**Timescales At A Glance**

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| *The aim of this ‘quick reference’ sheet is to support Social Workers and Managers*  *who work with Children, Young People and their families.*  *Remember, timescales should first and foremost be driven by* ***the child’s*** *situation and plan.*  *This sheet is an extract from Gloucestershire County Council’s* ***Practice Standards******for Children’s Services****. Please read through that first, as the context for your social work practice.* |

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| **Visiting Timescales At A Glance[[1]](#footnote-1)** | |
| **Timescales for visiting children are driven by the need for developing the working relationship with the child and family, and by the child’s plan and urgency of their situation or level of concern.** Decisions about when/how often practitioners visit are taken in supervision, with these decisions recorded on the case record and in the child’s plan. | **Manager & Worker** |
| **Early Help**  The frequency of contact is set out in the child’s plan, sufficient to enable assessment and intervention to be effective and to allow for a credible review of the child’s progress. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children we are notified about: contacts made to children’s services**   * The decision about the type of response the child needs and feedback to the referrer is made within one working day of a referral being received (WT). * If a Section 47 enquiry is triggered, the child is visited according to risk and need, no later than 2 working days.[[2]](#footnote-2) | **Social Worker** |
| **Child in Need**   * Within a maximum of 5 working days and thereafter as set out in the CiN Plan agreed with Manager. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children subject to a Child Protection Plan**   * Within a maximum of 48 hours, thereafter as set by the Initial CP Conference and Core Group * At least once every 10 working days. * At least once per month relative to need visiting should include time in the family home and, for children aged 5 and over, time alone with the child. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children looked after:**   * On the day the child is placed, then within 1 week of the beginning of the placement * Intervals no longer than four weeks during the first year of any placement * Every four weeks during subsequent years unless formally agreed as a permanent placement and once agreed, at intervals of not more than three months * Whenever reasonably asked for by a child or foster carer, regardless of placement status. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children and young people who are placed in a series of short breaks:**  (respite care arrangements, or short stays with relatives away from the main placement):   * Within the first seven placement days then within 3 months of the first placement day. * Intervals of no less than six months after the first visit * Unannounced at least once a year if placements interval is more than six months * At least annually the child’s sleeping arrangements will be seen. | **Social Worker** |

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| **Children placed in an adoptive placements:**   * Within the first week of the placement and weekly thereafter until the first review * Thereafter, the frequency of visits is determined at the child's Adoption Review or, if not specified, every six weeks for the first year and after this, three-monthly.. * Additional visits are arranged where there are any concerns. * Link worker visits as per Placement Plan, until Adoption Order made or placement ended. | **Social Worker** |
| **Privately Fostered Children**:   * Within 9 days (7 working days) from the date of notification to the local authority * Intervals of not more than six weeks during the first twelve months * Intervals of not more than 12 weeks in any 2nd or subsequent year. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children with temporarily approved foster carers or parents under Interim Care Order**:   * Weekly until the first review * Every four weeks thereafter until the carer is approved or final hearing completed. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children made subject to a Care Order and placed at home with parents**:   * Within the first week * Intervals of no more than six weeks thereafter. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children reported missing**:   * The ‘children missing/missing from care’ procedures are followed – these are on the *Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board* and *South West Child Protection Procedures* website*.* * Visited within 72 hours of the child’s return, referring to the above procedures. | **Social Worker** |
| **Children in more than one placement - residential school and foster care or residential home:**   * visited in each living situation, at least every 12 weeks | **Social Worker** |
| **Young people aged 18-21:**   * At least every 28 days by their personal advisor. * In addition keeping in touch by phone, text or email based on the YP’s preference * Frequency and type of contact agreed with the YP and set out in their Pathway Plan. | **Social Worker** |

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| **Assessment Timescales At A Glance** | |
| Single assessments are carried out within a maximum of **63** (**45 working) days.** | **Social Worker** |
| The Manager will review the progress of the single assessment between **1- 8** **working days** (concluding whether no further action is required and the assessment can be closed, or whether further work is needed); again at **20 working days**; and signed off with appropriate comment as an assessment that meets good standards by **45 working days.** | **Manager** |
| The single assessments has been updated:   * As a minimum once **every 12 months;** * Prior to a child becoming looked after; * When any significant change or incident in the child’s life requires updated assessment and planning; * Prior to a young person’s Pathway Plan being started; * Where there is a proposed significant change to the care plan; * Where progress is not seen to be made; * When a manager considers it necessary. | **Social Worker** |

***Can’t find what you’re looking for? Refer to***

* *GCC’s “Practice Standards for Children’s Services”**from which this is taken*
* [*Children's Services Procedures Manual*](http://gloucestershirechildcare.proceduresonline.com/)
* [*South West Children Protection Procedures (GSCB)*](http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/gloucestershire/)*.*

1. For further details refer to online Practice Guidance on Home Visiting. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Refer to Emergency Duty processes in TriX policy pages where necessary. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)