**Newham Children’s Services**

**Policy for transfer of children and families**

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# Introduction

This document covers the transfer of children and families between social care teams and to resources such as Families First. It does not apply to:

* The reallocation of children and families within teams
* The allocation of work to teams from MASH, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) assigned directly to LAC
* Transfers from LAC to leaving care, ordinarily started at 17 years 9 months
* Children aged 17 years 9 months whose service from 0-25 SEND will cause at 18, ordinarily alerted to the leaving care team to assign a personal advisor during transfer to adult social care
* Requests for support from No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) or Intentional Homelessness (IH) teams
* Step up to social care from other services.

This document includes terms of reference and process flowchart for the transfer panel meeting.

The transfer meeting request and outcome form and LAC transfer checklist are available by emailing CYPS-transfers@newham.gov.uk

# Transfer panel terms of reference

## Principles underpinning the transfer of cases

The transfer panel is underpinned by ‘best practice’ principles regarding case transfers. In order for the process of case transfer to work as soon as possible for the child & family a degree of professional judgment will be required in many cases to decide when to transfer. At all times the needs of the child are paramount when considering a change of the adult who is helping them. A change of practitioner is a significant event for a child and family and needs to be reflected in sensitive and careful handling by practice leads and practitioners.

## Role of the Transfer Panel

The role of the transfer panel is to manage handovers in the case pathway and access to post assessment services such as intervention and families first, ensuring the relevant practice or team leads are involved and agree the best service for the child / family, the plan of work and the timescales for transfer.

The function of the transfer panel is to ensure children and their families access the right service at the right time for only as long as is necessary.

The transfer panel meets weekly on a Tuesday between 9.30am and 1pm and is facilitated by service managers from social care.

## Preparation for transfer

Social workers and practice leads should identify through supervision where children and families should move to a different service and when this applies should begin to prepare for transfer at the earliest opportunity.

The transfer meeting booking and outcome form lists the documents that must be completed before a transfer will be accepted. Although these will not apply for all children and families transfers will not be accepted without genogram, chronology, current assessment or plan within timescales, completed visits within timescales and up to date supervision records. A separate checklist applies for children transferring to the LAC service.

It is the responsibility of the practice lead to ensure these documents are not only completed but are of good quality. Preparing for transfer should be seen as a quality assurance task.

An important element of preparation for transfer is ensuring the child and family are aware of what is happening and the reasons for it and this is recorded, the practitioner and practice lead may also wish to take the opportunity to reflect in supervision on the impact on the child / family.

**Practice note statutory visits:** When arranged statutory visits for a child or family being prepared for transfer please take account of the required visit frequency. Sufficient time should be allowed between the last visit and the next visit falling due for the transfer to take place and a practitioner to be allocated. Transfers where tasks are about to fall overdue is a frequent reason for delays to the process.

## Requesting a transfer meeting

Once the child / families file is prepared for transfer the relevant form should be completed. For transfer to LAC this is the LAC transfer checklist, for all other transfers this is the transfer meeting request and outcome form. The completed form must be sent by the practice lead, requests from practioners will not be accepted.

Requests should be sent to CYPS-transfers@newham.gov.uk by 12 midday on Wednesday for the panel meeting the following Tuesday.

CYPS business support will produce and circulate the panel agenda to all those expected to attend by no later than 2pm on the Friday prior to the panel meeting.

## Transfer meeting preparation by receiving teams

It is best practice for the transferring practice lead to have a discussion with the receiving practice lead or team manager before submitting a transfer request. Receiving team managers can also access the mailbox CYPS-transfers to check for referrals to their service after the weekly deadline.

Receiving team managers should raise any queries or questions with the transferring practice lead so that these can be resolved prior to the panel meeting and where these are outstanding should ensure their services representative at the meeting is aware.

Although it is the responsibility of transferring practice leads to prepare the child / families file the receiving practice lead / team manager should also assure themselves that work is completed so that delays do not occur after the meeting. If the transfer summary or LAC checklist is not accurate CYPS business support should be notified so the child / family can be removed from the meeting agenda.

## Transfer panel membership

Membership of the panel is below, transferring and receiving practice leads are required to attend for their child / family.

* Service Manger on rotation (Chair)
* Intervention Service Manager/s or delegate, optional
* Families First / Early Help Team Leader
* 0-25 SEND Service Manager or delegate
* LAC Service Manager or delegate
* CYPS Business Support

Those attending panel do not need to stay to hear presentations for children and families who are not transferring to their service though they are welcome to stay and input.

Agendas are organised in order of the transferring practice lead wherever possible. LAC transfer are heard at the beginning of each meeting.

