

# Lambeth Children's Social Care Scheme of Delegated Decision- Making

2023/2024



# About this document

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<b>Title</b>	<b>Scheme of Delegated Decision-Making Children's Social Care 2023/24</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>To set out the levels of agreed delegated decision making within Children's Social Care</b>
<b>Updated by</b>	<b>Katherine Peddie</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Andrew Carter – Strategic Director of Children's Services</b>
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# Version Control

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This document is only valid on the day it is printed

Date Issued:	Version	Summary of Changes	Created by
June 2022	1	DRAFT	
August 2022	2	Updates re permanency	K Peddie
Sept 2022	3	Further updates re permanency	K Peddie
June 2023	4	Inclusion of Legal Gateway and Care Entry Panel	K Peddie

## Intended Audience

This document has been issued to the following people for Review (R) Information (I) and Review and Sign off (S). The Scheme of Delegation is mandatory and must be shared with all managers, and social work staff and with those holding cases in Early Help to ensure decisions are being made at the appropriate level within the organisation.

Name	Position	S/R/I
Andrew Carter	Strategic Director for Children's Services	S
Robert Bielby	Director of Children's Social Care	S
Brenda Mcinerney	Director of Practice, Performance and Partnerships	
	Assistant Directors Children's Social Care	S
	Service Managers	I
	All social care staff	I

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# Scheme of Delegated Decision-Making Children's Social Care 2023/2024

## 1. Introduction Panel and Board Structures

This Scheme of Delegation sets out who has the authority to make decisions in Children's Social Care at an appropriate level. Staff at all levels need to be confident on where they have delegated authority to make decisions and must also be clear on who is the decision maker, where they do not have the permission.

Delegation creates the authority to carry out a task or to make a decision. This in turn places a requirement on those for whom authority has been granted to be accountable and responsible for the decisions they have been asked to make. Anyone who makes a decision must be confident that they know the scope of their authority.

1) Panel Management			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
1.1	Children's Care Episode Panel (CEP) and approval of placements (IFA, Residential, CWD, FSCP)	Director of Children's Social care	See Terms of Reference
1.2	Legal Gateway	Director of Children's Social care	
1.3	Court Tracking Panel (CTP)	Assistant Director Safeguarding	
1.4	Permanency Tracking Panel (PTP)	Assistant Director Corporate	See Terms of Reference

1) Panel Management			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
		Parenting / Assistant Director Safeguarding	
1.5	PLO Tracking Panel	AD Safeguarding	
1.6	16+ Panel	AD Corporate Parenting	
1.7	NEET Panel (NP)	Virtual School Head	
1.8	High-cost placement panel	AD Brokerage and Placements / Director of CSC	
1.9	Tripartite Panel	Chaired on a rota basis with partners (Health / Education / Social Care). Currently chaired by Assistant Director of Children's Commissioning	
1.10	SIL Panel	AD Brokerage and Placements	
1.11	Performance and Practice Overview Panel decisions (PPOP)	Director of Children's Services	Recorded on a central action log
1.12	Service Area Practice and Performance Groups decisions (PPG)	Assistant Directors	Recorded on a central action log

## 2. Legal Status of Children and Young People

Supporting decisions relating to children and young people and their legal status have been reflected in a revised set of core decision making relating to Section 20, Emergency and Child Assessment Orders. A revised set of directions has been provided to ensure that the appropriate decision making has been reflected in the arrangements for Secure Accommodation and the right of appeal to a court decision.

2) Decisions relating to Legal Status of Children and Young People			
ID	Decision taken on behalf of Child and Young Person	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
2.1	Emergency Accommodation of a child following Police Protection, or as a result of an Emergency Protection Order, or remand into care, or the accommodation of a child with no one with parental responsibility and no one to care for them.	Directors / Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Out of Hours: Service Managers or Assistant Director designated as senior manager on call between 5pm and 9am and at weekends and Bank Holidays – <b>decision must be clearly recorded on the child's record.</b> Must go to next Care Episode Panel
2.2	Accommodation under Section 20 Children Act 1989	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Notification to the Director of Children's Social Care and must go to next Care Episode Panel
2.3	Application for an Emergency Protection Order	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Notification to the Director of Children's Social Care and must go to next Care Episode Panel
2.4	Application for a Child Assessment Order	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Notification to the Director of Children's Social Care and must go to next Care Episode Panel
2.5	Approval for Initiating Care Proceedings	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Notification to the Director of Children's Social Care and must go to next Legal Gateway

