



Merton Children's Social Care and Youth Inclusion

Transfer Protocol - 2023

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Transfer Protocol

1. Purpose:

The purpose of the transfer protocol is to ensure children and families in Merton receive a seamless service when transferring between services. The aim of this transfer protocol is to avoid delay and ensure that children and their families receive the most appropriate service at the right time. While this protocol provides specific guidance in relation to transfer points and timescales, all services will remain flexible and the needs of individual children must remain central.

2. Principles:

- **No delay** - The transfer of children must not cause delay to social work intervention for children, young people and their families/carers. All transfers and allocations must be needs led, not resource led. Social workers and managers must plan for children and families to be seen and careful and sensitive discussions about the transfer of responsibility must take place. Decisions about where and how this should happen must include the family and professional judgement
- **Flexibility** - This protocol must be used flexibly. This protocol provides guidance – not rigid rules. A professional and pragmatic approach will be adhered to by the respective managers, ensuring that the needs of children remains the priority at all times. Where there are capacity issues this will be managed by senior managers within the organisation.
- **One Service** - Standards of service delivery across all Children's Social Care teams are the responsibility of all staff. Each manager has the responsibility for ensuring high standards of practice in their respective service area
- **Open & honest communication** - Communication is a key component of effective working together. We are a learning organisation and professional challenge, discussion and debate in encouraged in a supported culture of learning.
- **High standards of practice and case recording** - case records form an essential part of a child's journey. Teams will continue working with the family seamlessly and ensure that children's records are accurate and up to date during the transfer process. **Appendix 1: Social Worker and Team manager checklist**
- **Communication** – Transfer arrangements will always focus on the safeguarding of children. Careful and thoughtful sharing of information at the point of transfer needs to take place. All transfers must be child and family focussed and the process should always include the child and family in discussions where possible. Formal meetings are not the appropriate place for children and families to meet their new workers.

Children and families will always be informed of any planned transfer to another service and will be provided with details for their new allocated worker and manager. Transfer discussions will take place between Team Managers and Social Workers/Personal Advisors prior to transfer to ensure a handover visit takes place with the children and families. This will ensure there is a focus on continuity, managing endings well and are well prepared for the transfer.

3. Transfer list:

The transfer checklist is for use by each respective team across CSC and provides detailed information for children identified for transfer to another service. The transfer list will be stored on the shared drive and can be accessed by managers and Team Support from all services.

Appendix 3: Case Transfer Checklist

Each manager who has a child to transfer to another service will ask their Team Support to update the transfer list each week by Wednesday midday. There are service to service twinning arrangements in place for Assessment & Intervention and Family Safeguarding and Support Teams. The team managers from each service must meet their twin on a weekly basis to discuss outgoing/incoming cases (ideally on a set day each week for continuity). This is to ensure that there is good communication regarding the recommended support for children and families and to support the family support and safeguarding managers to understand the number of incoming allocations. Where necessary there are direct conversations between Service Managers to achieve transfers in line with the child's timescales and avoiding delay.

There is a transfer panel held for Family Wellbeing Service for those children who need more than universal support to address their needs. The discussions about transfers will usually take place on Thursdays.

Each entry on the transfer list must consist of:

- MOSAIC reference number and name of child/ren. **One family per line.** If there are brothers and sisters, they must be recorded on the same line, to avoid confusion.
- Date, location and time of Child in Need Meeting/Child Protection Conference/CLA Review. These will serve as proposed transfer points so that planning is well managed.
- Dates of upcoming court hearings, ADMs, Permanency Planning Meetings, Family Group Conferences and any other relevant dates (this list is not exhaustive)
- Filing dates in relation to evidence or assessments if the family are in proceedings

- Details of any outstanding work due for completion prior to transfer, with timescales
- Name of current allocated Social Worker/Personal Advisor, Team Manager and Service, if applicable the name of the Independent Reviewing Officer or Conference Chair.

The child will remain with the originating team who will hold responsibility for the child or young person until transfer takes place on Mosaic. It is envisaged that this will happen on the agreed date of transfer

The transferring team is responsible for all outstanding visits and the child will not transfer if a visit is due within 5 working days.

Children's records will be placed on the transfer list at the earliest opportunity to allow the receiving managers a maximum of 10 working days to audit the file and to enable a joint handover/introductory visit to take place.

Until transfer has taken place the child's details will remain on the transfer list and will be reviewed in transfer meetings by Service Managers on a weekly basis. This will enable managers to be mindful of delays, pending child transfers or new developments in relation to our children. The tracker will be managed by a Business Support Officer on a rota basis.

