DARLINGTON Borough Council

CASE TRANSFER PROCESS

Principals of Case Transfer between CAP, CRFT and Assessment and Safeguarding teams

Case transfer arrangements should be based on the following principals:

- **Child Centred**: think child first. Children and their families should experience a minimum number of transitions in receiving our support and service.

- **No Delay**: there can be no delay in providing a service. When a case meets the criteria for transfer it must be accepted regardless of staffing issues.

Please refer to Appendix 1 and 2 for case transfer points between:

- **CAP and the Life Stages 0 – 25 team, and**
- **The Assessment and Safeguarding teams to the Looked After Through Care team (LATC).**

Cases should be considered at the following:

Children's Access Point (CAP) is responsible for reviewing all incoming contacts.

Once a contact meets the threshold for referral, the case will be transferred to the Children's First Response Team (CFRT), all threshold decisions must be made within 24 hours.

Cases which are considered to have met the threshold will have a clear social work analysis including known history on the case. A management decision by the duty manager will articulate the rationale for threshold citing Darlington Continuum of Need (and any other threshold matrix used i.e. CSE, DVRIM).

Children's First Response Team will receive all new cases other than the following:

Private fostering cases and step parent adoptions will transfer directly to the Assessment and Safeguarding teams.

Pre-birth assessments will transfer directly to the Assessment and Safeguarding teams at approximately 18 weeks of gestation. Unless the following circumstances apply WHEN CASES WILL TRANSFER AT FIRST NOTIFICATION:

- Where concerns exist regarding the mother's or father's ability to self care or protect;
- Where alcohol or substance abuse is present and is likely to impact on both the parent(s) and the child;
- Where the expectant parent(s) are very young and a dual assessment of their own needs as well as their ability to meet the baby's needs is required; including young people under 16 for whom there is a risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, trafficked or as a result of non consensual sex;
- Where a previous child in the family has been removed either permanently or on a temporary basis because they have suffered harm or been at risk of suffering significant harm;

- Where a person who has been convicted of an offence against a child or adult, or is believed by child protection professionals to have abused a child, intends to join or has contact with the family;
- Where a person is subject to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) need to be considered;
- Where there are professional safeguarding concerns regarding parenting capacity particularly where the parents have either mental health problems, learning disabilities and difficulties or mental capacity;
- Where the child is believed to be at risk of significant harm due to domestic abuse;
- Where an unborn baby has siblings subject to a Child Protection Plan or previously subject to a Child Protection plan;
- The parent is a Looked After child or has been previously looked after by a local authority;
- Any other concerns that the professional may place the unborn at risk of harm.
- Where there is a sibling link to a case which is currently open to an Assessment and Safeguarding team.
- Children who have been subject to a Child Protection Plan in the previous 2 years, or have been Looked After in the previous 2 years and the threshold for intervention is at the level for social care involvement.
- Those cases that have been open to a Social Worker less than 3 months from the current referral should return to the team responsible for closure.
- Transfer in Child Protection and Child in Need Cases
- Section 7/37 Court requests for reports

Case Transfer Panel

A case transfer panel will oversee all the case transfers between CRFT and the Assessment and Safeguarding teams.

The case transfer panel is held on a weekly basis and will be chaired by a Head of Service.

Membership of the Panel

- Service Managers from both services (CFRT/CAP and A and S)
- Transferring and Receiving Team Manager of delegated deputy

Purpose and Function of the Case Transfer Panel

- The purpose of the case transfer panel is to facilitate the smooth transfer of cases between the two service areas, ensuring Service Manager oversight and conflict resolution at the earliest opportunity during the case transfer stage.

- The case transfer panel will facilitate clarification of ongoing assessment, risks, legal situation, the plan for the child, and the assignment of outstanding tasks and timescales.

- CFRT will ensure all cases meet the minimum standards for transfer including completed assessments, recording of section 47 and Child in Need Plan, LAC documentation, chronology, case notes and supervision notes. **Please refer to Appendix 3 for the case transfer checklist.**

- The electronic case management system must be up to date prior to a transfer of a case and the plan must be on the system at least 48 hours after the panel.

- Any remedial action must be identified at the meeting and a timescale established for completion of tasks.

- The Chair must record the decisions regarding transfer on the relevant child's case file under Case Transfer.

- CFRT must inform all professionals, parents and those with significant involvement of the date of transfer and the name of the new worker.

