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**SCHEME OF DELEGATED**

**DECISION MAKING**

Children’s Social Care

July 2019

Introduction

This Scheme of Delegation sets out who has the authority to make decisions on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council Children’s Social Care. Staff at all levels need to be confident on where they have delegated authority to make decisions and must also be clear on who is the decision maker, where they do not have the permission.

Delegation creates the authority to carry out a task or to make a decision. This in turn places a requirement on those for whom authority has been granted to be accountable and responsible for the decisions they have been asked to make. Anyone who makes a decision must be confident that they know the scope of their authority.

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| **Legal decisions** | | |
| ID | Decision | Delegated to: |
| 1.1 | Emergency Accommodation of a child following Police Protection, or as a result of an Emergency Protection Order, or remand into care, or the accommodation of a child with no one with parental responsibility and no one to care for them. | Head of Service |
| 1.2 | Accommodation under Section 20 Children Act 1989 | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Service |
| 1.3 | Application for an Emergency Protection Order | Head of Service |
| 1.4 | Application for a Child Assessment Order | Head of Service |
| 1.5 | Initiating Care Proceedings | Head of Service |
| 1.6 | Appointment of Counsel in court proceedings | Head of Service |
| 1.7 | Instruction of Counsel, including experts witnesses | Head of Service |
| 1.8 | Decision to revoke a Care Order | Head of Service |
| 1.9 | Decision to apply for Secure Accommodation | Service Director |
| 1.10 | Decision to use secure accommodation without the authorisation of a court (up to 72 hours in aggregate over a 28 day period). | Executive Director /  Service Director |
| 1.11 | Appeal to the Court against a decision | Service Director |
| 1.12 | Authority to apply to a Court for discharge or variation of a Supervision Order | Head of Service |
| 1.13 | Authority to apply to a Court for the discharge of an Order committing a child to the care of the Council | Head of Service |

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| **Children in need of help and protection** | | |
| ID | Decision | Delegated to: |
| 2.1 | Decision to hold strategy meeting. | Team Manager |
| 2.2 | Initiate Section 47 Child Protection enquiries including direct work with the family. | Team Manager |
| 2.3 | Conclude Section 47 enquiries. | Team Manager |
| 2.4 | Decision to convene an Initial Child Protection Conference. | Team Manager |
| 2.5 | Decision to cease CIN Plan | Team Manager |
| 2.6 | Decision to end CP Plan | Child Protection Adviser |
| 2.7 | Signing of single assessments | Team Manager |
| 2.8 | Agreeing legal advice or LPM | PLO Court Manager |
| 2.9 | Signing off final care plan | Team Manager (having sought the views of Child Protection Adviser or Independent Reviewing Officer where required) |

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| **Consent decisions relating to children in care**  *Note: the views of child, parent, carer and Independent Reviewing Officer must always be considered in making consent decisions.* | | |
| ID | Decision | Delegated to: |
| 3.1 | Sign Passport Applications as person with parental responsibility. | Head of Service |
| 3.2 | Consent to support a young person on a Care Order changing their name. | Head of Service |
| 3.3 | Consent to join the Armed Forces. | Service Director |
| 3.4 | Consent to marriage of 16 or 17 year old on a Care Order. | Service Director |
| 3.5 | Consent for 16 or 17 year old on a Care Order to live independently. | Head of Service |
| 3.6 | Authorisation to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who is being placed for adoption | Service Director |
| 3.7 | Authorisation to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who are going home or going to live with family or friends. | Head of Service |
| 3.8 | Authorisation of the support plan where a child is to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who are subject to special guardianship or child arrangement orders. | Head of Service |
| 3.9 | Authorisation to cease being looked after for young people aged 16 & 17. | Head of Service |
| 3.10 | Young person continues to be accommodated after their 18th birthday where in residential provision. | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 3.11 | Young person remains in an extended foster placement or a formal ‘Staying Put’ arrangement. | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 3.12 | Consent to routine planned health assessments or treatment for looked after children where the Local Authority has parental responsibility. | Head of Service |
| 3.13 | Consent to common (age-related) health remedies including non-prescription drugs such as ibuprofen and paracetamol. | Head of Service |
| 3.14 | Consent to health assessments, treatment or other interventions including general anaesthetic for a child on a care order where the parent is in agreement. | Head of Service |
| 3.15 | Consent to health assessments, treatment or other interventions including general anaesthetic for a child on a care order. | Head of Service |
| 3.16 | Consent to medical interventions to deal with life threatening situations. | Executive Director /  Service Director |
| 3.17 | Where there is a high risk associated with medical treatment or procedure and this is a planned intervention | Executive Director /  Service Director |
| 3.18 | Consent to medical interventions to deal with life threatening situations or where there is a high risk associated with the treatment or procedure where the parent or other persons with parental responsibility oppose the intervention. | Executive Director /  Service Director |
| 3.19 | Acting as a parent for children subject to care orders for  the purposes of assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983 & 2007 | Head of Service |
| 3.20 | Decisions about contact arrangements. | Team Manager |
| 3.21 | Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to go on holiday with school or other agency | Head of Service |
| 3.22 | Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to have an overnight stay with friends, relatives or temporary carers | Team Manager |
| 3.23 | Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to travel abroad with Foster Carers | Head of Service |
| 3.24 | Authority to give consent to a child taking contraception when they are looked after by the authority and are subject to a care order. | Head of Service |
| 3.25 | Authority to give consent to a child having a pregnancy terminated, when they are looked after by the authority. | Service Director |
| 3.26 | Agreement that long term fostering is the plan for the child. | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 3.27 | Special Guardianship Support Plan | Service Director / Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 3.28 | Adoption Support Plan | Service Director / Head of Children’s Care Services |

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| **Fostering and Adoption Agency Decisions** | | |
| ID | Decision | Delegated to: |
| 4.1 | Approval of new Foster Carers | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.2 | Approval of Foster Carers following first annual review | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.3 | Continued approval of foster carers following subsequent reviews (unless referred to Fostering Panel) | Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 4.4 | Authorise emergency placements out of the foster carers terms of approval | Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 4.5 | Permanent change of approval | Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 4.6 | Temporary Approval of Foster carers (Regulation 24) | Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 4.7 | Approving adopters as Foster to Adopt carers | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.8 | Termination of Foster Carers Approval | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.9 | Approval of new Adopters | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.10 | Approval of the plan for a child to be adopted | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.11 | Approval of a match between a child and adopters | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.12 | Revocation of the plan for a child to be adopted | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.13 | Decision to pay an adoption allowance or lump sum payment | Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 4.14 | Review of adopter’s approval (unless review at panel) | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.15 | Revocation of adopters’ approval | Agency Decision Maker |
| 4.16 | Long term fostering | Agency Decision Maker /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| **Placement Decisions** | | |
| ID | Decision | Delegated to: |
| 5.1 | Agreement to place in external residential care | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 5.2 | Agreement to place with an Independent Fostering Agency | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 5.3 | Agreement to place within in house residential care | Registered Home Manager / Head of Care Services |
| 5.4 | Agreement to placement with parents | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 5.5 | Family and Friends – Regulation 24 | Head of Children’s Care Services / Nominated Officer |
| 5.6 | Placed for Adoption | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 5.7 | Agreement to a placement move | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |
| 5.8 | Emergency accommodation | Service Director /  Head of Children’s Care Services |