It is the responsibility of the transferring manager to ensure all information is current and up to date. In the event of a child/ren or young person/s file not being ready on the agreed date of transfer, the transferring manager will notify the receiving manager and a new date will be agreed and noted in the transfer spreadsheet.

If the file is not transferred by the agreed dates, the transferring team continues to hold responsibility for the child/ren / young person/s and must ensure they receive their visits in accordance with their plan. If a case is not ready to transfer within 7 working days of agreed date, delay in transfer to be escalated to Service Manager.

If there is information missing from the child's record there should be discussions between the respective managers to agree a timeframe to update the information and these actions/timescales will be added to the file by the receiving manager. It is critical updating of information, does **not** create a barrier to transfers. If agreement cannot be reached, escalation to the respective Service Manager must be actioned to progress the transfer requirement. The responsibility to complete outstanding tasks will remain with the previous social worker.

Under no circumstances should child records / information be sent back and forth between teams as this creates drift and leaves children vulnerable. If the outstanding work remains incomplete after 7 working days, the matter is to be escalated to Service Manager.

Any child/ren / young person/s pending transfer delayed by for more than 7 working days after the agreed transfer date, must be escalated to a Service Manager.

4. Direct transfers to teams:

NB Where children are recorded as 'open' it is the responsibility of the team/social worker to record on Mosaic any information that is received by the Children and Families Hub .e.g. Police Merlins, significant information, When received by the Children and Families Hub the information will be forwarded directly to the allocated social worker and their respective line manager. If they are out of the office this will be forwarded to the covering manager identified in the managers out of office or escalated to the relevant Service Manager if necessary. If it is identified that the child has brothers or sisters, it is the responsibility of the social worker to create the record for those children if it has not already been created.

The following types of referral will not be subject to the process outlined above:

- **Transferring a family from Family Wellbeing Service to Children's Social Care**

Following a case mapping session (if necessary) by the FWBS, the FWBS manager will make the decision whether or not to seek to transfer the family to Children's Social Care. The FWBS Manager will discuss the concerns with the Duty Manager in the Children and Families Hub immediately. If it is agreed a Social Care intervention is necessary, the FWBS Practitioner will complete the Step Up to Social Care MOSAIC form within the agreed timescale and this will be signed off by the FWBS Manager.

If the child or young person is considered to be 'in need' of a statutory social work assessment, the family should be transferred to Family Support and Safeguarding by the Family Key Worker and/or manager presenting the case at the next weekly transfer panel.

If the child or young person is considered to be at risk of, or suffering from significant harm, the family will be transferred from the FWBS to the duty manager, Assessment and

Intervention immediately and a Child Protection (Section 47) Strategy Meeting held. The Family Key Worker and manager must attend the Strategy Meeting.

- **Temporary registration of child subject to Child Protection plan**

Where a child temporarily moves to the area and is subject to a Child Protection Plan the responsible authority must notify Merton of where the child will be living, with who and for how long the arrangement should last. The Children and Families Hub will record all of the child's details and relevant information and complete the temporary register step. If the length of time for the arrangement is known there should be a further check by the Children and Families Hub to confirm the child has moved out of Merton and the temporary registration should be ended.

- **Request for a Transfer in Conference**

Merton follows the London Safeguarding Children Procedures.

The referral / request for a transfer in conference will be received by the Children and Families Hub. Within 24 hours of receipt of the request, the Children and Families Hub Manager will review the referral, confirm the relevant documents and information have been provided, make a decision about whether the transfer will be accepted, and communicate with the transferring Local Authority particularly where further information is required. See Appendix 2.

If accepted, the referral will transfer to the FSS duty manager who will request a transfer in conference be arranged by the Reviewing and Insights Service. The Children and Families Hub will create the Initial Contact and ensure the necessary documents are uploaded to Mosaic and start the Referral Step. The FSS duty manager receiving the request will complete the Referral and notify the Reviewing and Insights Service by e-mailing DutyIRO@merton.gov.uk. The FSS Service Manager will record management oversight confirming allocation details for team manager and social worker.

- **Transfer Out of Child Protection Plan**

Merton follows the London Safeguarding Children Procedures.

When a family with children subject to a child protection plan moves to another local authority area, the allocated social worker should notify the receiving authority and the

Merton CP Chair at the earliest opportunity. The social worker should provide the receiving authority with the following:

- Up to date assessment of each of the children in the family which clearly identified the risk(s) to each child;
- Records of all of the child protection conferences and child protection plans relating to the current period for which the children have been subject to a child protection plan;
- Current child protection plan;
- An up to date case summary setting out both the current situation and all relevant background information about the children.

