

Lambeth

Step Up/Step Down Process

1. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing is to provide guidance to practitioners and managers within the Community Early Help Service (EH) and Children's Social Care (CSC) about step up and step down processes between the two services.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Step Up/Step Down Flowcharts which accompany it and also detail how professional disagreements might be resolved and learning captured.

All actions should be undertaken in line with the principles articulated in that document.

There are three possible routes:

- EH to CSC (IRH) - Step Up
- CSC (CAT) to EH – Step Down
- CSC (FSCP) to EH – Step Down

2. Early Help to Children's Social Care (IRH)

- When an Early Help Practitioner is working with a family and believes the threshold for a statutory assessment has been reached, the EH Practitioner discusses with the Team Manager who has a discussion with an IRH Team Manager on the same day.
- EH Practitioner completes the Step Up form on Mosaic.
- If it is safe to do so, the EH Practitioner advises the family of what is happening.
- Unless there is a specified reason why the EH work should discontinue, the expectation is that EH work continues while CAT undertake an assessment.

3. Children's Social Care (CAT) to Early Help:

- As soon as it becomes clear that the child will not become a CIN or subject to a CP Plan, the CAT Social Worker begins to think whether the family might benefit from an Early Help intervention.
- The CAT Social Worker has a discussion with the EH Team Manager and gains the consent of the family for a referral.
- If the family consents, the CAT Team Manager allocates to relevant locality Team detailing the outcomes to be achieved.
- If appropriate, the CAT Social Worker and EH Practitioner undertake a joint visit. The EH Practitioner uses the CAT assessment, but completes the Outcomes Framework portion of the Early Help Assessment so that progress can be measured.

Children's Social Care (FSCP) to Early Help:

- When a CIN Plan is ending, FSCP Social Worker considers whether a family might benefit from an EH intervention. If the child has been subject to a CP Plan within the last three months, the FSCP Social Worker must bring the case to a Step Down Meeting for agreement before any discussion with EH.
- FSCP Social Worker has a discussion with the EH Team Manager and gains the consent of the family for a referral.
- EH Team Manager or EH Senior Practitioner attends final CIN Review where next steps are agreed.
- FSCP Social worker sends to relevant locality team via Mosaic.
- If the family consents, the CAT Team Manager allocates to relevant locality Team detailing the outcomes to be achieved.
- If appropriate, the FSCP Social Worker and EH Practitioner undertake a joint visit.

Glossary

CAT – Children's Assessment Team

CIN – Child in Need

CP – Child Protection

CSC – Children's Social Care

EH – Community Early Help Service

FSCP – Family Safeguarding and Child Protection

IRH – Integrated Referral Hub