originating authority must be invited to the Transfer in Conference and will be expected to submit a report at least 5 working days before the Conference, having shared this with the family beforehand. Any other professional closely involved with the family in the referring area should also be asked to provide a report.
5. West Sussex FSP (or relevant) worker should inform the family that a Transfer in Conference will be arranged, and provide a short report to Conference based on their assessment, which includes the mapping document.
6. The responsibility for case management and the existing Child Protection Plan remains with the original authority until the Conference has been held and West Sussex has accepted responsibility for the case.
7. All activity must be recorded on MOSAIC to provide a clear audit trail of decision making from referral to Conference.
8. Before accepting the case, West Sussex must be satisfied that the case is in order. This process will start at the point of the initial request. Often, a transfer is requested by an originating authority before it is clear that a family has moved permanently, or that they are likely to remain, in West Sussex.
9. The Chair of the Conference will need to be satisfied that all the required information has been provided both before and during the Conference. The Transfer Conference should be treated as an Initial Conference by the receiving authority. The Transfer in Conference must consider all the relevant informationand reach a recommendation regarding whether threshold is met as in an Iniital Child Protection Conference.
10. Disagreements between the local authorities should be escalated through the line management chain until a resolution is reached.

**Welfare Checklist and PLO**

In some cases where a family has moved, it becomes apparent that the originating authority had considered legal steps to protect the children at a PLO meeting, or in the opinion of the receiving authority it appears that the welfare checklist has been met and they should have done so but have perhaps held off if they believe the family may move away. It is not unusual, where there is a Child Protection Plan, that legal proceedings may have recently been considered. The guidance does not support delay of Child Protection transfers whilst negotiations are held between authorities around the necessity of legal proceedings and whose responsibility these are. The transfer of the Child Protection Plan will proceed in parallel with these discussions

**Visits to children**

The referring authority may be some distance away to the extent that home visits and other tasks cannot be effectively accomplished by a Social Worker within the referring authority. In such cases, the originating authority may request that West Sussex undertakes visits on their behalf. If we agree to undertake visits on behalf of the original authority the decision and the arrangements must be clearly recorded on MOSAIC.

**Section 47 enquiries in respect of a child who has moved/is moving between authorities.**

A local authority has a lawful responsibility to conduct s.47 enquiries regarding suspected or actual significant harm to a child who lives, **or is found** in its area.

The following principles must be applied:

* Negotiation about responsibility must **not** cause delay in urgent situations
* Any emergency action required should be taken by the host authority unless agreement is reached between authorities for the home authority to take alternative action, e.g. if geographically close.
* West Sussex should progress any new referrals for a child living in their area whether they are known or not known/living temporarily or permanently.

**Temporary Transfer Process**

If West Sussex are notified that a child is residing temporarily in West Sussex, e-mail notification should be sent by MASH to the CSU. If there is a request from the case holding Local Authority for visits to be undertaken, or a concern being raised, this will be managed through a referral.

**Children with Child in Need Plans – Process**

1. Referral request received by MASH from other Local Authority
2. MASH Practice Manager to ensure that referral includes
* Date that family are moving to West Sussex
* Circumstance for moving (why are the family moving – new accommodation secured/fleeing violence/residing with family already resident in area etc.)
* Current perception of strengths, needs and risks (this needs to be clear, snapshot of the current situation – are the risks increasing due to the move – are the family moving away from their support network? Are the risks reducing as the family are fleeing violence?
* what arrangements are the current local authority making to visit the child/ren until the transfer in has taken place
* Most recent assessment
* Most recent Child in Need Plan
1. Transfer in referral to be input onto Mosaic by MAS
2. Practice Manager to review and decide whether current circumstances, previous assessment, and transferring in local authorities view of strengths, risks and needs, meet the need for social care intervention in West Sussex.
3. Outcome of the Referral to be considered, either;
* Assessment and Intervention Team for CFA – new assessment needed to review current circumstances and need
* Early Help for ongoing support, either through single or multi agency support.

**Children with Existing Legal Orders - Process**

1. MASH Practice Manager to ensure that referral includes
* Date that family are moving to West Sussex
* Circumstance for moving (why are the family moving – new accommodation secured/fleeing violence/residing with family already resident in area etc)
* Current perception of strengths, needs and risks (this needs to be clear, snapshot of the current situation – are the risks increasing due to the move – are the family moving away from their support network? Are the risks reducing as the family are fleeing violence
* What arrangements are the current local authority making to visit the child/ren until the case has transferred.
* Most recent assessment
* Relevant court documents – most recent statement and care plan
1. Transfer in referral to be input onto Mosaic by MASH
2. MASH Practice Manager to ensure that West Sussex Legal team are made aware of transfer in request
3. MASH Practice Manager to ensure that the existing local authority is clear that responsibility remains with them until transition of legal order has been agreed and transferred
4. If child is subject to Interim or Full Care Order – MASH Practice Manager to make contact with Group Manager for relevant Resilience and Permanence Team to discuss transfer in request. Please note – it should not be agreed that West Sussex will accept any transfer in of legal order prior to discussion with Legal Department and Group Manager in R&P
5. If child is subject to Supervision Order - MASH Practice Manager to make contact with Group Manager for relevant Family Support and Protection Team to discuss transfer in request. Please note – it should not be agreed that West Sussex will accept any transfer in of legal order prior to discussion with Legal Department and Group Manager in FSP

**Reference Points;**

This guidance is specific to West Sussex and is currently not part of the Pan Sussex procedures which can be found at; <https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/hkqq/child-protection-conferences/transfer-child-protection-conference>