Within 15 days of having the information, the receiving authority should arrange a transfer child protection conference. The receiving authority will be responsible for undertaking checks on any other residents of the new address as appropriate. At that child protection conference, the receiving authority should formally accept case responsibility. The conference should determine whether the children would remain subject to a child protection plan and the contents of that plan.

It is the responsibility of the allocated social worker in Merton to notify all other agencies working with a child, who has a CP plan, the child has moved to another area. It is the responsibility of each agency in Merton to notify their colleagues that the child has moved to their area and to transfer relevant documentation as soon as possible. Where a child of school age has moved to another area and not registered for a school place, it will be the responsibility of the receiving authority to treat that child as if they are missing from education and to seek to ensure that their parents or carers register that child for a school place as soon as possible.

Following the transfer child protection conference, the allocated social worker in Merton should notify the CP Chair of the outcome and the Merton Reviewing Service will end the child protection plan and notify relevant agencies.

- **Request for a Transfer in Child in Need Plan**

Merton follows the London Safeguarding Children Procedures.

Transfer of a Child in Need plan is subject to the consent of the family. The referral / request for a transfer of a CiN plan will be received by the Children and Families Hub. Within 24 hours

of receipt of the request, the C&F Hub Manager will review the referral, confirm the relevant documents and information have been provided, make a decision about whether the transfer will be accepted, and communicate with the transferring Local Authority particularly where further information is required. See Appendix 2

If a family moves whilst subject to child protection enquires under s47 (CA 89) or an assessment of need under S17 (CA 89), those assessments should be concluded before transfer of case responsibility takes place. The referral / request for a transfer in Child in Need Plan will be passed to the duty manager in the Family Support and Safeguarding Service where a decision is made about allocation and they will arrange / attend a joint Child in Need meeting with the requesting authority. If it is decided the needs can be met with the support of the Family Wellbeing Service the FSS duty manager will lead the transition to FWBS and record management oversight for the required actions.

- **Transfer out of Child in Need Plan**

Merton follows the London Safeguarding Children Procedures.

If a family with children who have a child in need plan moves to another area, then the allocated social worker should seek parental consent to share information and notify the receiving authority the family have moved and provide the following information:

- Most recent assessments of each of the children;
- Child in need plan;
- Up to date case summary;
- If the children have previously had a child protection plan, the allocated social worker should clearly describe the risks and protective factors in the case summary.

The receiving authority should hold a meeting to discuss the transfer of a child in need plan, especially where the family situation is complex or the children have previously had a protection plan. The allocated social worker in Merton should attend this meeting.

- **Transferring a family from Children's Social Care to the Family Wellbeing Service**

With agreement, families who meet the Family Wellbeing Service criteria (Appendix 5) and want to continue to receive a service can be transferred from CSC to the Family Wellbeing

Service. To transfer a family the social worker will need to present the case at the weekly transfer panel, which involves the Service Managers from the Family Wellbeing Service, Help and Support, and Family Safeguarding and Support. A Team Manager for the FWBS will attend all panels

Process:

- a. Allocated practitioner sends transfer summary including parental consent and proposed plan (PDF of Case Summary or Closure Summary from Mosaic) to transfer panel administrator and family is put on the agenda for the next panel;
- b. Allocated practitioner and/or manager attends transfer panel to present reason for transfer and proposed plan;
- c. Transfer panel decides on transfer and agreed handover/transfer date is identified;
- d. Allocated social worker speaks to family and professionals of agreed transfer and name of new worker;
- e. Outgoing Team Manager oversight ensures child's record is up to date and ready for transfer (see standards);
- f. Allocated social worker writes to family and professionals confirming a change of service and/or practitioner and date of transfer.
- g. TAF meeting held with the family between transferring and receiving practitioners, within 10 working days, of the transfer date, arranged by the allocated CSC social worker. If this does not occur transferring service manager to be alerted.

At no point should a child be without a named allocated practitioner. If difficulties are experienced in transferring children due to capacity this should be immediately escalated by the Team Manager to the Service Manager. The Transfer Panel administrator should be notified in writing, the issue considered at the next Transfer Panel and a record kept of the agreement for each child that has been escalated.

- **Re-referral on a case closed in the past 3 months**

Any new information that would reach the possible threshold for intervention will be recorded as a contact in Mosaic.

The three-month rule applies to A&I, FSS, SWIS, CWD and the Academy only. It does not apply to U-Turn or any teams within Corporate Parenting.

The three-month rule will be applied from the last initial contact was completed or date of closure. The date of closure will be taken from the date recorded in the closure step and not the date of the closure step itself.

