

Admission
and
discharge
policy

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Admission and Discharge Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy describes the role of the Registered Manager, Responsible Individual, Social Worker and Residential Child Care/Support Workers in admitting and discharging children and young people in Warrington Children's Social Care residential children's homes. All young people shall have an effective induction (unless in an emergency admission).
- 1.2 Warrington Borough Council residential services believes that residential care and short break care for many children with complex and challenging needs can be a positive choice.
- 1.3 From settling new children and young people in to the home to moving to move them on to alternative placements, a clear, individual and comprehensive of a plan is essential. This plan will be informed firstly by the care plan but also via multi-agency assessments / risk management strategies and the independent awards achieved by the children and young people. The residential settings ensure that transition is smooth and children are confident and very well-prepared when they move on to the next stage in their life. We support children with complex and challenging needs by providing safe, structured nurturing and loving homes.
- 1.4 Differences in philosophy, pedagogy and assessment have too often exacerbated the situation and left children facing daunting levels of change as they move from Warrington residential home settings. It is believed that all packages of support will be individual to the child's needs and circumstances, however when examining good practice and listening to views of the child it was believed that guidelines were required to ensure support was adequate and suitable.
- 1.5 Within our residential services we understand that our children will have experienced separation and loss as well as experiencing neglect and or abuse.

Children in care and in need are a vulnerable group who require a nurturing environment where they can grow and develop, learning interpersonal and independent skills along the way. Due to the historical background children may not have experienced positive role models and have a support network. Children and staff have voiced their views within Warrington that they need reassurance about their future plans. The transition plans could be when young people are moving from a residential placement to foster care, home, their own supported or independent setting.

- 1.6 Whilst young people are placed in our residential settings they spend a significant time planning for permanence and learning from modelling positive behaviours and attitudes. They are encouraged to progress through the independence awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold Booklets) whilst assessments are taking place. Working together with other professionals and agencies can be key within this process and ensuring that plans are understood and progressed for each individual child that show the outcomes and progress they have made.
- 1.7 The Children Homes (England) Regulation (2015) clearly state that 'emergency admissions should not be taken unless the home's Statement of Purpose and its capacity and support systems mean that it has the capability to care for children admitted at very short notice while continuing to offer high quality care to children already living in the home'. If the home has a room available to accommodate a child it is the Registered Manager's responsibility or Assistant Manager in the Registered Manager's absence to have the detailed plans for a planned admission and / or be available to accommodate another child.

2.0 Principles

- 2.1 All children should be treated with respect and in accordance with the home's values as defined in the Statement of Purpose.
- 2.2 All admissions, where possible, should be planned and an identified key worker allocated to each child prior to admission wherever possible.

- 2.3 All children should be provided with written and verbal information in relation to the home on their admission. Information should be given in a form suitable to the intellectual and emotional development of the individual child.
- 2.4 It will be important to ensure a welcoming atmosphere for each child, and, where appropriate, other children resident in the home should be involved in the admission, and encouraged to welcome the child into the home.
- 2.5 All plans for admissions and discharges should be discussed with the relevant parties and placement planning meetings shall take place before a child is formally admitted to the home.

3.0 Legislative context

- 3.1 This guidance should be read in conjunction with **Children Homes (England) Regulations and Quality Standards (2015); the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.**
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of all Warrington Borough Council staff to ensure that our children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. All nine quality standards should be adhered to and young people should be welcomed into the home. Where possible, a clear transition plan with introductions should be completed in line with the care plan for the child. This is the responsibility of the Registered Manager to ensure its completion and fit for purpose.
- 3.3 Regulation 14 of the Children's Homes Regulations states that all children should 'receive well-planned care from the home and have a positive experience of admission and transition processes.' It is the responsibility of the Registered Manager to ensure the needs of the young people can be met in the home, this should be demonstrated in a needs led placement assessment, which takes matching with other young people in the home into full consideration. This must take the Statement of Purpose into account, whilst ensuring the staff have the skills and knowledge required for the individual child.

When young people move from the home a plan of support should be completed in conjunction with the care planning and pathway planning procedures and social worker.

