

MANAGEMENT ACTION NOTE 15

CV-19 Business Continuity Planning; Making Every Contact Count.

Context

The impact of CV-19 and associated difficulties with the recruitment of agency staff have led to staffing levels being critically impacted in some children's social care teams. As a result, a response plan has been agreed by CSLT to ensure children and young people are seen and supported in line with their identified needs.

Agreement has been given to some flexibility from agreed practice standards relating to visiting vulnerable children in specific circumstances to ensure the most vulnerable children, young people and families are prioritised for face to face visiting by Social Workers, and to ensure that visiting in these cases is meaningful and enables planned work to progress in line with the child's established plan. Arrangements will be made to return to 'business-as-usual' expectations as soon as staffing levels allow.

Flexibility can be considered only for children identified as being at low level of current risk, with a 'Green' RAG rating agreed through their current risk assessment as set out in the VTT (Vulnerability Tracking Tool).

The agreed VTT practice standard is:

Red: Weekly face to face visits minimum
Amber: Fortnightly, face to face visits minimum
Green: Six weekly face to face visits minimum.

Some children/young people assessed as 'green' will need to continue to be seen by a Social Worker at least monthly as the level of risk or concern is significant

For a fixed period of time, agreement is given to; some children/young people assessed as 'green' being seen virtually, some children/young people to be seen less frequently than existing expectations and for some children/young people to be seen by professionals other than the social worker.

The initial VTT has been revised in Eclipse to incorporate the risk assessment, so there is no longer a need to upload the separate word document. This will be **live from Monday 15th February**.

At the next review, in **ALL** cases (Red, Amber and Green) a revised initial VTT will need to be completed in order to trigger a review VTT into the child's worklist appropriately.

Once you have completed the new **initial** VTT, you will not have to re-do an initial VTT again regardless of whether circumstances or RAG change as the **review** VTT will pull the current RAG rating from the most recent initial VTT

The Social Worker will be required to review the RAG rating and update the latest **review** VTT whenever circumstances change and at least on a six-weekly basis for all children/young people identified as 'Green.'

Some children/young people assessed as 'green' are likely to continue to need to be seen by a Social Worker/PA face to face given the complexity of their circumstances. Examples include:

- Children/young people who have recently been stepped down from a 'red' or 'amber' RAG rating from the VTT.
- All children on child protection plans.
- Children not in school.
- Children in need on the edge of there being safeguarding concerns Children.
- Children/young people on the edge of care.
- Children/young people involved in exploitation.
- Children in care at risk of placement breakdown.
- Children placed at home on placement with parent regs.
- Children in Reg 24 placements.
- Care leavers in unsuitable accommodation.
- Care leavers engaging in risk taking behaviour.
- Children who go missing repeatedly.

Some examples of children/young people assessed as 'green' suitable for virtual visiting by a Social Worker/PA or where the visit could be undertaken by a non-social work professional. Examples include;

- Children/Young People who are CIN and due to step down to Early Help or to close in the next 3 months.
- Children in need who access short breaks where there are no concerns about significant harm.
- Children in need who are attending school and where there are no concerns about possible risk.
- Children in care in stable long-term matched placements who are attending school.
- Children in suitable and stable placements, not yet matched but SW assured the Child/YP has an established relationship with their carer and other professionals.
- Care leavers in suitable accommodation who agree to alternative visiting arrangements.
- Care leavers who are in suitable accommodation and have an established relationship with another professional.

Process for determining how a child/young person will be seen, how frequently and who by:

For all children assessed as 'green', each Team Manager will:

- Check updated risk assessment and authorise VTT 6 weekly.
- Confirm on the Teams tracker those children/young people who will continue to be seen by a SW/PA six weekly.
- Confirm on the Teams tracker which children/young people will continue to be seen by a Social Worker/PA but where the visit will be virtual.

- Confirm on the Teams tracker which children/young people will be seen by other social care professionals. e.g: FP, Contact Worker/PAs/Student Social Workers, Supervising Social Workers, Reach, Adoption, Fostering, Adults, Support and Advice, Family Practitioners, Edge of care, Schools Social Workers.
- Confirm on the Teams tracker with children and young people will be seen by non-social work professionals. E.g. School, Health, IDVA, YOT, Y-Smart, EH Childrens Centre, Youth Intervention, Family Intervention, Probation, other.
- The tracker will highlight the date of each visit due 7 working days before visit is due.

The process social workers & Business Support will undertake:

- **Step 1;** Virtual visits by the social worker will still be completed on forms by Social Worker as normal.
- **Step 2;** Business Support will alert other professionals who have agreed to see children of visits due date 14 days before due date.
- **Step 3;** If partner agencies have not responded by 3 working days before the visit is due, Business support will follow up with the partner agency.
- **Step 4;** If a partner agency is undertaking the visit in the home or seeing the child/young person in a different setting they will be requested to return a record of the visit within 24 hours.
- **Step 5;** The email address the professional will send the record of visit to is makeeverycontactcount-mailbox@devon.gov.uk.
- **Step 6;** If the completed visit form is not received from professionals then Business Support will send out an email to follow up request for completed visit form, the day after the form was due.
- **Step 7;** Once the visit form has been received from non-Social Work professionals, Business Support will send a copy to the Social Worker.
- **Step 8;** The Social Worker will review the visit form completed by professional and consider whether there's significant information from the visit to indicate that risk level has changed, and the RAG status needs to be updated and recorded using the VTT.
- **Step 9;** Team Managers will authorise the VTT.
- **Step 10;** Business Support will attach the completed visit form into an Eclipse visit form and ensure that all mandatory information is completed - See additional guidance.

Actions Agreed	Manager Responsible	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An up-to-date Risk Assessment will be in place for all children and young people. b) For all children and young people identified as 'green' managers will confirm how often the child/young person will need to be seen, how often and who by. c) All Green RAG rated children will have an updated review VTT authorised when circumstances change, at least six weekly. 	Team Manager	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An up-to-date Risk Assessment will be in place for all children and young people. b) Review all completed visit forms by other professionals and assess if RAG remains green. c) Complete visit forms for all virtual visits. d) Update review VTT when circumstances change, at least 6 weekly for all Green RAG cases. 	Social Workers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Send emails to partners as per guidelines for visits and form completion. b) Upload professional visit forms into the Eclipse visit form on the child / young person's record. c) Follow up forms from professionals if not received 3 days of visit due date. 	Business Support	

Rachel Gillott

Acting Head of Children's Social Care (Deputy Chief Officer)
Children's Services

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