This will be passed to the A&I, FSS, SWIS, CWD or Academy manager for the team that was responsible for the child at the time of closure. An e-mail will be sent to the respective Team Manager alerting them of the contact, if they are out of the office this will be forwarded to the covering manager or escalated to the Service Manager if necessary. Where the new information is prioritised as a potential child protection issue, bragged as a 'red', the Service Manager will also be alerted.

The Team Manager in the previously allocated team will review the contact and background information and make a decision about the next steps for this child. The Team Manager will record this decision and action a Referral Record on Mosaic where necessary. When information is received for one child in a family it will be the receiving Team Manager's decision as to whether all of the children should be the subjects of a new referral.

Where there is information that is low level eg: notification of routine attendance at A&E or low-level information only documents, these will be recorded as such and uploaded onto Mosaic by the Children and Families Hub.

- **Children who were previously looked after and have returned home who have since re-entered care within 6 months**

If a child was previously looked after for more than 13 weeks and re-enters care, they will be allocated to the team that was responsible at the time the child left care.

- **Request to accept a Supervision Order**

The initial contact and referral record will be completed by the Children and Families Hub and transferred to the duty manger in the Family Support and Safeguarding Service for allocation.

- **Request from the Courts for a Section 7 / Section 37 reports, Transfer in Supervision Order or involvement in other Local Authority proceedings**

S7 reports – for children who do not have an allocated worker the Children and Families Hub will create a contact and referral and pass this to the duty manager in the Assessment and Intervention Team for review and allocation.

Requests for Section 7 / Section 37's on open cases, including those in the Assessment and Intervention Service, will be passed to the allocated social worker and their Team Manager as the social worker knows the child/ren and family. Where the request is received during the assessment and there is likely to be ongoing intervention and support the completion of the S7/37 report will be agreed between the current and receiving team manager.

Requests for S37 reports and involvement in other Local Authority proceedings for children who do not have an allocated worker will be sent to the duty manager in Family Support and Safeguarding; this is because the local authority is being asked to consider whether a Court order to the LA is needed to secure the long-term welfare of the child.

- **Request for SGO assessment / support plan**

For relevant children, not currently open to Merton Children's Social Care, Court Orders will be passed to the Fostering Recruitment and Permanence Team for the Special Guardianship Order (SGO) assessment to commence. An email needs to be sent to the Fostering and Recruitment and Permanence Team's duty box.

For relevant children open to a social work team, and where an SGO assessment is part of the care planning for a child / young person, the allocated social worker will advise the Fostering Recruitment and Permanence (FRP) Team. An email needs to be sent to the Fostering and Recruitment and Permanence Team's duty box. The FRP Team will then undertake the SGO assessment.

- **Adoption support**

Requests for adoption support will be passed to Adopt London South for an assessment.

- **Child/ren with a Disability**

A safeguarding or Child in Need referral received into the Children and Families Hub for a child with a severe and/or profound disability will be referred to the Children with Disabilities Team Manager for threshold review prior to the case being accepted in the Children with Disabilities Team. The Children and Families Hub will complete the initial contact and referral record.

Should there be a need to clarify whether criteria threshold has been met, the Assessment and Intervention Service will undertake the assessment and seek guidance from the Children with Disabilities Team. This may include a joint visit with a duty social worker or advice regarding wider support. Once the assessment has been completed a further threshold

discussion should take place with the Children with Disabilities Team manager to agree whether the criteria for support has been met. Where a child does not meet the criteria, they will transfer to the Family Support and Safeguarding service. However, clarity is required in respect of the actual service needed, not just the threshold criteria.

Not all children with a disability will automatically be entitled to a service from the Children with Disabilities Team, and their needs may be met via the Short Breaks Service or the Local Offer. In addition to this, there are parents/carers who may not wish to access a longer-term statutory service despite the criteria threshold being met.

There is an interim arrangement in place for children who are not previously known to Merton Children with Disabilities team but based on screening are believed to have a disability that is severe and/or profound. This is only for children whereby a request for service is bragged 'red' by the Children and Families Hub and a recommendation of a strategy discussion is made. These children will progress to the Assessment and Intervention service who will chair the strategy discussion and Children with Disabilities will attend. Children with Disabilities will continue to co-work throughout the section 47 enquiry unless it is identified that the child's disability does not meet the threshold for Children with Disabilities team. The Team Manager for Assessment and Intervention will oversee the section 47 enquiry. If it is agreed within the section 47 enquiry that the threshold is met for Children with Disabilities, then Children with Disabilities will progress the assessment for the child and future planning. If threshold is not met for Children with Disabilities the child will remain with the Assessment and Intervention service.