4.0 Procedure for admission

Good practice

- 4.1 Many children placed in homes may undergo a difficult transition and what should be simple aspects of their care take on a substantial significance in this context. Staff should provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to their behaviour. Homes must also meet children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual (Guide to Children Homes (England) Regulations including quality standards, 3.7, DfES (2015)).
- 4.2 Where possible and appropriate, planned admissions will start with the Registered Managers being provided with the details of prospective children for consideration.
- 4.3 The Registered Manager will complete a needs led placement assessment for ALL children and use this as a tool to decide the best match for all of the children within the home. The needs led placement assessment shall consider the Care Planning Standard. If following the completion of a needs led placement assessment, the Registered Manager is not satisfied that the placement is appropriate; discussion will take place with the Responsible Individual. If there is any discrepancy between the Registered Manager and the Responsible Individual on whether a child should or should not be admitted, this will be escalated to the Director of Children's Services who will meet with the Registered Manager and Responsible Individual to formulate a decision. All parties can seek guidance from OFSTED.

- 4.4 Once a child has been identified for placement at the home, contact between the Registered Manager, Social Worker, child's current carer, and other professionals involved with the child should be established as soon as possible to gain as full a picture as possible of their needs.
- 4.5 The Registered Manager should inform the Social Worker of the documents and reports required upon admission, and a documentation list will be forwarded to the social worker as an Aide Memoir. **Ref. Appendix 1**. The Social Worker is responsible for providing the documentation in full to the Registered Manager prior to admission. A child will not be placed without this paperwork.
- 4.6 Before a child is admitted to the home, the Social Worker must complete the Delegated Authority Form along with the Placement Information Record and give this to the home. This documentation includes authorised signatories for delegated actions and each sheet should be signed by a person who has parental responsibility and where possible by the child. Failure to produce this documentation will result in the home being unable to admit the child.

5.0 The placement planning meeting

- 5.1 A placement planning meeting should take place within five working days of admission. The Registered Manager will chair the placement planning meeting. This meeting will include the allocation of key worker(s). The key worker from within the home will, on admission, arrange for the child to undertake a programme of introduction and familiarisation with the home. This should include provision of the Children's Guide to the Home, information about methods of behaviour management to be used in the home and the rules/expectations of living in the home. It is the responsibility of the Registered Manager to ensure that the admissions data is updated within the monitoring systems for residential services.
- 5.2 This meeting should involve the child, their social worker, the key worker where available, a representative from the child's school, a representative from health, the child's parents and/or current carer, if appropriate and should be chaired by

the Registered Manager of the home or the Assistant Manager. For children being admitted for short breaks, any planning meeting should also involve the responsible health professional.

- 5.3 The meeting will agree a placement plan for the child taking into account the child's needs, measurable outcomes and ways of addressing the following areas for consideration: health, education, cultural and religious requirements, issues of language, leisure and arrangements for contact and daily routine.
- 5.4 The meeting will ensure the placement information record is fully completed for the placement and complete the placement planning record which supplements the placement information record and addresses some issues not covered by the placement information record.
- 5.5 Prior to admission the Registered Manager and/or Assistant Manager will complete an initial risk assessment, behaviour management plan, missing from home risk assessment, CSE tool in respect of the child. This documentation will be circulated in advance of the meeting and amended at the meeting if needed.
- 5.6 The child should be involved as much as possible in the preparation of their placement plan, and the staff within the home should take time with the child after the meeting to ensure they understand what has been agreed.

6.0 Risk assessment and behaviour management plan

- 6.1 All young people should have comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour management plans. They should highlight any risks and outline the actions of the staff and views of the child.
- 6.2 The **risk assessment** should highlight key hazard areas for the child and the level of risk attached. It should also detail how the risks will be managed. The **behaviour support plan** should identify those behaviours that cause difficulties for the child and clear strategies on how to manage them consistently.

7.0 The role of staff within the home

7.1 Key workers will spend quality time undertaking direct work with the child on a regular basis. Ideally this should be at least once a week. Sessions should be planned in advance regarding what issue will be addressed with the child.

