**Permanence Planning**

**in**

**Family Support & Safeguarding**

Permanence is the long-term plan for how a child is to be cared for throughout their childhood. The objective of planning for permanence is to ensure that children have a secure, stable and loving family to support them through childhood and beyond. The evidence tells us that the earlier permanence is considered the better the outcomes are for children in the long term. With these principles in mind, it is important that we can evidence that we have considered the most effective route to securing permanency for a child or young person at the earliest opportunity. Practice around permanence planning has been explored to understand how confident we are that this is happening at the earliest opportunity for all children and with pace and purpose.

A review of permanency decision making within the Family Support & Safeguarding Service has taken place in June 2023 with:

* Adam Shepherd - Head Family Safeguarding
* Helen Dickeson - Deputy City Solicitor
* Karolyn Lake - Service Leader - Central 2, FS&S
* Chantelle Lemmon - Team leader, North, FS&S
* Julie Errington - Team leader, Adoption
* Scott Kirby-Carter - MOSAIC Team

In Dec 2022 it was identified, through quality assurance and data scrutiny, there were a cohort of 24 children under the age of 5 subject to full care orders. A report was prepared to understand what this may represent in terms of permanence. In addition, the report to the performance overview board in April 2023 detailed data that Portsmouth City Council was an outlier within the Regional Adoption Agency for the number of children being considered for adoption and the numbers of children having adoption secured as a permanence plan.

We need to be confident that our permanence planning process is ambitious in our planning for all children unable to return to their birth families which should include children that are considered harder to place such as older children and those within sibling groups.

* **Permanence discussion planning process:**

When families are presented to Legal Gateway and agreement is given to issue care proceedings, an action from this is to return in 6 weeks, for a recorded permanence plan discussion.

The Social Worker will complete the permanence plan discussion workflow and send to legal Gateway administrator 24 hours prior to the booked discussion.

**Permanence Planning and Discussion**

**Permanence Planning**

Details of all subject child(ren)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **DOB/ EDD** | **Gender** | **Address** | **Ethnicity** | **Sub-ethnicity** | **Specific Needs** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Child's Needs and Experiences

Significant adults who may be carers

Details of parallel planning

Reunification considerations

**Placement Option - 0**

**Proposed Care Plan and Placement Options**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Placement Option** | **Strengths** | **Risks** | **Outline support** |
|  |  |  |  |

Impact analysis of placement option

**Proposed Contact Framework**

Brief rationale for the proposed contact plan

**The Contact Plan**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Who contact is with and relationship to the child** | **Level of support/supervision required** | **Frequency and duration** |
|  |  |  |

**Views of family and interested parties**

Child(ren)

Parent(s)

Significant adults who may be carers

IRO / Core Group

Support Offered / Work Already Completed

**Permanence Discussion**

**Attendees**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Relationship / job title** | **Contact details** |
|  |  |  |

Date and time of meeting

Permanence discussion and rationale for decision

Legal advice

Re-unification

SGO

Long-term fostering

Adoption

**∨**

Permanence Planning Decision

Senior Manager Signature 🞏

When this discussion has taken place, either a clear permanence plan will be agreed or if there are options and we remain parallel planning for adoption and assessment of family / connected carers - then there will be an agreed date to return.

Legal gateway will also review all Final Care Plans prior to filing. The Social Worker will submit final statement and care Plan to Legal Gateway Administrator 24 hours prior to meeting, allowing at least 48 hours prior to filing with Court. A Head of Service case note will be recorded evidencing rationale of support of care plan or challenge to care plan.

**Return to Legal Gateway with Final Statement & Care Plan at least 48 hours prior to filing**

**Enter PLO**

**Start parallel planning - all children under X**

**FGC (if not already held)**

**Viabilities of relevant connected persons**

**Return to Legal Gateway by week 12**

**Step down from PLO**

**Extend PLO**

**Return to Legal Gateway by week 16**

**Step down from PLO**

**Legal Gateway - agreement to issue proceedings**

**CMH**

**Permanency planning discussion within 6 weeks of agreement to issue**

**Clear permanency plan agreed**

**Option for permanency agreed**

**Return for further permanency planning discussion \***

**Clear permanency plan agreed**

**\* This can happen more than once**

This will support the clear recording of discussions around permanency, to provide clear rationale on MOSAIC as to the decision making for children's permanency

**June 2023**