5. **Specific cases – transfer and management:**

- **Private fostering**
 - The Children and Families Hub will be notified about children who are privately fostered.
 - The Duty manager (A&I) and Consultant Social Worker responsible for private fostering and the Team manager (Social Work Academy) will be alerted. An initial joint visit will be completed by A&I and the CSW PF to establish whether there is a need for a single assessment under S17 or S47.
 - If there is a need for a single assessment responsibility will be retained by A&I.
 - Where there are no significant safeguarding concerns, responsibility will be held by the private fostering CSW.

- If the child needs a CIN plan, the case will transfer in the usual way to the FSS Service with support from the CSW PF to ensure private fostering requirements are met as part of the Child in Need plan.
- Where the child needs a child protection plan, case responsibility will transfer to the FSS Service with support from the CSW PF so the arrangement and child protection plan can be monitored separately and together.

- **Relinquished baby**

The Children and Families Hub will create a contact and referral, which will then pass to the duty manager in Assessment and Intervention for allocation and assessment. The duty manager of the Assessment and Intervention team will liaise with the Team Manager of Adopt London South to identify a co-worker from the team to support the assessment process. When the assessment is completed and it is confirmed that the baby has been relinquished, the child's record will transfer to the Adopt London South Team. This transfer will be arranged directly between the Assessment and Intervention Team Manager and the Adopt London South Manager.

- **Homeless 16/17 Year old**

The Children and Families Hub will create a contact and referral, which will then pass to the duty manager in Assessment and Intervention for allocation and joint Southwark Judgement assessment with housing.

- **Young person remanded to Youth Detention by the Youth Court into either a Secure Training Centre (STC) or Young Offenders Institute (YOI) or Remand into Local Authority Accommodation (RiLA)**

Where a young person has been remanded, the Children and Families Hub will create a contact and referral, which will then pass to the duty manager in Assessment and Intervention for allocation and assessment, unless the young person is already allocated to a Children's Social Care team. When the assessment is concluded and a decision is made regarding the length of the remand and whether the young person will be returning home, the transfer process to either Family Support and Safeguarding or Children in Care and Permanence Service will apply. The respective service managers for Family Support and Safeguarding and Children in Care will meet to agree which service is best placed to meet the child's needs in these circumstances with consideration of potential length of remand and with consideration if the child is likely to be looked after long term.

When any child comes into our care, a referral to allocate an Independent Reviewing Officer must be made to the Reviewing and Insights service by emailing: DutyIRO@merton.gov.uk.

- **Request for Leaving Care services for Care experienced person not currently open**

Where a child has been looked after on their 16th birthday and has been looked after for 13 weeks since the age of 14 years old, they are a “Relevant children” under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The Children and Families Hub will create a contact and referral, which will then pass to the duty manager in the Children in Care and Permanence Service.

- **Unaccompanied asylum seekers / Separated children and young people**

If an unaccompanied asylum seeking child or young person is ‘found’ in the Borough of Merton or directly presents to Merton, the Children and Families Hub will alert the duty manager for the Children in Care and Permanence Service. The Hub will create an initial contact and assign this to the Children in Care and Permanence Service who will review the information and start the referral. If an age assessment is required this will be completed by a social worker in the Care Experienced Service.

If the child / young person is allocated to Merton under the National Transfer Scheme or Pan London rota, the C&F Hub will create the Initial Contact and assign it to the duty manager in the Children in Care and Permanence Service. The London Asylum Seeking Consortium will liaise directly with the duty manager from the Children in Care and Permanence Service regarding transfer to Merton’s care and allocation.

When any child comes into our care, a referral to allocate an Independent Reviewing Officer must be made to the Reviewing and Insights service by emailing: DutyIRO@merton.gov.uk.

- **No Recourse to Public Funds**

If a family has no recourse to public funds and seeks help from the Local Authority their details must be screened and recorded as an initial contact by the Child and Families Hub. If the decision is that Merton have a responsibility to complete an assessment the referral record will be passed to the duty manager in Assessment and Intervention for allocation and assessment. [Families with No Recourse to Public Funds \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com)

The family’s details will be recorded on the NRPF Connect database by the Assessment and Intervention manager. NRPF Connect is the national database for councils to record details of households with no recourse to public funds that are being provided with accommodation and/or financial support by social services.

- **U-Turn**

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Parents and carers may have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. When a child/young person is identified with the primary concern being only contextual harm, consideration should be given to transfer to the Contextual Safeguarding Team for intervention.

