

Case Transfer Protocol Between the Initial Response Service, Safeguarding and Family Support Services and Looked After Children's Services



SCOPE OF THIS CHAPTER

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure the effective and efficient transfer of cases between service areas. This will ensure that there is no delay for families in receiving services; that partner agencies are clear about where and when cases are being transferred and to whom, and to ensure that appropriate decision making and plans are in place before cases leave a service area.

AMENDMENT

February 2017 - Additional information was added on Managers recording of decisions using the Management Decision Records in the child's file.

Contents

1. [Children being supported through a Child In Need Plan](#)
2. [Children on a Child Protection Plan](#)
3. [Children requiring Care Proceedings and Consideration for Pre-Proceedings](#)
4. [Looked After Children – S20](#)
5. [Children with No Recourse to Public Funding](#)
6. [Children and Young People who are Privately Fostered](#)
7. [Relinquished Babies](#)
8. [Private Law Court Reports](#)
9. [New Cases with Siblings already allocated to Social Workers](#)
10. [Transfer of Children whose Permanent Plan is Fostering or Residential Care](#)
11. [Acceptance of Cases](#)
12. [Dispute Resolution](#)

1. Children being Supported through a Child In Need Plan

- Following completion of the Child & Family assessment where a decision is made that the child/ren require continued support by a CiN plan, the case will be transferred to SFS. The transfer point will be an initial multi-agency CiN meeting;
- The IRS social worker will arrange the initial CiN meeting and invite the parents, the child if appropriate to do so, partner agencies and the SFS team who will receive the case;
- The case will transfer to the SFS unit on the day that the CiN meeting takes place. IRS must inform the receiving SFS team manager the week before the CiN meeting takes place to ensure that SFS representation can be organised. Social Workers from SFS will attend the CiN meeting and SFS will take case responsibility from this point. The case will be allocated to a social worker in SFS that same week via the team's allocation's process;
- The initial CiN meeting will discuss and ratify the CiN plan. IRS will update the CiN plan as agreed at the CiN meeting prior to electronic case transfer. Should work be outstanding from IRS involvement this must be completed by IRS, with electronic case transfer taking place no longer than two days after the CiN meeting has taken place. In these circumstances case responsibility will still transfer to SFS from the point of the CiN meeting;
- IRS must ensure that the Child and Family Assessment and initial CiN plan is recorded 3 days in advance of the CiN meeting. The SFS manager will review these documents and if there is likely to be potential disagreement about the plan then this must be discussed with the IRS manager before the meeting takes place. Any issues of ongoing dispute must be escalated through to the Team Managers and the Group Manager's as per the existing escalation policy;
- All files transferred from IRS will have a fully completed Central Index; a chronology recorded in the Analytical chronology format that evidences key events and the impact/relevance of these for the life of the child; a SMART plan and an MDR which reflects the current assessment and endorses the plan for the child.

2. Children on a Child Protection Plan

- Children being considered at ICPC will be presented by IRS after completion of the Child and Family Assessment/S47;
- The SFS social worker to be allocated the case will attend the ICPC with their Manager and take case responsibility from this point;
- The process of ICPC notification to Managers via The Hollies will continue. In addition to this the IRS manager will speak with the duty team manager in SFS regarding cases due for transfer. This must take place at least 72 hours before the ICPC to ensure appropriate case allocation within SFS;

- If there are issues relating to uncompleted work prior to the ICPC the IRS social worker will undertake this work following discussion and agreement with their Manager and the SFS Manager. This will not delay the transfer to SFS for more than 48 hours after the ICPC.

3. Children Requiring Care Proceedings and Consideration for Pre-Proceedings

- When the threshold for EPO/care proceedings is met, IRS will ensure that the application is initiated immediately in order to safeguard the child/ren. The point of transfer to SFS is at the first ICO hearing. The SFS social worker will attend court with their Manager to accept case transfer. Notification of the hearing date must be made in a timely way to ensure appropriate allocation in SFS. This must include a conversation between the IRS and SFS Team Managers to handover the casework issues;
- If concerns are not immediate then IRS will complete all relevant paperwork and present at PLO panel to seek agreement for pre-proceedings or for planned care proceedings. The SFS team manager will also attend panel to ensure decision making and plans are clear to the receiving team;
- If panel agreement is given to the immediate initiation of care proceedings IRS will complete the court paperwork and attend the first ICO hearing. The SFS social worker and their manager will also attend this hearing at which point the case will transfer to SFS. If pre-proceedings are agreed SFS will accept case responsibility from the ICPC, post placement meeting or first LAC review depending on whether these children are CP listed or Looked After;
- If contact arrangements are to be put into place then IRS will clearly establish what the requirements for contact are and make the referral to the Contact Centre prior to transfer of the case to SFS. If there is any delay in the contact centre provision then IRS will ensure that the family are provided with the agreed level of contact for a maximum of 1 week, after which SFS will assume responsibility for contact.

