



Buckinghamshire Children's Social Care Scheme of Delegation

Last update: September 2024

For review: September 2025



Introduction

This Scheme of Delegation sets out who has the authority to make decisions on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council's Children's Social Care. 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.

Legal decisions

ID	Decision	Delegated to:
1.1	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	Head of Service
1.2	Accommodation under Section 20 Children Act 1989	Head of Service
1.3	Application for an Emergency Protection Order	Head of Service
1.4	Application for a Child Assessment Order	Head of Service
1.5	Initiating Care Proceedings	Head of Service
1.6	Appointment of Counsel in court proceedings	Head of Service
1.7	Instruction of Counsel, including expert witnesses	Head of Service
1.8	Decision to revoke a Care Order	Head of Service
1.9	Decision to apply for Secure Accommodation	Service Director
1.10	Decision to use secure accommodation without the authorisation of a court (up to 72 hours in aggregate over a 28-day period).	Corporate Director / Service Director
1.11	Appeal to the Court against a decision	Service Director
1.12	Authority to apply to a Court for discharge or variation of a Supervision Order	Head of Service
1.13	Authority to apply to a Court for the discharge of an Order committing a child to the care of the Council	Head of Service
1.14	Decision making in the event a legally compliant placement has not been identified	Service Director
1.15	Authority to approve initial care plan within care proceedings	Team Manager

1.16	Authority to approve final care plan within care proceedings	Head of Service
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Children in need of help and protection

ID	Decision	Delegated to:
2.1	Decision to hold strategy meeting	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
2.2	Initiate Section 47 Child Protection enquiries including direct work with the family	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
2.3	Conclude Section 47 enquiries	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
2.4	Decision to convene an Initial Child Protection Conference	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
2.5	Decision to cease CIN Plan	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
2.6	Decision to end CP Plan	Child Protection Adviser
2.7	Signing off Child and Family assessment and care plan	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
2.8	Agreement to a legal planning meeting and subsequent legal advice	Team Manager
2.9	Agreement to commission private independent assessments	Head of Service
2.10	Decision to cease an Early Help episode	Early Help Assistant Team Manager
2.11	Signing off an Early Help assessment and care plan	Early Help Assistant Team Manager

Consent decisions relating to children in care

Note: the views of child, parent, carer and Independent Reviewing Officer must always be considered in making consent decisions.

ID	Decision	Delegated to:
3.1	Sign Passport Applications as person with parental responsibility	Head of Service
3.2	Consent to support a young person on a Care Order to legally change their name	Service Director
3.3	Consent to join the Armed Forces	Service Director
3.4	Consent for 16- or 17-year-old on a Care Order to live independently	Service Director
3.5	Authorisation to cease being looked after for children (aged 0-15 who have been in care over 20 days) who is being placed for adoption	Service Director
3.6	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	Service Director
3.7	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	Head of Service
3.8	Authorisation to cease being looked after for young people aged 16 & 17 within a S20 arrangement	Service Director
3.9	Young person continues to be accommodated after their 18th birthday where in residential provision	Service Director / Head of Children's Care Services
3.10	Young person remains in an extended foster placement or a formal 'Staying Put' arrangement	Head of Children's Care Services
3.11	Consent to routine planned health assessments or treatment for looked after children where the Local Authority has parental responsibility	Head of Service
3.12	Consent to health assessments, treatment or other interventions including general anaesthetic for a child on a care order (parental agreement is preferable).	Head of Service

3.13	Consent to medical interventions to deal with life threatening situations	Corporate Director / Service Director
3.14	Where there is a high risk associated with medical treatment or procedure and this is a planned intervention	Corporate Director / Service Director
3.15	Consent to medical interventions to deal with life 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	Corporate Director / Service Director
3.16	Acting as a parent for children subject to care orders for the purposes of assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983 & 2007	Head of Service
3.17	Decisions about contact arrangements	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
3.18	Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to go on holiday with school or another agency	Head of Service
3.19	Authority to give consent for a child who is looked after by the authority to travel abroad with Foster Carers	Head of Service
3.20	Authority to give consent to a child having a pregnancy terminated, when they are looked after by the authority	Service Director
3.21	Authority to give consent to the piercing of a child looked after by the local authority	Head of Service
3.22	Authority to give consent to a child looked after by the local authority who wishes to engage in an extreme and/or dangerous sporting activity	Head of Service
3.23	Agreement that long term fostering is the plan for the child	Service Director / Head of Service
3.24	Special Guardianship Support Plan	Service Director / Head of Children's Care Services
3.25	Adoption Support Plan	Service Director / Head of Children's Care Services

Fostering and Adoption Agency Decisions

ID	Decision	Delegated to:
4.1	Approval of new Foster Carers	Agency Decision Maker
4.2	Approval of Foster Carers following first annual review	Agency Decision Maker
4.3	Continued approval of foster carers following subsequent reviews (unless referred to Fostering Panel)	Head of Children's Care Services
4.4	Authorise emergency placements out of the foster carers' terms of approval	Head of Children's Care Services
4.5	Permanent change of approval	Head of Children's Care Services
4.6	Temporary approval of foster carers (Regulation 24)	Head of Children's Care Services
4.7	Approving adopters as foster to adopt carers	Agency Decision Maker
4.8	Termination of foster carers approval	Agency Decision Maker
4.9	Approval of new adopters	Agency Decision Maker
4.10	Approval of the plan for a child to be adopted	Agency Decision Maker
4.11	Approval of a match between a child and adopters	Agency Decision Maker
4.12	Revocation of the plan for a child to be adopted	Agency Decision Maker
4.13	Decision to pay an adoption allowance or lump sum payment	Head of Children's Care Services
4.14	Review of adopter's approval (unless review at panel)	Agency Decision Maker
4.15	Revocation of adopters' approval	Agency Decision Maker
4.16	Long-term fostering for children under the age of 8	Agency Decision Maker / Head of Children's Care Services

Placement Decisions

ID	Decision	Delegated to:
5.1	Agreement to place in external residential care	Service Director / Head of Children's Care Services
5.2	Agreement to place with an Independent Fostering Agency	Service Director / Head of Children's Care Services
5.3	Agreement to place within in house residential care	Registered Home Manager
5.4	Agreement to placement with parents	Service Director
5.5	Family and Friends – Regulation 24	Head of Children's Care Services / Nominated Officer
5.6	Placed for Adoption	Head of Service
5.7	Agreement to a placement move	Head of Service
5.8	Emergency accommodation	Head of Service
5.9	Decision making in the event a legally compliant placement has not been identified	Service Director