7.2 Planned direct work undertaken with the child should be related to identified issues within their risk assessment and care plan and be based on the Children Home's Quality Standards:

- The Quality and Purpose of Care Standard
- The Children's Wishes and Feelings Standard
- The Education and Learning Standard
- The Enjoyment and Achievement Standard
- The Health and Well Being Standard
- The Positive Relationship Standard
- The Protection of Children Standard
- The Leadership and Management Standard
- The Care Planning Standard

RECORDING GUIDANCE

- Use anti-oppressive language, i.e. not derogatory.
- Don't write names of other young people who live in the home.
- Write full words, rather than abbreviations, for example "YP".
- Be aware of negative words like "refused" and "failed". Focus more on alternative
- Phrases like "chose not to..." or "did not attend".
- Beware of emotive words when describing behaviours, for example "extremely naughty"
- Describe situations and behaviours factually.
- Take care with spellings.
- Be honest but also sensitive about how information is recorded.
- Get the child's view about what has happened and what has been written.
- Record the full name of the member of staff making the recording.

7.3 Wherever possible the child's own views should be sought. If possible the child should be encouraged to write their own comments on the direct work sheet or if not, the key worker should write them on the child's behalf. The child should be encouraged to sign the direct work sheet to show they have been consulted and involved in the process.

7.4 The Direct Work will be read and authorised by the Registered Manager and should be placed on the child's working file at the home; this should be accessible to the child's social worker.

7.5 The key worker for children living in residential accommodation is responsible for reviewing all of the child's documentation, and completing a monthly written report on the child. The report should cover the Quality Care Standards, and highlight any progress that the child has made in each area. It should also note any ongoing areas of difficulty for the child and what is being done to address this.

8.0 Emergency admissions

8.1 In exceptional circumstances and when it is included in the Home's Statement of Purpose it may be necessary to admit a child in an emergency. In all circumstances, the decision to admit rests with the Registered Manager or Assistant Manager and in their absence in consultation with the Responsible Individual. The current circumstances and the normal function of the home should be taken into account in making this decision. The emergency provision will last 72 hours, if the placement is agreed for longer the Registered Manager will review the Impact Risk assessment.

8.2 In the event of such an admission, further discussions should take place within one working day with the social worker and a decision made about future arrangements for placement of the child.

- 8.3 Where the local authority proposes to place a child in a children's home in circumstances outside the normal criteria set out in the home's Statement of Purpose, the Responsible Individual, or delegated Head of Service, should obtain permission from Ofsted in writing and furnish the Registered Manager with the written evidence to retain on file.
- 8.4 In emergency cases the home will be required to have basic information regarding the child to enable staff to safeguard and care for the child. This will be as outlined within children in care policies and procedures, placements will not be accepted without this, as it places the child and staff team at risk.
- 8.5 The documentation provided by the Social Worker as a minimum for an emergency admission should be the Parental Consent Form for Accommodation and Medical Consent (if Section 20), Delegated Authority Form, Placement Information Record and Background Information record.

9.0 On arrival at the home

- 9.1 A Welcome Pack should be given to the child which will include the home's Children's Guide and Complaint form.
- 9.2 A guided tour of the home should be made as soon as practicable for the child.
- 9.3 The child should be met with a welcome from staff and the social worker should stay for a while to help the child to settle in. The social worker should also make arrangements for the next visit before leaving.
- 9.4 The child should be offered help in unpacking.

- 9.5 Any medication necessary should accompany the child and medication charts must be completed.
- 9.6 If not already in place during the transition period, staff and the child may make plans to go out together to buy things to personalise the child's bedroom.
- 9.7 As soon as possible but within 24 hours, an explanation of the rules and expectations, rights, and the complaints procedures should be given to the child, together with information regarding systems within the home. A Fire safety instruction is completed with the child upon admission to the home.