Transfer Process

CFRT will:

Notify the Assessment and Safeguarding Service that a child is likely to require transfer as soon as this is known. The transfer points are:

- **The date of the first Child In Need planning meeting (no later than 10 working days from the development of the CIN plan)**
- **The date of the Initial Child Protection Conference (does not need to come to the panel as notification will have been received from Safeguarding unit)**
- **The date of the first Looked After Review**
- **The date of the first court hearing date if the child is not Looked After**

Ongoing communication as to the status of the case is essential to ensure the receiving team is afforded the time to consider allocation to a relevant worker.

The case should be alerted to both the Service Manager chairing the panel and the receiving team no later than Wednesday at 12 noon via e mail. This is to allow sufficient time for preparation for the meeting. The Panel will take place each Friday from 1 pm. No case will be accepted after the 12 noon deadline and the current team will maintain case responsibility until the next panel.

The receiving manager should undertake an audit of the file to identify any potential remedial actions for consideration at the transfer meeting.

The Service Manager chairing the panel will place a note on the electronic file advising of:

- Outstanding actions and timescales to include the name of the receiving manager and worker.

- The date of the joint visit to the family which must be within 5 working days of the transfer meeting, at initial conference or first LAC review which every occurs dependent on the case.

- If any significant change occurs to the status of the case then both social workers should jointly work the case until the agreed transfer date and alert the chair. The receiving social worker will write up the joint visit and the receiving team manager will allocate the case on the day of the joint visit.

- The Chair of the Panel will then update the Liquid Logic system via the Transfer Meeting form. Should the receiving allocated worker be unavailable on the agreed date for any reason the receiving manager must immediately identify and inform the manager of CFRT the name of the worker who will be undertaking the joint visit.

- Cases should not be delayed in transfer due to staff sickness or holiday or lack of capacity. The case will transfer at this point regardless.

- There may be occasions when cases will not transfer at any of the above points if it is deemed not to be in the best interest of the child.

Conflict Resolution:

Should the Chair be unable to resolve any issues arising from transfer, the case will be stood down from the transfer meeting and discussion will be held and agreement made outside the meeting with the relevant Heads of Service and reported back at the next panel. This decision will be final and the case transfer will proceed.

Step down to Early Help and requests for additional support from Early Help from Local Authority Services.

For any request for a service or step down to Early Help (Local Authority), the Service Manager will be notified by e-mail of a request with the title "stepdown" or "additional support from Early Help." The e mail must include the case number and a rationale for the request. The e-mail should be forwarded to the Service Manager for Early Help and copied into the Team Managers for Early Help.

The Early Help team will consider the request.

All requests must be received by Wednesday lunchtime (12 noon).

Discussion Meeting attendees

- Service manager for Early Help Chair/Service Manager Social Care
- Team Manager Representative for Early Help
- Team Manager or designated person from the requesting team

Any decision to accept or decline the request will be final at this meeting.

Meetings

Meetings will be held on a Friday afternoon. All meeting notes will be recorded under the transfer meeting case note in Liquid Logic by the Chair of the Meeting for social care.

Early Help step down should be recorded via the step down process or individual pieces of work must be recorded under Early Help Requests.

Stepping Down within the Local Authority

The meeting will consider the request, any outstanding actions, and provide a rationale for either accepting or declining it.

Timescales will be set for transfer and a joint visit agreed. Once the joint visit has occurred the Social Worker will record the visit and the manager will close down the involvements on the case and the Early Help manager will open the case on EHM.

The Social Worker must inform all professionals involved in the case of the named worker from Early Help and this must be recorded on a case note. The social Worker must also seek and record consent from those with parental responsibility for the involvement of Early Help.

Requests for Service

The meeting will consider the request, and provide a rationale for agreeing the request, the name of the allocated worker to undertake the task, and the commencement date and completion date for the work. If further work is identified then the Team Manager from Social Care must return to the panel to request additional work direct approaches to Early Help workers must not be undertaken.

The Social Worker's Team Manager must add the Early Help Worker to the involvements on the child's file.

The Early Help worker must record after each session with the family, work undertaken and next steps.

The Early help worker must inform the Social Worker when sessions have been cancelled.

Stepping Down to other Agencies

If a case is to step down from social care to another agency, this must be clearly recorded who is the lead professional and all other parties should be informed. This should be recorded on Liquid Logic and an e mail sent to the Early Help Coordinator advising who is the Lead Professional. The case closure should identify that it has stepped down to an external ageny.

Appendix 1

Case Transfer from CAP to Life Stages 0 – 25 Team

Cases that meet the threshold for services for the Life Stages 0 - 25 team should transfer directly from CAP to the Life Stages 0 – 25 team.