If a request for service is received into the Children and Families Hub relating to contextual harm and meets the threshold for statutory intervention this needs to progress to the Assessment and Intervention service for an assessment. The Team Manager for U-Turn will attend strategy meetings if possible. The contextual harm screening tool needs to be completed and if the criteria is met an Adolescent Support Worker will be allocated to co-work.

6. Points of transfer:

- A standard transfer checklist will be used (Appendix 1) to ensure child/ren / young person/s receive a seamless outcome in the transfer process. The completed transfer checklist will be sent to the receiving manager by the transferring manager following the Transfer Panel decision and before case responsibility transfers, this will notify the receiving manager the child / young person is ready to be transferred and the records have been transferred to the relevant team in MOSAIC.
- It is the responsibility of the originating social worker to ensure the child/ren, their families and the professional network are made aware of the proposed transfer date and given the details of the new social worker and team manager. A joint visit to the child/ren / young person (and their family) will take place between the current and new social worker before the date of transfer.
- All children who are looked after or subject to a child protection plan will be allocated to a social worker. Where a risk of a child being unallocated arises, this must be escalated immediately to a service manager. No child should be allocated to a manager for more than a short period and no longer than 5 working days.
- Wherever possible, brothers and sisters should be allocated to the same practitioner or within the same team and be overseen by one manager. Managers will ensure the child/ren / young

person/s records are duplicated and signed off on all brothers and sisters of the child/young person in the family.

- Where it is agreed that the case remain within the current team, and it is not transferred, as this is considered to be in the best interest of the child/ children, a record of that decision is placed on the records by the service manager.
- Children must never be added to a social workers responsibility (caseload) without a manager's prior approval. Work steps cannot be put into the receiving social worker's name if the case is not ready to be transferred.
- If applicable the IRO or CP chair must be informed if a child is transferring teams.
- **Child Protection Cases**

Case holding teams for Child Protection (CP) cases: Family Support and Safeguarding, including the Children with Disabilities Team.

The transfer point for all protected children will be the Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). The transferring team will make sure the child's details are recorded on the transfer list and the child's record is updated as outlined above. The new Social Worker and/or receiving Team Manager must attend the ICPC to accept responsibility and continue a seamless service to the family and all professionals. It is paramount for all of the child's information to be recorded on the transfer list as soon as the ICPC is requested.

The Assessment and Intervention Team Support is responsible for transferring the child's record into the receiving social worker's name within 24 hours of the conference.

- **Child In Need**

Case holding teams for Child in Need (CIN) children:

Family Support and Safeguarding, including Children with Disabilities Team.

NB Assessment & Intervention will case hold Children in Need whereby the assessment is that a period of Child in Need will be required for 16 weeks or less. Assessment and Intervention will also case hold Children in Need whereby the child is deemed a child in need by virtue of the family having NRPF and there being no other safeguarding concerns.

The transfer point for all CIN cases will be a CIN meeting. The CIN meeting will be organised and chaired by the originating team. The receiving team (social worker or manager) will attend this meeting. Social workers from the transferring team will have the responsibility of sharing the assessment and co-developed plan with the family before the CIN meeting. The Transfer list should be updated a minimum of 7 working days before the CIN meeting to allow the receiving team to identify a receiving social worker to attend the CIN Meeting. The transferring social worker should update the CIN plan and CIN review on MOSAIC and share these with family and professionals within 48 hours of the transfer taking place

When a family has no recourse to public funds and the outcome of the assessment indicates there are no safeguarding concerns and the local authority have a duty to provide housing and subsistence, the child/ren / young person/s (and the family) will be transferred to a No Recourse to Public fund worker in the Assessment and Intervention Service

Where the Family Support and Safeguarding Team Manager does not agree with the threshold of the Child in Need they are to review this following transfer. If the decision is to close the case (CIN Plan) in agreement with the Service Manager, the Team manager must clearly record the decision on the child's record. If the family are re-referred to the Children and Families Hub within 3 months, this will be reallocated to the Family Support and Safeguarding Service.

➤ **Public Law Outline (PLO) cases and Care Proceedings**

If a child is open to Assessment and Intervention and becomes subject to the PLO process, the Assessment and Intervention Head of Service will chair the Legal Planning Meeting and invite the Service Manager for the Family Support and Safeguarding Service. If threshold for PLO has been met, the A&I Team Manager and Social Worker must complete the recording of the PLO meeting before transfer.

Where Care Proceedings are initiated in Assessment and Intervention the transfer point will be the initial court hearing and the receiving team will be invited to the Legal Planning Meeting and included in devising the Care Plan. The case will be ready to transfer at the first hearing.

