

The Care Plan

In all circumstances where a decision is made to look after a child, the child must have a Care Plan completed by the social worker and signed by the relevant team manager and Group Manager, the contents of which include:

- The child's Placement Plan (setting out why the placement was chosen and how the placement will contribute to meeting the child's needs);
- The child's Permanence Plan (setting out the long term plans for the child's upbringing including timescales, to be agreed at the second Looked After review);
- The Pathway Plan (where appropriate, for young people leaving care);
- The child's Health Assessment (within 20 working days of the placement);
- The child's Personal Education Plan (within 10 working days);
- The contingency plan;
- The date of the child's first Looked After Review (within 20 working days);
- The name of the Independent Reviewing Officer.

Note: The Care Plan must identify if there is reason to believe that the child is a victim of trafficking, or is an unaccompanied asylum seeker and has applied for, or intends to apply for, asylum.

The Care Plan Where the Matter is Before the Court

In addition to the above, a Care Plan should reflect that the court is required under s. 8 Children and Social Work Act 2017 to consider the 'permanence provisions' of the Care Plan for the child:

- a. The provisions setting out the long-term plan for the upbringing of the child - to live with a parent/family member/family friend; adoption; or other long-term care; and
- b. The plan's provisions in relation to any of the following:
 - i. The impact on the child concerned of any harm that he or she suffered or was likely to suffer;
 - ii. The current and future needs of the child (including needs arising out of that impact);
 - iii. The way in which the long-term plan for the upbringing of the child would meet those current and future needs.

The Care Plan - Process

Where there is no recent Assessment in relation to the child, the Care Plan must provide for an Assessment to be completed.

The child's social worker is responsible for drawing up and updating the Care Plan in consultation with:

- a. The child;
- b. The child's parents and those with Parenting Responsibility;
- c. Anyone who is not a parent but has been caring for or looking after the child;
- d. Other members of the child's family network who are significant to the child;
- e. The child's school or the education service;
- f. The relevant health trust;
- g. The Youth Justice Service, if the child is known to them;
- h. Any other agency involved with the child's care.

The social worker should ensure that the child, those with Parental Responsibility and the carer understand the Care Plan and their role in contributing to its implementation.

One of the key functions of the Care Plan is to ensure that each child has a Permanence Plan by the time of the second Child in Care Review. The Care Plan should be updated for each Child in Care review, where it will be reviewed – see [Looked After Procedures](#)

The Care Plan should include the arrangements made to meet the child's needs in relation to his or her:

- Emotional and behavioural development;
- The child's identity in relation to religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background;
- Family and social relationships; arrangements for contact with sibling(s) accommodated by the authority or another local authority; details of any Section * Order, in relation to a Looked After Child; details of any order in relation to contact with a child in care; arrangements for contact with parents/anyone with Parental Responsibility / any other Connected Person; arrangements for the appointment of an Independent Visitor for a Looked After Child;
- Social presentation;
- Self-care skills.

See the **All About Me/ Care Plan Template**

Timescale for Completion

A Care Plan must be prepared prior to a child's first placement or, if it is not practicable to do so, within 10 working days of the child being placed.

Approval of the Care Plan

Any Care Plan taken before the Court within Care Proceedings must be endorsed and signed by a Group Manager.

All other Care Plans must be endorsed and signed by the social worker's Team Manager.

Circulation of the Care plan

The Care Plan must be circulated to the following people:

- The child, where age appropriate;
- The parent(s);
- Providers/Carers - if no Care Plan has been drawn up prior to the child's placement, the social worker must ensure that the providers/carers understand the key objectives of the plan, and how the placement will help achieve these objectives.
- The child's Independent Reviewing Officer

Other Required Plans, Documentation and Actions

Placement Plan

The child must have a Placement Plan at the time of the placement (this includes the parent's consent to the placement (if applicable) and the child's medical treatment). It should be completed as far as possible before the child is placed or, if not reasonably practicable, within 5 working days of the start of the placement.

The information to be included in the Placement Plan will include:

1. How on a day-to-day basis the child will be cared for and the child's welfare will be safeguarded and promoted by the appropriate person;
2. Any arrangements for contact between the child and parents/anyone with Parental Responsibility/any other connected person, including, if appropriate, reasons why contact is not reasonably practicable or not consistent with the child's welfare; details of any Contact Order (under Section 8 or 34 of the Children Act 1989); the arrangements for notifying any changes in contact arrangements;
3. Arrangements for the child's health (physical, emotional and mental) and dental care, including the name and address of registered medical and dental practitioners; arrangements for giving/withholding consent to medical/dental examination/treatment;
4. Arrangements for the child's education and training, including the name and address of the child's school/other educational institution/provider and designated teacher; the Local Authority maintaining any Education, Health and Care Plan;
5. The arrangements for and frequency of visits by the child's social worker; and for advice, support and assistance between visits;
6. If an Independent Visitor is appointed, the arrangements for them to visit the child;
7. The circumstances in which the placement may be terminated;
8. The name and contact details of the Independent Reviewing Officer, the Independent Visitor if one is appointed, the social worker who will be visiting the child, and the Personal Adviser for an Eligible Young Person.

The Placement Plan will be recorded on the child's electronic file on Mosaic.

Copies of the Placement Plan must be provided to the child (if of sufficient age and understanding), the parents and must be handed to the residential staff/carers before the

child is placed. Where a child is placed in an in-house foster placement, the Fostering Team will have access to the copy on Mosaic but a copy should be provided to the Foster Carers.

At the time of the placement, the carers/residential staff should also be given any additional information about details of the child's day to day needs which are not covered by the Placement Plan or Referral but, are important to ensure that the carers/staff are in the best possible position to help the child settle in the new placement, for example any particular fears at night-time or the child's favourite toys.

Chronology

Whenever a new placement is made or the child moves placement, the child's Chronology should be updated.

Arrangement of first Looked After Review

The child's social worker must notify the Independent Review Unit of the placement within two working days of the child becoming looked after, so that the necessary arrangements for the allocation of an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) (within 5 working days of the child coming into care wherever possible) and the child's first Child in Care Review can be arranged. See the [Looked After Reviews Procedure](#) for the procedures relating to reviews, including the responsibility for invitations to reviews.

Health Care

Before or at the time of the placement, the social worker should request the parent to transfer the child's personal child health record. Where this is lost or not available, the social worker should ask for a replacement to be issued and ask the Designated Nurse for LAC to assist with providing any information to complete the record.

The social worker should also contact the Designated Nurse for LAC to arrange a Health Care Assessment before the placement or, if not reasonably practicable before the first Looked After Review (i.e. within 20 working days of the placement) so that the completion of a Personal Health Care Plan is in time for the child's first Looked After Review.

In addition, the social worker should inform the carer of any medication the child is taking, and ensure that a supply of medication is provided in a clearly labelled bottle with the child's name, required dosage and the time the medication is to be given.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

The social worker should also liaise with Virtual School and the Designated Teacher so that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) can be completed as part of the Care Plan before the child becomes looked after (or within 10 working days in the case of an emergency placement) and be available in time for the first Looked After Review. See [Looked After Review Procedures \(relating to PEP\)](#)

Changes in Legal Status

Any changes in a child's legal status as a result of court proceedings must be recorded on the child's electronic record (Placement Codes changed on Mosaic).