



Independent Reviewing Officer Practice Standards

Introduction

Buckinghamshire Council is committed to improve outcomes for children looked after by ensuring they are at the centre of all that we do. Buckinghamshire Councils IRO Practice standards are set out to support IROs effectiveness and positively impact on the child's care planning process. This set of standards does NOT replace the statutory guidance found in Chapter 6 of the IRO Handbook which is available online and should be read in conjunction with Buckinghamshire's Independent Reviewing Officer Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure.

[iro_statutory_guidance_iros_and_las_march_2010_tagged.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

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The IRO'S primary focus is to quality assure the care planning and review process for each child and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration.

The IRO handbook draws on a model of best practice to improve outcomes for children looked after and this document serves to ensure that every child in care can expect the best possible service from their IRO.

One of the most important aspects of the IROs role is to meaningfully engage with children and to remain child-centered in everything they do.

Practice Standards

Ensure the child is at the centre of all they do.

1. The IRO will ensure that the child's views, aspirations and wishes are given full consideration.
2. The IRO will be satisfied that each placement is meeting the needs of the child.
3. The IRO is to ensure that each child knows who their IRO is and how to contact them between reviews, which should be clearly noted in the record of the review.
4. Each child's review is a process that requires necessary information to be available, such as the child's care plan and recent child and family assessment to enable all the relevant people to contribute ensuring clear and informed judgements are made about the progress of the care plan.



5. All care plans and decisions to have a timescale attached that meets the child's needs and a named person to implement them.
6. The IRO will identify where there is drift in care planning and utilise Buckinghamshire's local authority formal dispute resolution process where needed.
7. The IRO should be satisfied that plans for permanency have been identified by the at the earliest opportunity, but by the second review.
8. The IRO will be satisfied that the local authority is meeting the requirements of the care planning regulations including fulfilling its duty as corporate parent.
9. The IRO will record the child's review in accordance with the timescales set out in the IRO Handbook.
10. The IRO pro-actively monitors the progress of the care plan and the implementation of the review decisions. The IRO will provide midway oversight in between reviews and record this on case notes using the IRO oversight drop down and label the subject tab IRO midway oversight.
11. The IRO will determine whether a review needs to be convened when there is a significant change/event in the child's life.
12. The IRO will engage with the child's guardian in line with the Cafcass protocol in order to ensure effective communication about the child's care plan.
13. The IRO will provide both positive and constructive feedback to all the stakeholders in order to achieve good outcomes for children.
14. The IRO will provide a link role to a particular social work team to facilitate good communication, support social works team understanding of the IRO role and maintain the relationship between the IRO service and the social work team. This will entail bimonthly meetings between the Team Manager and the IRO and IRO attendance at the social work team meeting 3 monthly or at an agreed frequency between managers.

More information

More detailed information and relevant Department for Education (DfE) publications can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

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