An initial discussion should be held between CAP and the Life Stages 0 – 25 Team Manager to ensure threshold is met and this should be clearly recorded on Liquid Logic.

For those cases which have been closed by the Life Stages 0 – 25 team and return to the department within 3 months, a discussion must be held with the Life Stages Team Manager to determine eligibility criteria.

For those cases that do not meet the threshold for the Life Stages 0 – 25 service but where the child requires services should follow the same threshold application as for all other cases.

For those cases that are linked to a child who is currently open to the Life Stages 0 -25 team, a discussion should be had between the CAP Team Manager and the Life Stages Team Manager to determine if the eligibility criteria applies. If it does not then the case should follow the same threshold application as for all other cases.

Appendix 2

Case Transfer from the Assessment and Safeguarding teams to the Looked After through Care team (LATC)

Cases will transfer between the Assessment and Safeguarding teams to the LATC team as follows:

a. At the point the decision is made for a Looked After Child not to return home and a legal planning meeting decides that there is no need to enter into Care Proceedings; or

b. At the end of Care Proceedings where the plan is for the child to remain looked after via a long-term fostering plan.

The Assessment and Safeguarding teams will retain case responsibility for children who have a plan of adoption following the conclusion of Care Proceedings.

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The Assessment and Safeguarding Team Manager should contact the LATC Team Manager to advise that a child's case is due for transfer. This should be followed up by a transfer meeting between both Team Managers and the current and receiving Social Workers to ensure the transfer process is smooth.

The checklist attached at appendix 3 should be used to aid in the preparation of the electronic file in readiness for its transfer.

Any difficulties encountered within this transfer process will be resolved by the Head of Service whose decision will be final.

Appendix 3: Checklist of Requirements at Transfer

- Child and family (single) assessment
- Up-to-date case notes
- Updated chronology
- Supervision/management oversight notes
- All demographic information checked and completed
    - current address,
    - dob,

  - ethnicity
  - GP
  - school
  - gender
- All siblings and other relationships created and appropriately linked
- All episodes completed
- CIN Plan authorised
- Strategy Meeting/discussion minutes/ episodes
- Section 47 episodes completed
- Authorised Conference Report on Liquid logic
- Child Protection Plan on Liquid logic
- PLO / LPM Minutes (where appropriate)
- CLA Review episode
- Contact Plan
- Placement and Information Record
- LAC review paperwork
- Care plan
- Statutory Medical
- Risk Assessment (where appropriate)
- Court Documents (where appropriate)

NB: A detailed assessment will usually cover much of the information required in a transfer summary. To avoid duplication and information being repeated, the transfer summary will be a case synopsis highlighting outstanding tasks, important dates, financial commitments, etc.