9. Short Breaks Admissions

- 9.8 Short Breaks is a unique service, however it still follows and embraces the ethos of nurturing and commitment to the children as discussed in the early section of this policy. Before, a child is considered for short breaks, a referral will be completed by the Social Worker, which will be signed and authorised by the Team Manager this will be sent to short break residential manager. The Registered Manager or Assistant Manager in their absence will complete a Needs Led Assessment based upon the referral and the combined assessment. This will assess if the home can meet the needs of the child and who best the child will be accommodated with. Emergency placements can only be agreed by the Registered Manager or Responsible Individual; placements will only be for children with disabilities and will last for 72 hours, as stated in the Statement of Purpose.
- 9.9 When the placement has been agreed, the parents and the child will be invited to visit the home and will be given information about the home, in a format that the child and family understand. Prior to the child coming to stay the Key Worker will work closely with family to complete a comprehensive risk assessment and care plan, looking at routines, medication and what is

important to that child. It is imperative to ensure that the child and their family feel happy and comfortable with the short break provision. Prior to a child coming for over nights stays a placement planning meeting will commence, this will involve relevant professionals, the child where appropriate and the family, and Key Worker, this will be chaired by the Registered Manager.

Parent/carers will complete an inventory of the child's belongings prior to the short break. Staff should check this inventory against all the items/clothing brought by the child. When the child returns home, this inventory should be checked again by staff to ensure the child returns home with all their belongings, and signed out.

9.10 Any medication necessary should accompany the child and medication charts must be completed, this will be discussed with parents/ carers prior to the first visit

The home will keep in contact with the parent/ carers to keep them updated about the child's stay via the home communication book, in addition if required the home will contact the parents/ carers with a telephone update.

10.0 Procedure for discharge

10.1 All discharges from residential children's homes should be planned. If it is not possible to prevent a placement breakdown through care planning and intensive support, any unplanned discharge should be followed by a disruption meeting, particularly if the disruption occurred during permanence planning or a long term placement. The Registered Manager will arrange a disruption meeting with the Responsible Individual, Team Manager and child's Social Worker to reflect on why the placement broke down and if there is anything to be learnt from this.

In relation to Short Breaks the above will be conducted if it is felt that the home can no longer meet the needs of the child, the Needs Led Assessment will be

updated and shared with the placing team, and this will be discussed at length in the disruption meeting. However if this is a planned discharge for example the child has reached the age of 17 the home will work closely with the transition team, to support the family and child at this time of change. This will include attending meetings if required, supporting the child in their new placement in relation to visiting it and sharing paperwork with consent with the new placement. In addition when a child leaves our care, they will be given unique photo album sharing all the memories we have made. When a child moves on from our care, the child's paperwork will not be stored on site this will be removed and stored electronically.

- 10.2 Any planned decision to discharge the child should be made at a statutory review, and a decision made regarding who is responsible for tasks relating to the discharge.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

If serious incidents or significant changes in the child's circumstances occur during the course of a placement, it will be necessary to review the arrangements set out in the child's placement plan and Care Plan. In these circumstances a **Planning Meeting** should be held for the purpose of review of planning. The meeting should be attended by the social worker and all professionals involved in the care of the child and the Conference and Review Manager informed. If it is possible the placement may need to be ended – a statutory review should be arranged.

- 10.3 Where the Registered Manager comes to the view that the placement is not meeting the need of the child, the Needs Led Placement Assessment will be reviewed and amended if necessary. Any actions to stabilise the placement will be put in place in discussion with the Social Worker and other relevant

professionals. If actions put in place to stabilise the placement prove to be ineffective, the Registered Manager will escalate the matter to the Responsible Individual who will hold a placement stability meeting. If the Registered Manager is not happy with the decision of this meeting, then this will be then escalated.

- 10.4 When discharge is agreed, key workers will complete a transition plan to prepare the child to move on in a positive manner. The Key Worker or an alternative staff member should accompany the child to the new placement as appropriate and the home should keep in contact with the child for a minimum of 6 weeks following discharge from the home.
- 10.5 Prior to discharge, residential staff should ensure that the child has appropriate levels of clothing for the new placement.
- 10.6 Transfer of school and GP (where appropriate) should be organised prior to discharge, together with ensuring adequate amounts of medication/uniform for transfer.
- 10.7 All children should be provided with their own holdall/suitcase for transfer. All personal belongings should move with the child, with assistance from staff in packing as required. Any photographs etc. should move with the child. Before a child leaves our care a full inventory of their belongings will be completed and the new placement will sign to receive these, this form will then be stored electronically on the child file.
- 10.8 All children should be given a moving out box which will include a plan of contacts for key members of staff to enable a smooth transition. This plan should be akin to the admission plan and will include a planned opportunity to say appropriate goodbyes to residential staff and other children in the home.

