

CASE NOTE TYPE: Virtual Contact

The ‘Virtual Contact’ case note type MUST be recorded on a child’s LCS record whilst working restrictions are in place during Covid-19. This type of contact replaces the required statutory visit.

A virtual contact is a video call where the home and occupants are seen. Other types of contact such as telephone calls, texts and emails should be recorded using the case note type ‘Communications (T/calls; emails etc)’.

Attempts made to organise a virtual contact MUST be recorded as a ‘Communications’ case note.

The *minimum expected standard* for a virtual contact is:

1. The contact MUST include a conversation with the child/children.
2. The ‘child seen’ box MUST be ticked if the virtual contact is via Skype or other forms of video link, and the child has been seen and spoken to.
3. EVERY recording on the child’s file on LCS needs to detail the following:
 - a) The attempt made to communicate using video so we can see family members. If this is refused why and our ANALYSIS of this. Has risk gone up as a result.
 - b) A record of the attempt to talk to all the children/see all the children via video. If this is refused why and our ANALYSIS of this. Has risk gone up as a result.
 - c) If a video call takes place the recording needs to say which children were seen and state clearly if any were not and why.
 - d) Finally the social worker needs to state their overall analysis of the interaction and whether anything needs escalating to their manager.
4. All successful virtual contacts MUST be recorded on LCS within 48 hours of the contact taking place.

If the recording does not meet this minimum standard, the worker will be asked to complete a follow up virtual contact covering all expectations as detailed above; and to record a further ‘Virtual Contact’ case note.

Assistant Team Managers should support their workers to prepare for the virtual contact in advance of it taking place; and the Assistant Team Managers must have consistent and regular oversight of what is being recorded by their workers to ensure that the required minimum standards are being met, and take action when the standards are not met.

CASE NOTE TYPE: COVID-19

A COVID-19 case note MUST be added to the child’s file ONLY by a Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager/IRO/CPA when we have been notified that a member of a household where a child lives who is open to children’s social care:

-Has COVID- 19

- Is suspected to have Covid-19
- Is required to shelter for 12 weeks
- Is required to self-isolate

The case note should include the date of the notification, if this is self-diagnosis or has a health professional given advice and if so who, who in the household has symptoms, whether hospital treatment is required, if self-isolating is this because they are in a high risk group or because they have had contact with a person who has symptoms.

As part of this case note, the Assistant Team Manager/Team Manager MUST record their management direction to the worker regarding virtual contact from this point and their view on the likely impact on the children in the household in relation to known and potential risks and vulnerabilities. i.e. will this exacerbate known risk, does the child/ren have any underlying health problems that may be exacerbated?

BANNER NOTICE: Covid-19

Team Managers/Heads of Service MUST add a banner notice to LCS for individuals open to Children's Social Care who are:

- Confirmed COVID-19
- Suspected COVID-19 – household self-isolating for 14 days due to symptoms/contact with someone displaying symptoms
- Suspected COVID-19 – household chosen not to self-isolate
- Sheltering due to COVID-19 – household has a family member who shielding having been defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable

Enter the start date of the notification and if self-isolating for 14 days add an end date of two weeks from the start of the self-isolation.

Management Oversight

For children and families who do not require a COVID-19 case note to be recorded, Team Managers and Assistant Team Managers MUST record a management oversight using the 'Management Decision' case note for all children and young people who we are worried about. For example, unborns; children aged under 5; children in care and care leavers who are parents; children at risk of exploitation; children who go missing regularly; domestic violence where the perpetrator is now in the home all day; young carers. This should be reviewed regularly with the frequency of this review based on risk and needing to be more frequent given the unique and difficult circumstances we are in. It should also detail what other agencies we have communicated with, clear time bound actions taken to minimise risk and ensure that the IRO and CPA are included in the risk assessment.