

**Child subject to a Child Protection Plan becomes a child in our care**

**Updated August 2023**

**This protocol clarifies the** procedure for reviewing children who are subjectto child protection plans and who then become a child in care.

In Tower Hamlets we work towards children not being subject to both the child protection and child in care processes and aim to end the Child Protection Plan and process once it has been confirmed that the child is in care and on-going care planning will be taking place. If there is any ambiguity about whether the child will be remaining in care and/or might be returning home or to family within a very short period of time (days or a matter of weeks), and the risks remain the same, a discussion will take place between the CP Group Manager and IRO Group Manager to decide on an individual case basis if the CP status should be maintained for a limited agreed period while the child in care process continues. This will be recorded in the child’s record and the child, their parents, social worker, team manager, and involved professionals informed. This decision will be reviewed by both Group Managers on a weekly, or no less than fortnightly basis depending on circumstances.

In all other circumstances the procedures below will apply.

The IRO Handbook states in 3.40 ….

*‘In most cases where a child who is subject of a child protection plan becomes looked after it will no longer be necessary to maintain the child protection plan’*

1. **Child becomes a child in our care whilst subject to a child protection plan.**
* The Child Protection Conference Chair will inform the CP Administrator that the child is no longer subject to a Child Protection Plan. It is then the responsibility of the CP Administrator to complete the **Decision Sheet** on Mosaic so that the child is no longer recorded as being subject to a child protection plan. This will be sent out to all members of the core group for information purposes.
* The Child Protection Conference Chair, the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and the allocated social worker must have a conversation before the first Statutory Child in Care Review about the identified risks to the child and how this as well as aspects of the child protection plan can be incorporated into the child’s care plan. This discussion must be recorded on Mosaic by the CP Conference Chair and any specific actions agreed recorded by the IRO in the record of the meeting and decision sheet.

* The CP Administrator will write to all members of the core group and the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) to state that the child is now in our care and there will be discussions at the first Child in Care review about the child no longer being subject to a child protection plan. Professionals will have 10 working days to lodge any objections to the child no longer being subject to the plan. This will be fed back to the IRO chairing the Child in Care Review by the Child Protection Chair.
* The IRO will formally state at the first Child in Care Review that the child is no longer subject to a child protection plan. It is the responsibility of the IRO to record this on the **First Child in Care Review Decision Sheet.**
1. **Child is subject to a Child Protection Plan and a Children’s Looked After Care Plan.**
* The IRO handbook states in 3.41 that ‘where a looked after child remains the subject of a child protection plan it is expected that there will be a single planning and reviewing process, led by the IRO, which meets the requirements of both the Regulations and the guidance in *Working Together to Safeguard Children.*
1. **Child is subject to Child Protection Plan and / or Children’s Looked After Care Plan and is subject to PLO.**
* The Letter before Proceedings will state what concerns need to be addressed by the parent and what support will be provided by the LA to help. These issues should be reflected in the existing child protection / care plan. It follows that the LA should update the plan and send it to the parents as a draft plan (ideally with the Letter before Proceedings) which he or she will be asked to agree at the Pre-Proceedings Meeting (PPM). The Chair of the PPM will ensure that the Letter before Proceedings reflects the existing child protection / care plan.
* Conversely for unborn children where pre-proceeding takes place first, the Letter before Proceedings will inform the child protection plan.