4. Looked After Children – S20

- If a child/ren is accommodated under S20 and the plan is not for the child to return home within 12 weeks (i.e. unaccompanied minor) then the case will transfer from IRS to LAC at the post placement meeting. IRS must inform the receiving LAC Team Manager as soon as the post placement meeting has been arranged to enable attendance at the post placement meeting All referrals for health assessments, PEP etc will be completed by IRS;
- LAC Team Manager as soon as the LAC review has been arranged to enable attendance at the meeting. All referrals for health assessments, PEP etc will be completed by IRS;
- If a child/ren is accommodated under S20 due to safeguarding concerns and further assessment is required regarding return home, then the case will transfer from IRS to SFS. Transfer will take place at the post placement meeting or the first LAC review if the first transfer point is not met due to ongoing work being completed by IRS. IRS must inform the

receiving SFS Team Manager as soon as the post placement meeting has been arranged. IRS will consider the need to attend PLO panel to request pre-proceedings on all of these cases and if this is deemed appropriate proceed to present at PLO panel as above. All paperwork for health assessment, PEP etc will be completed by IRS;

- Children and young people who are a challenge to care because of family breakdown will only be accommodated for a maximum of six weeks in conjunction with parents agreed co-operation with the Edge of Care team. These cases will transfer from IRS to SFS at the post placement meeting or the first LAC review should the first transfer point be missed due to ongoing work being undertaken by IRS. IRS must inform the receiving SFS Team Manager as soon as the meeting has been arranged to enable appropriate allocation within the receiving service.

5. Children with No Recourse to Public Funding

- On completion of the Child & Family Assessment and the Human Rights Assessment (HRA) where the outcome is that the LA has a duty to provide the family with support, the case will transfer from IRS to SFS. Although the children will be considered CiN, in most cases there will not be a requirement to hold a CiN meeting as the HRA clearly records the financial support the family are to receive. The IRS Team Manager will therefore speak with the SFS Team Manager to discuss the case and agree electronic transfer. Should a separate CiN plan also be required then transfer will be at an initial CiN meeting as per the process for children receiving support through a CiN plan.

6. Children and Young People who are Privately Fostered

- On completion of the Private Fostering Assessment (PFA) where the outcome is that the arrangement is Private Fostering, the case will transfer to the relevant SFS team. The IRS Manager will speak with the SFS Manager to discuss the case and agree electronic transfer. Should a separate CiN plan also be required then handover will be at an initial CiN meeting as per the process for children receiving support through a CiN plan. Prior to transfer of any privately fostered child IRS must notify Family Placements about the need for a carer assessment. There should be a joint visit between IRS and Family Placements.

7. Relinquished Babies

- IRS will complete the Child & Family Assessment to determine that the mother does want to relinquish the baby. IRS will inform the adoption team immediately in order to facilitate joint work. If the mother remains of the opinion that she does want to relinquish, then the baby will be accommodated under S20. IRS will invite the relevant SFS team to attend the post placement meeting. Transfer of the case will take place at this point or the first LAC review should the first transfer point be missed due to work being undertaken by IRS. All referrals for health assessment etc will be completed by IRS.

8. Private Law Court Reports

- In respect of S7 and S37 report requests, these MUST be transferred to SFS on the day that they are received by MASH following a telephone discussion with the receiving SFS Manager. MASH will ensure that timescales for completion of the reports are clearly detailed on the referral.

9. New Cases with Siblings already Allocated to Social Workers

- When a referral is received in respect of an unborn and the sibling/s already has an allocated social worker, the case will transfer immediately from MASH to the service area and team where the sibling/s is open. This will not apply if the sibling/s are in a long term foster or adoption placement but will apply if the siblings are placed at home with parents.

10. Transfer of Children whose Permanent Plan is Fostering or Residential Care

- For those cases in proceedings the SFS Manager will notify LAC in advance of the final hearing date. SFS will arrange a transfer meeting with LAC at least 5 days before the final hearing and where agreed as appropriate, the receiving social worker from LAC will attend the final hearing;
- Cases will be electronically transferred within 48 hours of proceedings being concluded;
- In respect of section 20 children, transfer will take place from SFS to LAC at the second LAC review. Where a plan of permanency by way of fostering is to be presented, SFS will complete all paperwork and the SFS Team Manager will speak with the LAC duty manager at least two weeks prior to the review to ensure LAC attendance at the review. All transfers are subject to information being available and actions completed as per the relevant transfer checklist. If there are any outstanding tasks for SFS to complete this will be agreed between the SFS and LAC Manager and must be completed prior to the LAC review. LAC will take case responsibility at the LAC review;
- For all transfers to LAC, the new social worker must be introduced to the children and where possible, the parents, following the transfer meeting. Ideally this will be before the second LAC review.

11. Acceptance of Cases

- All electronic transfers of cases must be accepted by the receiving in manager within 24hours of the request being made.

12. Dispute Resolution

- If the Manager has concerns in respect of a case received for transfer, then any challenge regarding acceptance of the case **MUST** be made to the transferring Manager within 24hours of the transfer request. Concerns in respect of a case will not mean that a case transfer is not accepted;
- If resolution cannot be agreed then this will be escalated to the Team Managers for the team transferring and ultimately to the Group Managers for the respective services.