Any ongoing contact with the residential home after transfer should be decided at the care planning meeting.

Appendix 1 – Information required

Information required on admission to a residential establishment		When required
Basic information	Background Information Record	Prior to Admission
	Placement Information Record	On Admission
	Combined assessment	Prior to Admission
	Care Plan	Prior to Admission
	Health Assessment	Prior to Admission
	Copies of any Legal Order in force: Care orders, Contact orders, Bail conditions	On Admission
	Child Protection Plan (if applicable)	On Admission
	Previous LAC Review Record or CIN/ Early help meetings (if applicable)	Prior to admission
	Medical Consent	On admission
	Parental Consent to placement	On admission
	Passport	On Admission (not required for respite)
Other information	Any recent report on the child and family	On Admission
	Reports from: Child Psychiatrist Ed. Psychologist School Hospital	On Admission
	Record Sheets from previous placement	On Admission
	Assessment and Action Records	As appropriate
	Personal Education Plan	As appropriate

Appendix 2 - Welcome pack

(Please note that children in care gain a pack from their social workers which includes information from NYAS and for children in care)

- Pyjamas and slippers
- Toiletries, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, facecloth, shower gel etc.
- New towel, both bath and hand towel
- Children's guide
- Complaint Form

Appendix 3 - Welcome pack

(Prior the a child coming stay the child will receive the following)

- Children's guide in a format that the child can understand
- Will choose bedding that they would like
- On the child's first tea visits we will explain how to make a complaint
- We will complete a walk around the building and discuss fire safety
- Parents will receive SOP and lasts Ofsted inspection report (short breaks).

Appendix 3a: Example of transition plans for admission of care from the home

JANUARY						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1 st	2 nd Placement planning meeting: provisional moving in date to be agreed.	3 rd	4 th
5 th Child to visit with foster carer and social worker for one hour to visit the property.	6 th	7 th Child to visit the home for tea and foster carer/social worker to transport only. Workers to gather information regarding wishes for room	8 th Child to go with key worker to gain items for the room to personalise. Key worker to pick up from education	9 th	10 th Child to spend the day at the home and or on activity	11 th
12 th Meeting with Registered Manager and social worker to assess and agree the moving date following a provisional being set at Placement planning meeting. Social worker to ensure all paperwork is provided on this date	13 th Childs views regarding placement noted and at the home for tea	14 th Child home for tea after education.	15 th Staff to finalise the room, whilst child finalises end to previous placement.	16 th Moving in date	17 th	18 th
19 th	20 th Social worker statutory visit	21 st	22 nd	23 rd	24 th	25 th
26 th	27 th	28 th Social worker statutory visit	29 th	30 th	31 st	1 st

Appendix 3b: Example of transition plans for discharge of care from the home

JANUARY						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1 st	2 nd Placement planning review meeting and agreed plans for care plan.	3 rd	4 th
5 th Child to decorate home and gain furniture/white goods with PA	6 th Staff to help child with practical support in line with pathway planning.	7 th	8 th Staff to visit home with the child and provide encouragement and support.	9 th	10 th	11 th
12 th Meeting with Registered Manager and social worker to review the plans.	13 th	14 th	15 th Agreed move in date for child to own property.	16 th Staff to visit and where appropriate take child for lunch.	17 th Possible date for teatime visit. Staff available via the telephone.	18 th
19 th Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 2 hours	20 th Social worker or PA visit	21 st Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 2 hours	22 nd Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 2 hours	23 rd Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 2 hours	24 th Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 2 hours	25 th Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 2 hours
26 th Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 1 hour	27 th Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 1 hour	28 th Social worker or PA visit Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 1 hour	29 th Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 1 hour	30 th	31 st	1 st Possible to plan for key worker to be available to child at their home for 1 hour