## Panel meeting

Transferring practice leads are expected to attend the panel to present their transfers and answer questions.

The outcome of the panel will usually be a transfer to the team requested but on occasion a more appropriate team will be identified, transfer to that team will only be agreed if they are present.

Occasionally it may be identified that further involvement of the Local Authority is not required and an agreement made to close the child / family, it is the responsibility of the current team to complete this.

## Dispute resolution

It is expected that managers will work co-operatively to resolve case transfer issues as they arise.  The key aim is to ensure that manager work together to achieve the best outcome for the child / family. In rare and exceptional cases where a dispute cannot be resolved the decision of the Head of Service Assessment and Intervention is final.

## Panel decision and outcome

Following the panel meeting CYPS business support will complete the decision section of the transfer meeting request and outcome form or LAC transfer checklist and this will be emailed to the receiving practice lead or team manager within 24 hours, using the email title child name / AZEUS ref / Transfer to . . . A copy of the decision is also uploaded to to Azeus in documents.

## Transferring team post meeting actions

Following the panel meeting the transferring practitioner / practice lead must ensure that all outstanding tasks are completed and approved in Azeus.

For children transferring to LAC the following must be completed

* Most recent Looked After Child Social Workers review report;
* Placement Information Record;
* Initial Person Education Plan (PEP);
* Initial Medical should have been arranged and where possible taken place;
* Up to date Care Plan;
* A copy of all current Legal Orders must be scanned into the case file record. In the case of a child Looked After (on a Care Order under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989) a copy of the birth certificate will be retained, or (for children accommodated under Section 20) will have been requested;
* Any financial agreements should be up to date.

**Practice note outstanding tasks:** Where there are outstanding tasks on the child’s file that predate the transferring services period of involvement a request should be raised with the Azeus team for the task to be closed and a copy of the notification sent to the receiving team manager.

## Allocation to receiving team and handovers

Receiving team managers are expected to identify a practitioner prior to the panel meeting and ensure their service representative has this information.

Handover will be agreed at the meeting if an introduction between the two practioners and child / family has not already taken place.

Transfer of the child / family file and allocation to the receiving practitioner should take place no sooner than five work days from the meeting and no later than eight working days.

This information is tracked by CYPS business support who will escalate to the service manager assessment where timescales have not been met, the receiving service manager is expected to resolve this within one working day.

Children and families must not remain allocated to inappropriate teams or services as a result of issues such as capacity in receiving team or services. Where this applies the receiving service manager is expected to put arrangements in place to allow the transfer to take place such as duty cover.

## Point of transfer

The following table outlines the point of transfer

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Transfer from  | Transfer trigger | To | Point of transfer | Note |
| Assessment | Assessment complete CIN plan | Intervention  | CIN meeting | No less than 5 and no more than 8 days from transfer meeting |
| Assessment | Assessment complete child protection plan | Intervention | ICPC | Early alert send to receiving team, panel to be booked for week before ICPC |
| Assessment | Care proceedings commenced | Intervention | First hearing | Transfer timed to allow receiving team to attend hearing |
| Intervention | Conclusion of care proceedings | LAC | 5 working days from final hearing | Final order, care plan and permanency plan sent to LAC 5 days before submission to court |
| Assessment or Intervention | Section 20 | LAC | Next looked after review | Transfer booked 5 working days from ratification of permanency plan |
| Assessment | Assessment complete, no further statutory action but further support required | Families First | Handover meeting between 5 and 8 working days from panel | Families first criteria met |
| Intervention | No further intervention required, some further support required | Families First | As above | As above |
| NRPF / IK | Where escalation or additional CIN / CP support is required | Separate pathway applies | NA | NA |

# Transfer Flowchart

**Prior to transfer meeting request Post transfer meeting request deadline**

Identified in supervision that child should transfer

Calculate target panel meeting data and schedule in deadlines

Create transfer meeting request and outcome form or LAC checklist

Quality assure form / checklist and case file

Complete all tasks required and discuss handover with child / family

Complete

Incomplete

Check forms and that associated documents are attached

Incomplete

Complete

Schedule slots, produce and distribute agenda

**Transferring practice lead**

**Receiving team lead**

**Receiving practitioner**

**Transferring practitioner**

**Business support**

Transfer complete

Handover meeting

End worker relationship

Not agreed

Agreed

Notify receiving team Load transfer doc to Azeus

Allocate practitioner

Check transfers identified for your team have all the required tasks completed

Incomplete

Complete

Discuss any concerns with the transferring practice lead, ensure panel rep has details

Identify practitioner

Presented at panel

Send to CYPS-transfers by 12 noon Wednesday