One Minute Guide



Children Looked After Monitoring (CLAM)

No 11, January 2019

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**What is CLAM?**

CLAM Panel meets once a week, currently Tuesdays between 13:30 and 17:00, on a rotating basis between the Horsham (CHN) and Worthing (CHD) offices.

This Panel is the triage point where Senior Managers within the organisation make decisions on the next steps regarding:

* Permission for child/young person coming into foster care under section 20
* Or retrospective review decision for a child who has come into foster/residential care on an unplanned emergency basis – the case must be presented to panel within 7 working days of coming into care
* Review of plan whilst in foster care under section 20
* Permission to seek supported lodgings and residential placements
* Review of IFA foster or residential placement
* Return into care for children already subject to a Care Order
* Review any unregulated placements and review if a placement should be considered section 20 and under reg 24
* Review children who are placed with parents
* Consider permission for placement to be ratified as permanent and make a decision on whether to support this recommendation for a final decision to be made by Panel Chair

**What is the purpose of the panel?**

The Panel ensure there is consistency of practice across services and a whole service ownership and response to the plan.

Its purpose is:

* to ensure management oversight and evidence of key decision making in permanency planning is recorded, and clear as to the reasons for why these decisions were made

• to ensure that permanency is achieved within the children’s timescales

* to ensure the outcomes for the children we are working with promote their safety, welfare and protection so that they have the best opportunity to reach their full potential

• to ensure the right children are receiving the appropriate, proportional response to their circumstances and this is being worked upon by the right practitioners with pace and purpose.

**What decisions do the panel make?**

The panel will make decisions regarding:

* To agree or not that a child is to come into foster or residential care under section 20
* To agree or not that a placement search is triggered
* To ratify any proposed plan for achieving rehabilitation To ratify any proposed plan for achieving safety and development of their independency skills
* To set out the parallel plan for achieving permanency, whether this is return home, placement with others under a SGO, or long term fostering.
* To set out the timeframes for the above to be achieved and who is responsible for carrying out each piece of work

- To set a review date for returning to Panel to provide an update on the progress and ensure plans are kept on track or adapted according to new information.

**Membership of panel:**

* Service Leads
* Represpresentatives from Group Managers for Looked After Children, Family Support and Protection, Life Long Services, and Assessment and Intervention
* Group Mannagers for Fostering and Placement Finding Team
* Permanency Planning Co-ordinator
* Note Taker
* CLAM Coordinator

**Expectations of practitioners:**

Practitioners will need to have a 3 way discussion/meeting with their Practice Manager and Group Manager who will make the decision and give permission to request a slot at Panel.

Practitioners need to request a slot by e-mailing the CLAM coordinator and CLA Panel Admin and request a slot either in Horsham (CHN) or Worthing (CHD). The date, time and room will be confirmed by way of a calendar invite/email. A written referral for the CLAM panel needs to be completed and submitted prior to panel to the panel co-ordinator/CLAM admin. The referral will be uploaded onto each of the children’s files once it has been quality assured and approved by the social worker’s Practice Manager.

Triage and screening of the requests will be undertaken by the CLAM Coordinator/ Placement Finding Team Practice Manager. If appropriate, a 15 minute slot will be given to practitioners to discuss each child; additional 15 minutes for additional siblings. The Practice Manager and the allocated social worker for the child are expected to attend panel and present a summary of the reasons for wanting a decision and what the proposed plan is. Conference calling is available, instead of face to face attendance, if attendance would not otherwise be possible due to the physical location of panel and time constraints in travelling.

The key decisions will be recorded on each of the children’s files as a manager’s comment in bold as a significant event. This will be done at panel on the day by the note taker.

The Practice Manager is responsible for ensuring that the agreed actions are progressed within the agreed timescales. Any difficulties in achieving this plan must be escalated to their Group Managers.

Consultation and advice is available for children with more complex needs or high number sibling groups from the Permanency Planning Co-ordinator (guide).

**Useful links:** CLA Panel Admin: [CLAPanelAdmin@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:CLAPanelAdmin@westsussex.gov.uk) CLAM Panel Co-ordinator: Paul Tierney [paul.tierney@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:paul.tierney@westsussex.gov.uk) Permanency Planning co-ordinator: Hazel Birchmore [hazel.birchmore@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:hazel.birchmore@westsussex.gov.uk)