Appendix 4

<u>Process for transfer of cases into LATC</u>

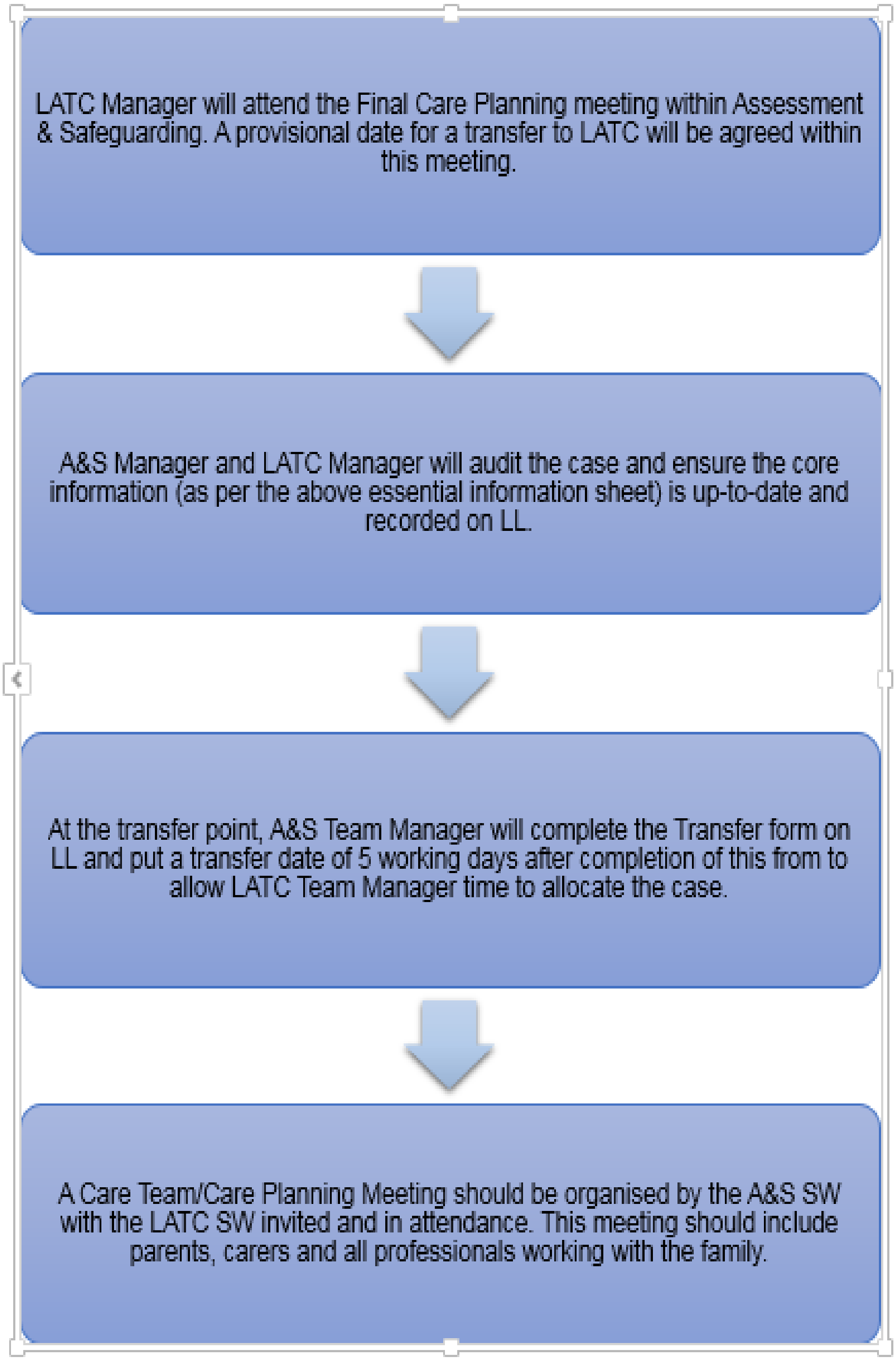
Bi-monthly meetings to be held between LATC and A&S managers where early alerts will be flagged up.

When a case is identified where plan is for a child/ren to be long-term LAC (including those cases whereby children are in the care of Connected Carers with a view to SGO being sought following a period under a Care Order.) The LATC Team Manager should be invited to the Final Care Planning Meeting.

Core information needed prior to a case transferring:

- ❖ Immunisations recorded on LL.
- ❖ Dental check recorded on LL.
- ❖ Eye test recorded on LL.
- ❖ IHA & RHA recorded on LL.
- ❖ National Insurance Number to be applied for on any child who is 15yrs and 9months old and to be recorded on LL (under identifiers section).

- Current Passport to be held by the child/ren's carer or LA.
- Birth Certificate to be held by the LA.
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire up to date on LL.
- Case Summary (above case note list) to be updated. (To include; SoS headings *What's working well* and *What are we worried* about, a brief explanation of the reasons the child/ren came into care and details of contact arrangements with family members, details of any previous referrals to CAMHS etc.).
- All contact details to be up to date on LL for parents and carers.
- Care Plan/Pathway to be updated.
- Genogram to be uploaded onto Care Store of updated on LL.
- Chronology to be up to date on LCS.
- Initial and Final Court reports to be uploaded onto Care Store.
- Any referrals made to Harbour/CAMHS etc. to be uploaded onto Care Store.
- Up to date Assessment.
- Photographs to be taken during contact and of the children in their placement to aid Life Story work.
- Later in Life Letter explaining the reasons the child became LAC by the SW who was involved at the time. (This does not necessarily have to come over with the case, however must be the responsibility of the A&S SW to provide to LATC within 6 months.)


LATC Manager will attend the Final Care Planning meeting within Assessment & Safeguarding. A provisional date for a transfer to LATC will be agreed within this meeting.
A&S Manager and LATC Manager will audit the case and ensure the core information (as per the above essential information sheet) is up-to-date and recorded on LL.
At the transfer point, A&S Team Manager will complete the Transfer form on LL and put a transfer date of 5 working days after completion of this from to allow LATC Team Manager time to allocate the case.
A Care Team/Care Planning Meeting should be organised by the A&S SW with the LATC SW invited and in attendance. This meeting should include parents, carers and all professionals working with the family.