

SOCIAL WORK TEAMS – ‘KEY’ PROCESSES BEFORE SEEKING TO PLACE A CHILD

It is essential that considerations are given regarding the needs of the child or young person, against the right placement type and support offers. Given this, completing all the placement processes is important to ensure that any child requiring a placement, will gain a suitable placement that is safe and that can meet their needs.

However, there are some ‘Key’ processes which supports decisive and safe decision-making that **always** must be prioritised and adhered to at all times. However, these ‘Key’ processes **do not negate** the full placement processes required from being completed.

Before any child should be placed the following ‘Key’ processes must have been completed:

Completing the Referral Form / Placing Children out of Dudley Template (OOA):

- Complete the form/template honestly, fairly and balanced, showing strengths and weaknesses and what we hope for the child: child-centred thinking is required.
- Risks such as Self-harming, CCE, CSE etc state how they are currently being managed and once in a provision what supports will they require
- Carefully consider the Pen Picture for the child and how this will be read by providers, showing them the child’s journey empathically.
- The referral should not read like a chronology of events in the child’s life or journey through the social care system.
- Analysis - what is hoped to be achieved for the child during the placement period.
- Anonymise the referral i.e. initials or system ID number.
- Team Managers **must QA the forms** before they are sent onto the Placements Team and evidence this action having been completed on the form.
- The completed referral form must be recorded and uploaded onto the child’s LCS file.

Placement Referrals – Needs Graded & Timescales:

- **Red** Emergency placement **required today**
- **Amber** Placement required within next 1 – 7 days
- **Green** Placement required within next 7+ days
- Email subject heading to the Placements Team should state: **Placement Request...** (then followed by Red, Amber or Green)

Matching a child to the most appropriate placement:

- Read through the Placement offers against the referral form and what you know about the child, taking full regard to the child’s needs, such as mental health and what supports the child will need once in the placement and how these will need to be managed.
- Go back to the placement team if there are gaps, don’t just assume or go ahead because of time restrictions.
- Asking the right questions of the carer/provider such as who else is in the placement and do they match with the child to be placed.
- Best Practice is to take the child and young person to view the placement before placing.

‘Key’ Placement Processes

- Service Provider Response (SPR) forms are sent to the social work team (the social worker can speak with provider, but not given a reply regarding accepting/not accepting the placement).
- SPR to be read in full, considering the needs of the child against the experience and ability of the care being offered. Once a provider has been chosen, the social work team are to come back to Placement Officer with their rationale and **not to the provider**.
- Only take the child or young person to visit a placement, after the Placements Team have received the full provider offer back and have been given permission to place.
- Gain permission to place – no child should be placed without authorisation.
- Notify Placement Team when the child is placed.

Ensure all approvals are in place before a child is placed

- HOS or higher approval is gained before placing a child/young person or occurring costs via care planning.
- Cases are to be presented at ARP and to be returned to ARP for any changes in costing for care planning.
- DCS approval (can be delegated) is required to place a child outside of Dudley MBC.