➤ **Children in Care, and Care Experienced Young People aged 18-25**

Case holding teams for Children in Care:

Where a child is looked after and the care plan is or is likely to be long-term separation the child will be transferred to the Children in Care and Permanence Service:

- If there are care proceedings and the care plan is likely to be long-term separation - the Service Manager for the responsible team will have a discussion with the Service Manager for Children in Care and 16+ as soon as the likelihood of long-term separation has been identified. If transfer is agreed, the respective Team Managers will then agree a transfer point that is in the best interests of the child or young person, this will usually be the next court hearing where possible. A joint handover visit will always take place in order to introduce the child or young person to the new Social Worker and/or Personal Advisor
- If care proceedings have concluded and a Care Order granted, long term separation should have been identified before the order was granted, however, at the latest, transfer should take place at the final hearing
- If care proceedings conclude with a Supervision Order, a discussion will take place between the Service Manager for Children in Care and the Service Manager for Family Support and Safeguarding regarding transfer back to the Family Support and Safeguarding Service. In order to minimise children and young people experiencing several transfers, it is important to carefully consider the likelihood of longer term separation when any initial transfer to Children in Care takes place. If an unaccompanied asylum seeking young person or separated child presents directly to Merton, the Initial Contact will be sent directly for the Children in Care/Care Experienced Duty Team Manager for allocation to the Duty Social Worker. When any child comes into our care, a referral to allocate an Independent Reviewing Officer must be made to the Reviewing and Insights service by emailing: DutyIRO@merton.gov.uk.

➤ **Transfers within the Children in Care and Permanence Service**

At age 15 years and 9 months, young people who are in care will be jointly allocated to a Personal Advisor in the Children in Care and Permanence Service. The decision as to whether a young person transfers to a Care Experienced Team at this time or remains with a Children in Care Team will be made within the service at fortnightly Managers Meetings. The decision as to whether a young person transfers to another team within the service will be dependent on matching the needs of that young person with the skills of the Personal Advisors in the teams.

Appendix 1. Social Worker and Team manager Checklist

The social worker from the referring team will ensure Mosaic records are up to date and the following will be provided:

1. Up-to date demographic information, including NHS and UPN numbers
2. Chronology – updated within one month
3. Genogram to include extended network
4. Case summary about child and family – updated within 3 months where relevant.
5. All recording will be up to date, including case-notes, visits, plans, reviews and meeting records; updated phone numbers of all relevant adults to the child/ren including grandparents or named adults who are part of the safety plan, name of GP, HV, schools
6. Where relevant, single assessments will be completed
7. a SMART plan (Children In Need, Child Protection, Care Plan, Pathway Plan, CiC Review Report/Care Plan (Mosaic doc for CiC)
8. Management supervision record within 8 weeks.
9. Comprehensive and clear transfer summary as of the date of transfer.
10. For a child with a CP Plan, all accompanying records must be completed including the Initial Conference report, CP Plan and Core Groups
11. For a Child Looked After, a copy of the birth certificate should be on the record or will have been requested.
12. For a Child Looked After transfer, all accompanying records must be completed including Looked After Child Reviews, PEP's, Health Plan/Initial Health Referral for children who are new into care.
13. The Independent Reviewing Officer must be informed of the transfer.
14. Financial agreements are up to date, on ICS and logged with Finance.
15. Location of any relevant court directions or legal orders must be included.
16. Any risk assessments relating to household members or the young person must be updated.
17. All relevant information to be duplicated to brothers and sisters' MOSAIC files. This is the responsibility of the originating team
18. The receiving team will also ensure that there is a clear management oversight recorded on the file at the point of transfer.
19. A representative of the receiving team will be invited to and attend the CIN review, Child Protection Conference or Children Looked After review and/ or any planned review meeting arranged to facilitate the move of responsibility from one team to the next. The child/young person/family should not find out about the transfer at these meetings, if necessary, follow up transfer meetings between social workers, the child and family should be agreed before or at the review.

Appendix 2: Transfer In requests – Minimum information from originating authority

Child Protection Plan:

- confirmation of permanent or evidence of local connections including health and education in Merton,
- Initial and latest CP conference records and plan,
- most recent CP report – this may be in an assessment format,
- most recent Core Group record,
- transfer/case summary completed within one month,
- name and contact details of social worker and team manager in the originating authority.

Child in Need Plan:

- the most recent social work assessment;
- Child in Need Plan;
- Minutes of latest Child in Need Review;
- summary / case report and,
- parent / carer's consent to share information with Merton.

Final

Appendix 3: Case Transfer Checklist

CASE TRANSFER

Date of Transfer Meeting	
Reason for Case Transfer	

Name of Child/Young Person			
Date of Birth		Ethnicity	
Home Address			
Placement Address (if different)			
Who has parental responsibility?			