## 2) Decisions relating to Legal Status of Children and Young People

ID	Decision taken on behalf of Child and Young Person	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
2.6	Appointment of Counsel in court proceedings	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Legal Gateway
2.7	Instruction of Counsel, including experts' witnesses	Service Manager (Children's Social Care)	Legal Gateway
2.8	Decision to revoke a Care Order	Director of Children's Social Care	Care Episode Panel
2.9	Decision to apply for Secure Accommodation	Strategic Director of Children's Services	Care Episode Panel
2.10	Decision to use secure accommodation without the authorisation of a court (up to 72 hours in aggregate over a 28-day period).	Strategic Director of Children's Services	Care Episode Panel
2.11	Appeal to the Court against a decision	Director of Children's Social Care	Legal Gateway
2.12	Authority to apply to a Court for discharge or variation of a Supervision Order	Director of Children's Social Care	Legal Gateway
2.13	Authority to apply to a Court for the discharge of an Order committing a child to the care of the Council	Director of Children's Social Care	Legal Gateway
2.14	Authority to apply for a Placement Order	Director of Children's Social Care / Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	Legal Gateway



### 3. Children in need of help and protection

Team Managers are the first line of management regarding making core decisions on the areas of social work practice covering Section 17, and 47 enquiries, ICPC, Decisions to close CIN and CP Plans, Strategy Meetings and Care Plans.

3) Children in need of help and protection			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
3.1	Decision to hold strategy meeting.	Team Manager	
3.2	Authorisation of S17 support plans up to £100	Team Manager	
3.3	Authorisation of S17 support plans up to £250 in any one case/family	Service Manager	
3.4	Authorisation of S17 support plans up to £2,000	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	
3.5	Authorisation of S17 support plans in excess of £2,000	Director of Children's Social Care	
3.6	Initiate Section 47 Child Protection enquiries including direct work with the family.	Team Manager	
3.7	Conclude Section 47 enquiries.	Team Manager	
3.8	Decision to convene an Initial Child Protection Conference.	Team Manager	
3.9	Decision to cease CIN Plan for a child who is in need	Service Manager	
3.10	Decision to end CP Plan for a child subject to a Child Protection Plan	CP Chair / Team Manager for the child	
3.11	Authorisation to cancel ICPC conference	Assistant Director / Director PPP	

### 3) Children in need of help and protection

ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
3.12	Signing off and approval of Child and Family Assessments	Team Manager	
3.13	Agreeing legal advice or Legal Planning Meeting	Service Manager	

## 4. Consent Decisions relating to Children in Care

Senior Leaders are permitted to authorise and ensure the appropriateness and consents relating to Children in Care which have significant personal and financial impact on the outcomes of young people. Assistant Directors have been provided the delegated authority to oversee requests regarding a person's identity and right to associate with a name. Assistant Directors also have final sign off in relation passport applications, living independently and going home arrangements.

4) Consent decisions relating to children in care			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
4.1	Sign Passport Applications as person with parental responsibility.	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	
4.2	Consent to support a young person on a Care Order changing their name.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.3	Consent to join the Armed Forces.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.5	Consent for 16 or 17-year-old on a Care Order to live independently.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.6	Authorisation to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who are being placed for adoption	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.7	Authorisation to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who are going home or going to live with family or friends.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.8	Authorisation of the support plan where a child is to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who are subject to special guardianship or child arrangement orders.	Director of Children's Social Care	

4) Consent decisions relating to children in care			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
4.9	Authorisation to cease being looked after for young people aged 16 & 17.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.10	Young person continues to be accommodated after their 18th birthday where in residential provision.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.11	Young person remains in an extended foster placement or a formal 'Staying Put' arrangement.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.12	Consent to routine planned health assessments or treatment for looked after children where the Local Authority has parental responsibility.	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	
4.13	Consent to common (age-related) health remedies including non-prescription drugs such as ibuprofen and paracetamol.	Team Manager	
4.14	Consent to health assessments, treatment or other interventions including general anaesthetic for a child on a care order where the parent is in agreement.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.15	Consent to health assessments, treatment or other interventions including general anaesthetic for a child on a care order.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.16	Consent to medical interventions to deal with life threatening situations.	Strategic Director of Children's Services	
4.17	Approvals where there is a high risk associated with medical treatment or procedure and this is a planned intervention.	Strategic Director of Children's Services	
4.18	Consent to medical interventions to deal with life	Strategic Director of Children's	

4) Consent decisions relating to children in care			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
	threatening situations or where there is a high risk associated with the treatment or procedure where the parent or other persons with parental responsibility oppose the intervention.	Services	
4.19	Acting as a corporate parent for children subject to care orders for the purposes of assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983 & 2007	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	
4.20	Decisions about contact arrangements that may involve birth family and extended family relationships	Team Manager	
4.21	Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to go on holiday with school or other agency	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	
4.22	Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to have an overnight stay with friends, relatives or temporary carers	Service Manager	
4.23	Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to travel abroad with Foster Carers	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	Where this is in term time, consultation must take place with Virtual School Head
4.24	Authority to give consent to a child taking contraception when they are looked after by the authority and are subject to a care order.	Assistant Directors (Children's Social Care)	
4.25	Authority to give consent to a child having a pregnancy terminated, when they are looked after by the authority and are subject to a care order.	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.26	Agreement that long-term fostering is the plan for the child through permanence planning.	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	

4) Consent decisions relating to children in care			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
4.27	Special Guardianship Support Plan Approval	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
4.28	Adoption Support Plan Approval	Director of Children's Social Care	
4.29	Authorisation of Pathway Plan	Team Manager	
4.30	Authorisation of the Permanence Plan for a looked after child	Assistant Director Safeguarding / Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	

## 5. Fostering and Adoption Agency decisions

Structural decision making relating to Fostering and Adoption is recorded in the table below. These are the statutory functions contained within the LA decision making abilities. A Further Scheme of Delegation information relation to the role of the RAA is recorded in their localised agreement between the LA and the RAA. The Agency Decision Maker for Lambeth is the Director of Children's Social Care with the Assistant Director Corporate Parenting deputising where required.

