

Care Planning Meetings to achieve Permanence Practice Guide

What is Care Planning?

Care Planning is the means by which agencies, carers, family members and the child concerned share information about the child's needs, make decisions in the child's best interest and monitor the progress of the child's Care Plan.

Care Planning should be informed by an up to date holistic assessment of the child's needs. A new child assessment should be completed every six months. If significant events occur during this time, the Social Worker and their Manager must ensure these events are analysed and that the family assessment is updated. This will ensure the child's Care Plan continues to meet the child's needs.

The overall aim is to provide children and young people in care with the quality of care a good parent would want to provide for their own child. This will ensure the child is supported in achieving good outcomes during their childhood and establish continued relationships with nurturing parents and care-givers.

Care Planning Meetings

All children in care will have their Care Plans pro-actively reviewed to ensure the actions contained in those Care Plans are fully completed and permanence is achieved.

By holding a **Care Planning Meeting** at key points in the Care Planning process, we can ensure smooth transitions and avoid drift. Care Planning Meetings differ from the child's statutory Child in Care Review Meeting, which is the child's meeting, chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer.

The Care Planning Meeting should be attended by the social worker, carer and key professionals. The team manager only needs to attend when the case is complicated or complex. An IRO may be invited to a meeting if appropriate and this will need to be considered on a case by case basis.

Purpose

The purpose of the Care Planning Meeting is to:

- Develop the Care Plan prior to the first and subsequent statutory reviews;
- Formulate the Permanence Plan for the child prior to the second statutory review;
- Monitor the progress of Care Plans in meeting the needs of the child in relation to: *Health, Education, Emotional and Behavioural Development, Identity, Family and Social Relationships, Social Presentation and Self-Care Skills.*
- Ensure all elements of Permanence Plans are implemented and monitored for children who are in care.

Frequency

After a child is placed in any new placement, there should be a Care Planning Meeting within 72 hours. If for any reason this cannot happen, the meeting should happen no later than 10 days of the placement starting.

All subsequent Care Planning Meetings should take place every 6 weeks and the meeting should agree the Care Plan to be presented to the next Child Looked After review.

In some cases where there are issues with the stability of the placement then an Urgent Care Planning Meeting should take place to understand what is happening and whether any support can be provided to enable the placement to continue.

When a child is settled in a long term placement, consideration should be given to the frequency of Care Planning Meetings; this should be discussed with the manager and IRO at the Child Looked After Review and recorded in the case file.

Chairing the Meeting

All Care Planning Meetings will be chaired by the allocated Social Worker, however for those cases where there is complexity or contentious issues consideration should be given to the meeting being chaired by the Team Manager or Practice Supervisor (this decision should be recorded in supervision notes).

Agenda and Minutes

The meeting agenda should be used to review the Care Plan and further discussion should be recorded as minutes using the template below: Care Planning Meeting to achieve Permanence Record.

The minutes should be distributed and uploaded on to the child's electronic file **within 5 working days**.

Informing the Independent Reviewing Officer

If changes to the Care Plan arise from Care Planning Meetings, or any other assessment/meeting, the Independent Reviewing Officer should be contacted to discuss the change and to decide whether a review is required to endorse these changes to the Care Plan.

If there are substantial changes made to a child's Care Plan as a result, a statutory review must be convened ideally within ten working days. Any agreed changes should be recorded on the Care Plan. The Independent Reviewing Officer has a responsibility to ensure Care Plans are informed by an up to date assessment.

Care Planning Meeting to achieve Permanence

Record Guidance

Name of child/children	
DOB	
Date of Meeting	
LCS Number	

In attendance

Name	Position and Agency

Apologies

Name	Position and Agency

Purpose of the meeting
Set out clearly when you will be meeting and the aims of the meetings - this can include Development of Care Plan, to formulate a Plan of Permanence, concerns regarding current Care Plan, issues with placement.
Minutes from the Previous Meeting
Review any actions identified at any previous meetings.
Plan for Permanence
Be clear regarding the current plan/proposed plan and Permanence options being considered. Ensure that aspects such as contact, sibling's assessments, family assessments and life story work have been considered and planned for as required.
Childs wishes and feelings
What does the child need? If old enough, set out the child's wishes and feelings and whether they understand what is happening.
Parents views
Be clear regarding what the parents think and whether they agree with the proposals. Also set out whether the parents understand what is happening.

Progress of Care Plan

Address specific risks and concerns about the child's safety, and their needs with consideration of their health, education, emotional and behavioural development, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation and self-care skills.

What is working well?
Be clear about the strengths and protective factors; set out what has worked well for the child and what has supported the adults to meet the needs of the child.
What are we worried about?
Set out clearly the risks, the challenges to achieving stability and a permanence plan for the child.
What needs to happen?
Be clear about the plan of work and what this looks like – set out who will take lead and timescales in the table below.

What needs to happen	Who will be responsible	When does it need to be done by	What will it achieve