Legal Status incl date accommodated if CLA			
PLO status incl next Court date if relevant			
Date of last meeting eg. CIN/CP/CLA/RMM/PEP			
Date of next Meeting eg. CIN/CPC/CLA/RMM/PEP			
Name of IRO/CP Chair			
Name of Foster carer / key worker			
Visiting Frequency			
Date of last visit		Date Next Visit due by	
Educational/Training Placement			
Is there a PEP/EHCP in place?			
Details of any funding already agreed			

Are the basic details up to date on Mosaic eg, current address, ethnicity, phone numbers, family network, GP, School, NHS Number, UPN etc?	Yes/No (delete as necessary & any reasons why if details not up to date)
Is the child relevant chronology up to date?	Yes/No (delete as necessary) last entry date:
Is there a completed family genogram?	Yes/No (delete as necessary)
Are all relevant documents completed up to date and signed off? eg. Assessments, strategy, s47, care plans, PWP's, visits, CIN reviews, Placement Plan	Yes/No (delete as necessary & details of latest relevant docs)
Is there a COVID 19 Risk Assessment completed?	Yes/No
Is there evidence of management oversight and supervision to enable a	Yes/No (delete as necessary and include details)

clear understanding of decisions that have been made?	
Is there a current and up to date plan clear on the record? <i>(including a safety plan)</i>	Yes/No (delete as necessary and include details of the plan/date)

Brief Summary of Case including the specific needs of the child/family (eg *exploitation, self harm risk*). Please specify the work you have assessed that this child/family needs.

What is the plan for this child/family?
 What key dates and events should the new SW be aware of.

Has Child/Young Person met their new social worker?		Date	
Have parents/carers & relevant professionals been informed of change in worker/Team and been provided with the contact details?			
Case to be transferred from (worker's name/Team)			
Case to be transferred to (worker's name/Team)			
Date of Case Transfer/Reallocation			

Sending Team Manager Comments

Date signed off by Team Manager

Appendix 4: The Family Wellbeing Service

Targeted support to families living in the borough of Merton where two or more of the following factors are impacting on a child's development and / or family functioning and wellbeing:

- Domestic Abuse / Parental Conflict
- Parental / Child Substance Misuse
- Parent / Child Physical / Mental Ill Health
- Special Educational Needs /Disability
- Early Signs of / Low Level Neglect
- Child's Behaviour (impacts on wellbeing/development, or deemed to be risky)
- Children at risk of exclusion/excluded and/or where there are school attendance issues.
- Overuse of chastisement of a child

Our Case Practitioner Service provides a Lead Professional to coordinate the family plan, following on from request for service via the Children and Families Hub, after an assessment or at the end of statutory CSC plan.

Best practice is that families are supported by agencies/professionals/networks that know them. Family Wellbeing Practitioners do not ordinarily know the family, therefore should be considered only when no other suitable agencies/professionals/networks are available.

For families to be eligible for services via the Children and Families Hub the following criteria must be met:

- Unborn child (after 28 weeks pregnancy) or a child/young person aged 0-18
- Parent and child/young person are resident in Merton
- Family support work/early help intervention has taken place at level 1 and/or level 2 that evidences more targeted support is required
- Family has a minimum of 2 presenting needs across the priority areas that have been assessed at level 3 (in line with Merton's NEW threshold document:)
- A Lead Professional is required to coordinate a multi-agency package of support, following an EH assessment, and work alongside families to achieve their goals
- Consent is gained, and an agreement for families to engage with the Family Wellbeing Assessment /Plan for a 3-month period – up to a 6-month period

For families to be eligible for services via step down from child and family assessment or CSC plan the following criteria must be met:

- Unborn child (after 28 weeks pregnancy) or a child/young person aged 0-
 - Parent and child/young person are resident in Merton
 - Family no longer meet the threshold for section 17, with identified follow on family support required over a period of approximately 12 weeks, through home based family support, working to the stepdown plan, as initiated by social worker
 - Family has a minimum of 2 presenting needs across the priority areas that have been assessed at level 3 (in line with Merton's NEW threshold document:)
 - Lead Professional is required to coordinate a multi-agency package of support and work with families to achieve their goals
- Consent is gained, and an agreement for families to engage with the Family Wellbeing Assessment /Plan over a period of approximately 3 months

Cases from CSC (whether from Assessment and Intervention or Family Support and Safeguarding) will be stepped down via a TAF which the Social Care practitioner arranges and chairs so that the on-going plan is shared and agreed by the professional network and the family. The FWB case practitioner will attend the TAF and the case will be handed over.