5) Fostering and Adoption Agency Decisions			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
5.1	Approval of new Foster Carers	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.2	Approval of Foster Carers following first annual review	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.3	Continued approval of foster carers following subsequent reviews (unless referred to Fostering Panel)	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.4	Authorise emergency placements out of the foster carer's terms of approval	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.5	Permanent change of approval	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.6	Temporary Approval of Foster carers (Regulation 24)	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.7	Approving adopters as Foster to Adopt carers	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.8	Termination of Foster Carers Approval	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.9	Approval of new Adopters	Director of Children's Social Care	Regional Adoption Agency
5.10	Approval of the plan for a child to be adopted	Director of Children's Social Care	

## 5) Fostering and Adoption Agency Decisions

ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
5.11	Approval of the match between a child and adopters	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.12	Revocation of a plan for a child to be adopted	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.13	Decision to pay an adoption allowance or lump sum payment	Director of Children's Social Care	
5.14	Review of adopter's approval (unless review at panel)	Strategic Director of Children's Services	Regional Adoption Agency
5.15	Revocation of adopters' approval	Strategic Director of Children's Services	Regional Adoption Agency
5.16	Long-term fostering Approval	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.17	Approval of private fostering assessment	Team Manager / Service Manager Assessment	
5.18	Authorisation of a Private Fostering Placement	Service Manager Assessment / Assistant Director Early Help, Access and Assessment	
5.19	Imposing requirements on Private Foster Carers	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.20	Prohibition of someone acting as a private foster carer	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
5.21	Authorisation to the appointment to the Central List of Fostering Panel members	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	



## 6. Placement Decisions

The below tables set out the approval and directions of placement decisions within the Local Authority. These decisions require board approval through the access to resource panel and must be formally recorded in the minutes of the board and on the child's case file.

6) Placements Decisions			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
6.1	Agreement to place in external residential care	Director of Children's Social Care	
6.2	Agreement to place with an Independent Fostering Agency	Director of Children's Social Care	
6.3	Agreement to placement with parents	Director of Children's Social Care	Placement with Parents Panel
6.4	Family and Friends – Regulation 24 approvals	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	Reg 24 Panel
6.5	Placed for Adoption approvals	Director of Children's Social Care	
6.6	Agreement to a placement move	Director of Children's Social Care	
6.7	Emergency Accommodation Provisions Approval	Director of Children's Social Care	
6.8	Approval for placement outside of 20 mile LA Boundary	Director of Children's Social Care	
6.9	Approval for placement of a Child Looked After outside England and Wales	Strategic Director of Children's Services	
6.10	Approval of a change in placement affecting a child looked after in Key Stage 4 of Education	Director of Children's Social Care	Care Entry Panel

## 7. Notifications

The table below sets out responsibilities for notifications to Ofsted or the Secretary of State. In all cases where there is notification to Ofsted or the Secretary of State, the Director of Children's Services and the Strategic Director of Children's Services must be informed.

7) Notifications			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
7.1	Notification of a death or serious injury to a child	Assistant Director Quality Assurance	AD for QA will notify Director and Strategic Director and will submit notification to Ofsted /Secretary of State.
7.2	Notification of a serious incident under <a href="#">Schedule 7</a> of The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (children in fostering placements)	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting / Assistant Director Quality Assurance	AD for QA will notify Director and Strategic Director and will submit notification to Ofsted /Secretary of State.
7.3	Notifications that a child from another authority is placed in the area	Assistant Director Quality Assurance / Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	
7.4	Notification to another area that a Child Looked After from Lambeth is to be placed in their area	Service Manager	
7.5	Notification that a child is missing	Team Manager	TM to escalate as appropriate to their SM / AD who will notify the DCS
7.6	Notification that a child is or is suspected of being a victim of child sexual exploitation	Team Manager	TM to escalate as appropriate to their SM / AD who will notify the DCSC
7.7	Notification that a looked after child is permanently excluded from school	Team Manager	TM to escalate as appropriate to their SM / AD who will notify the DCSC and DCE&L

## 7) Notifications

ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
7.8	Notification that a member of the children's workforce staff, carer or volunteer has been subject to an allegation	Assistant Director Quality Assurance	Will notify DCSC / Strategic Director

## 8. Additional

This table highlights additional decisions that are not contained within the main body of this document.

8) Additional			
ID	Decision	Delegated to:	How Managed / Children's Social Care Procedure / Policies
8.1	Giving authority for research projects involving service users	Strategic Director Children's Services	