



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Unregulated Placements Practice Guidance

Children's Social Care, People Group

Date

August 2024

Version

Version 1

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Name	Unregulated Placements Practice Guidance
Document Title	Unregulated Placements Practice Guidance
Applies to	CSC – All Staff
Document Replaces	N/A
Reason for change	N/A
Original Approval by	Assistant Director
Approval Date	August 2024
Distribution List	CSC -All Staff
Council Website / Intranet	TriX
Status	Live
Issue Date	August 2024
Review Date	August 2027
Version	1
Lead Officer	Head of Service – Care Planning
Author	Head of Service – Care Planning

UNCONTROLLED IF PRINTED

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Unregulated Placements Guidance

What is an unregulated placement?

An unregulated placement is when a child is placed with a carer/placement which is not regulated by Ofsted.

Care Placements: This may be a care placement commissioned when no other regulated provision can be identified for example a temporary children's home, staffed by unregulated carers. This would be a service where the accommodation is not permanent. This includes supported accommodation which is not regulated through the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023.

Supported accommodation that is not Ofsted registered is only appropriate for young people who have presented as homeless and have made a fully considered and informed choice not to be accommodated under section 20.

Children may be placed in an **unregulated placement with connected carers**. This may be when a kinship carer has had a viability assessment completed and this assessment has been negative or clear that there are unmovable factors which would prevent the carer becoming an approved foster carer. This will be identified by the Head of Service reviewing that assessment. If the decision is made either by Court or the LA to place the child irrespective of this, this will be an unregulated placement.

Children may also be placed in an **unregulated placement with connected carers** if the carers have not been approved by the fostering panel following completion of the connected carers assessment. In rare circumstances an assessment may not be presented to panel within the 16 weeks (which can be extended for a further 8 weeks) timescale.

Process

Care/Supported Accommodation

1. Extensive searches for regulated provision must first be explored including where appropriate use of Cedars Children's Homes and presented at Practice Solution's Panel.
2. If a regulated placement cannot be sourced, this must be discussed with a Head of Service who can give permission to explore unregulated placements in consultation with the Assistant Director.
3. If an unregulated placement is sourced, approval can only be given by the Assistant Director upon receipt of appropriate documentation and costings.
4. The risk assessment must be completed on the same day the placement is made.

Connected Care

Once it is clear an arrangement is to become unregulated, the risk assessment must be completed within 1 day of the placement becoming unregulated.

Risk assessment

The risk assessment can be found on LCS and must be completed immediately. This will set out what arrangements are in place to monitor the arrangement.

Overnight and unregulated placements

- All unregulated placements will be identified monthly during AD/DCS Performance Clinics and shared quarterly at formal Corporate Parenting Panels.
- The HoS will ensure planning takes place to work towards children living in a regulated placement
- The AD will be appraised of all children who are placed in unregulated provisions