

Protocol for Management of unallocated cases in

Children’s Social Care

Background

For the purposes of this protocol, unallocated casework is any child’s case held in children’s social care pending assessment or further work and the case has not been allocated to a worker for five or more working days.

Only in very exceptional circumstances should cases be unallocated in locality social work teams.

The Head of Service Locality must provide the Assistant Director with details of unallocated cases on a weekly basis (standard proforma Appendix 1).

The unallocated case lists are also received by Management Information who use the information to populate the Performance Improvement Board (Safeguarding) monthly report.

This provides a line of sight for the Head of Service, Assistant Director, Early Help and Safeguarding and the Performance Improvement Board on unallocated casework due to delays in allocation following referral or through the transition of workers.

Management oversight of unallocated work

The Head of Service will ensure action is taken to allocate casework at the earliest opportunity.

When there is a delay to the allocation of casework the Head of Service must ensure that the Team Manager reviews all unallocated cases at least weekly and this review is informed by discussion with the family/carers, the child (when appropriate) and discussion with other involved agencies.

Every unallocated case must have the manager’s oversight clearly recorded in case notes on the child’s file and this should consider the risk assessment pending allocation.

Should an allocated social worker be off work (for example due to sickness) the Team Manager must ensure that each of their cases is risk assessed for impact.

If the allocated workers absence extends for over 4 weeks, then cases should be reallocated or interim activity commenced to specifically support the child’s plan. This should be clearly outlined in the case record by the Team Manager.

Any concerns about risk in individual casework or through the accumulation of unallocated cases should be escalated to the Head of Service Locality and the Assistant Director, Early Help and Safeguarding.

In the absence of the Assistant Director, Early Help and Safeguarding, the Head of Service should alert the Assistant Director, Specialist Services and/or Service Director, Early Help and Safeguarding should there be any escalating concerns in relation to unallocated cases.

Responsible Officer – Pete Lambert

Date of Next Review – End of October 2019

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**Appendix 1**

**UNALLOCATED WORK – WEEKLY RETURN**

Cases should only be reported as unallocated if they have remained unallocated for 5 or more working days.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Locality:** |  |
| **Date of Return:** |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of****Children** | **Notes** |
| **Single Assessment** |  |  |
| **S47** |  |  |
| **CIN** |  |  |
| **CP** |  |  |
| **CIC** |  |  |
| **Head of Service comment on any unallocated cases** **(please consider the risk assessment and actions taken as per unallocated cases protocol)** |