



Case Closure Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

Good quality endings of social care intervention and closing of cases is equally as important as the way in which relationships are built at the beginning of any intervention. If a case is closed in a planned manner, then this lays a good base for if there needs to be any involvement in the future.

There are important practice reasons for ensuring that a case closure record is completed when the involvement of Childrens Social Care comes to an end, and for this to be completed promptly.

Firstly, it ensures that the family are clear that children's social care is no longer involved with them, and that they have a record of the reason for working with them and a brief closing summary of what has been achieved and the next steps.

Secondly, it provides clarity within teams, and for other agencies, who make future requests for support / assessment, that there is no current involvement with the family.

Cases may be closed in the following circumstances:

- Objectives / goals have been achieved and no further input is required
- The family require ongoing support but there is no role for Social Care
- Family decline further support and there is no statutory reason (e.g. child protection concern) for work to continue
- The child / family moves permanently to another area and there is no reason for continued involvement by us.

Where a child has been looked after the case can only be closed when they are no longer looked after and one of the above circumstances are met. At the point of closure, the Independent Reviewing Officer must be notified, and an assessment completed of the services that may be required in the future to prevent the child becoming looked after again.

2. Policy

The Closure Record summarises the impact of actions and services provided to a child and their family, and the evidence that supports the decision to close a case. This is used when it is planned to cease work with a child or young person and their family.

The Closure Record should be completed as soon as the decision to close a case has been made. A case is deemed to be closed from the date the Closure Record is authorised on Liquid Logic by a team manager.



3. Procedure

The procedure for completing the Closure Record is described, step-by-step, in the chart below.

Agent	Action
1. Worker	Discusses with the team manager, (or senior practitioner, where so delegated), the case for no further action by social care with regard to the needs of the child
2. Worker	Consults the child (where they are of appropriate age and understanding), the parent and other involved professionals, about the decision to take no further action.
3. Worker	Records on the Closure Record the views of the child and parent about the case closure.
4. Worker	Completes the Closure Record and notifies the team manager.
5. Team Manager	Authorises the Closure Record, if approved.

4. Completing a Closure Record

All Closure Records must address the following areas:

Reason for children's service involvement

This records a brief summary of why services were provided to the child or young person. It may include the reason the child or young person was originally referred to children's social care, the outcome of assessments in addition to any needs identified during the time that services were provided.

For example, the Closure Record on Harry potter, aged 5 years, recorded:

Reason for children's service involvement

Harry's mother, Ms Potter, contacted Childrens Initial Advice Team for support following the premature birth of Harry's brother, Mark, on 22nd January 2019. Ms Potter had recently moved into the area and had no local support and was finding it difficult to cope. A single (child and families Assessment) identified that Ms Potter would benefit from contact with other children and sponsored childminding was arranged. In March 2010 Ms Potter was admitted to hospital with acute depression. Emergency foster care was arranged before Harry and Mark were placed with maternal grandparents in Durham. Assistance with funding for contact was provided during this period. A child and Families Assessment was undertaken and a package of support put in place to support Harry and Mark following Ms Reeve's discharge from hospital in May 2020.



Details of social care interventions since assessment/admission/last review

This records what direct and indirect work has been complete with the child(ren) and their family during the current period of social care involvement

Review of planned actions

This section records the outcome of the actions and services contained within the plan for the child or young person, along with the impact of any unplanned services. All services received by the child/young person should be considered, including actions to be taken by the child or young person and their family. The actual level of services received should be recorded.

Reason for Closure:

This records why it has been decided to close the case at this time and comment on any progress and success made.

For example, the Closure Record on Harry Potter aged 5 years, recorded:

Reason for Closure

Support to Harry, Mark and Ms Potter included child minding, short break care and support from Safe Families volunteer. The review held on 27th July 2020, heard that Mark was making satisfactory progress in all areas of his development and Ms Potter was in good health. Ms Reeve had made links in the community, including local mother and baby group. Short break care was discontinued, and it was agreed that children's services would cease involvement in September 2020, as Harry started a new school. A review was held prior to closure and as progress had continued in all areas closure was confirmed. Ms Potter and Harry's school are aware that they can contact the Childrens Initial Advice Team if further support is required.

Views of child/young person

The plan to close the case should be discussed with the child or young person and their parent(s)/main carer(s), prior to closure to enable them comment on whether they think that closure is appropriate at this time. It may also provide the family with an opportunity to comment on the services they have received.

Views of parent(s)/main carer(s)

The plan to close the case should be discussed with the child's parent(s)/main carer(s), prior to closure to enable them comment on whether they think that closure is appropriate at this time. It may also provide the child's parent(s)/main carer(s) with an opportunity to comment on the services they have received.



Sharing the closure summary

When a Closure Record is given out it should be marked to indicate whose copy it is, and on what date it was given. This can be hand-written next to the authorisation section e.g. 'parent's copy' 3.10.2020

Where a parent does not speak or read English, the Social Worker should arrange for the Closure Record to be explained to the child, where of appropriate age and understanding, and to the parent with an interpreter.

Domestic Violence

Where an assessment identifies domestic abuse / violence as an area of concern, the closure summary must acknowledge what work has been complete with the perpetrator of the abuse / violence. It must also clearly state what actions need to be taken should the perpetrator be released from a custodial sentence or actions should the victim and perpetrator resume their relationship

Signatures

The Closure Record should be signed by the child or young person and their parents, who should be provided with a copy of the record.