

## **Achieving Early Permanence Panel Terms of Reference**

Permanence means:

***To ensure that children have a secure, stable and loving family to support them through childhood and beyond and to give them a sense of security, continuity, commitment, identity and belonging.***

Permanence starts with the first conversation with a family and ends when a child and their family can function independent of statutory intervention.

The Achieving Early Permanence Panel is a central point for operational leadership oversight and tracking of permanence of ***all*** children who are looked after. The AEP provides support, identify gaps and prevent delay during concurrent planning for all children in care. Children must be re-referred when forever homes break down.

AEP will then feed into the Permanence Monitoring Meeting which provides a strategic overview over interface with the Regional Adoption Agency and Dudley MBC.

### **Aims**

The Achieving Early Permanence Panel have three overarching aims:

1. To track pre-birth concurrent planning for unborn babies whose parents had previous children permanently removed from their care.
2. To track all new children who enter care (without an immediate reunification plan), to track concurrent permanence planning: reunification, connected people (care), special guardianship, mainstream foster care or adoption.
3. To track all children who experience delay in permanence following final order:
  - The child cannot be linked or matched with the forever home
  - The child's forever home broke down following failed placement stability intervention.
  - Revocation of Care or Placement Orders.
4. To report on Dudley's performance in progressing permanence for children.
5. To identify and escalate any barriers to permanence via the Performance Monitoring Pane.
6. To ensure best practice, through guidance, challenge and role-modelling.

### **Panel Membership**

The membership consists of operational leaders across all services. Where specific gaps in services are identified as a theme, different agencies can be invited into the panel, i.e. Health, Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Virtual School, etc.

- Service Manager Fostering and Adoption – Chair
- Service Manager Children in Care and Care Leavers – Vice Chair

- Service Manager Court Team and Care management
- Service Manager for safeguarding and review
- Court Progression Manager
- Fostering Panel advisor.
- Achieving Early Permanence Panel Administrator

### **Accountability**

The Panel is accountable to the Permanence Monitoring Meeting through formal quarterly reporting to the Service Director for Children.

### **Panel Process**

- The Child Permanence Meeting Minutes/Report will serve as the guiding document for the panel.
- Panel paperwork and agenda will be available for panel members from 12 o'clock on a Thursday prior to Mondays Panel. **(O:\Childrens Services\Children's Specialist Services\Achieving Early Permanence Panel)**
- Panel members are required to access agenda items and associated documentation in preparation of Panel; they are expected to bring any prior knowledge from their role or service area to aid discussions.
- A written record of the case discussion and actions for each child will be taken by the Panel Administrator and will be stored in the 'Achieving Early Permanence Panel' folder
- The Panel Administrator will ensure that a copy of the case discussion and actions are uploaded to the child's file in LCS following agreement of the Minutes at Panel.

<https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms1/media/10918/child-permanence-meeting-agenda.docx>