

Children & Family Services Transfer Process

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Author:	Karen Atalla	Sign & Date:	September 2018
Head of Service:	Pete Campbell	Sign & Date:	
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Related Documents

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This document sets out the arrangements for transfers between social work teams in West Berkshire Children's Services, together with a summary of the standards required and management responsibilities to be met before cases transfer

2. Applicability

- 2.1. It applies to the following teams:
- Contacts Advice & Assessment
 - Child Protection and Proceedings/Child in Need
 - Disabled Children's Team
 - Looked after Children Services
 - Leaving Care Team
 - Targeted Intervention Service
 - SHIP

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Head of Children & Families Service has overall responsibility for ensuring that transfers are managed appropriately in accordance with these agreed standards/processes.
- 3.2. The Service Manager of CAAS (Contact Advice & Assessment Team/MASH) is responsible for:
- Directing and reviewing this standard.
 - Ensuring that there is effective consultation and communication on all related matters
 - Publishing and promoting the adoption of this standard.
- 3.3. The managers of the teams detailed in para 2.1 above are responsible for the day-to-day management of the processes related to transfers including ensuring implementation of this standard.
- 3.4. All staff in the teams detailed in para 2.1 above are responsible for familiarizing themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with these standards/processes.

4. Transfer Points

- 4.1. Contact Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) will always endeavour to inform the receiving teams at the earliest opportunity of cases requiring transfer. There will be weekly transfer meetings held to ensure there is no delay in transferring cases to prevent potential drift and 'bottle neck' of case work. A transfer spreadsheet has been developed for all service areas to use to identify cases for transfer with dates for ICPC, CIN meetings and LAC reviews. A weekly transfer meeting will take place to agree and pre-empt cases for transfer. Cases will be transferred at the following points:
- 4.1.1. Child Protection cases will transfer at the first Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), where the child or young person is made subject to a Protection Plan. When the decision is made for ICPC Contact Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) will notify the relevant Locality Team, adding the case to the transfer sheet. C.A.A.S will ensure that the case is ready for transfer at the Initial Child Protection Case Conference. The relevant Family Safeguarding Team will identify a worker who will attend the case conference and the case will transfer at this point. (The receiving team must provide a named worker so that RAISE can be updated immediately following transfer. ***If a named worker is not provided the***

case/s will need to be assigned to a manager in the receiving team to enable the CP plan to be placed on Care Director); this is essential to prevent delay of case transfer.

- 4.1.2. Looked after children with a S20 status (where care proceedings are not anticipated) will be transferred at the first statutory LAC review. Transfer of this case will be to the relevant Locality team unless Locality and the Looked After Children Service agree the case transfers directly to LAC at this point. (This cannot be negotiated by CAAS). CAAS will ensure that the case is ready for transfer at the first review. The receiving team will identify a worker to attend the first review. The **Leaving Care Team** takes cases when the young person reaches their 16th birthday. There should be proactive planning prior to this with secondary allocation to **LCT** when the YP reaches 15yrs and 9months of age.
 - 4.1.3. Cases presented at Legal Planning meeting will be transferred at the first Public Law Outline meeting to the relevant Family Safeguarding Team.
 - 4.1.4. Children who become the subject of Care Proceedings will be transferred from the initial Court hearing to the relevant Locality team who will receive notification as soon as the date of this hearing is known. Receiving social worker/team should attend the Court hearing alongside the holding social worker.
 - 4.1.5. Child in Need cases will transfer from CAAS, at the point of the initial Child in Need meeting. Locality team will be notified via the transfer spreadsheet and transfer meeting. Locality team will ensure identified Social Worker or Senior Social Worker attends first Child in Need meeting. If a worker from the receiving team is not able to attend the meeting, the point of transfer will not be delayed.
 - 4.1.6. The Disabled Children's Team undertakes Single Assessments and Child Protection Enquiries. Any family requiring an assessment in which child/ren/young person/s has a disability and is the sole child/YP this assessment would be undertaken and work completed by DCT, including Child Protection enquiry/referral and SA.
- 4.2. If an assessment is required on a family with a number of children including a child/young person that reaches criteria for DCT, a joint SA should be undertaken. If further work is required following the SA, a decision regarding transfer would be based on outcome of the SA. If assessment determines that the main area for further work is the child/yp with the additional needs, then DCT would continue the work. If SA determines further involvement with the whole family the case would transfer to the most appropriate team with specialist advice / input from DCT.

5. Manager responsibilities.

- 5.1. All designated managers for the service areas will identify cases for transfer. An updated transfer sheet will be used to inform the meeting. Any cases not on the list that are discussed at the transfer meeting must be added to the list for tracking purposes. A nominated manager from the service areas to attend the transfer meeting whenever possible. If this is not possible the transfer list will be used as the tool for confirmation of notification of transfer.
 - 5.2. Manager to ensure that the spreadsheet for their service area is updated as this can be used as a tool to provide early identification of cases to transfer and dates of meetings, i.e. ICPC, CIN meeting, LAC review.
 - 5.3. All cases will have a completed transfer audit/checklist form signed off by the individual team managers prior to transfer to ensure quality of case work. Copy of the file audit/checklist form will be entered onto RAISE for the receiving team to access.
 - 5.4. In order to monitor, manage capacity issues and prevent drift, the following process and timescales must be maintained: Each service area must manage their individual issues i.e. capacity due to staffing issues, annual leave, and sick leave. A case cannot remain with the holding team past the agreed points of transfer identified in this document. (*This does not remove 'goodwill' between service areas and the service areas supporting each other whenever possible*).
- 5.4.1.** Receiving Team Managers to view the transferring case audit/checklist form within 24 hours

of receipt and any deficits referred back to the relevant team manager to discuss and rectify as necessary. Once a case has transferred, **cases are not to be 'transferred back'** via CD. Any Issues need to be resolved via the Team Managers in the first instance, if not resolved escalated to Service Managers.

5.4.2. Upon cases reaching agreed and appropriate transfer points and a satisfactory file audit/checklist form completed; all cases transferring will transfer via the respective holding team to the receiving team at the agreed transfer points outlined in this document.

5.4.3. Case responsibility will remain with the team transferring the case until re-allocated to the receiving team/social worker. Should the receiving team for any transfer not provide a named social worker the case will be transferred in name to the Team Manager and the relevant Service Manager advised via email. The holding team are responsible for re allocation of the case on Care Director. An email to be sent to managers in the receiving team confirming re allocation and a copy of the email placed into a case note in Care Director.

5.5. N.B. Child Protection, if the Plan outcomes are not achieved within **12 months prior to the 3rd review conference** the case must be reviewed in supervision by the social worker and Team Manager. Legal Planning processes to be considered at this point. A mandatory referral to legal planning should occur at the **2 weeks prior to the third CPRC**.

6. File Standards for cases transferring between all service areas.

6.1. The following minimum file standards are required when transferring a case to and from any statutory team:

6.1.1. For all cases

- There is a completed Single Assessment
- There is an up to date plan. (CP, CIN, SOS).
- Management oversight is evident via assessment sign off and management case notes.
- Due casework processes are evident and recorded and Care Director records up to date.
- Statutory visits (if applicable) have been recorded with the purpose and outcome of the visit explicitly stated
- There is evidence that the child/family are aware of the proposed transfer and the assessment has been shared. (**Both** parents unless assessed as a risk to do so).
- Transfer audit checklist/summary form has been completed and signed off by a manager in the transferring team.
- Chronology updated to point of transfer (continuation of chronology is the responsibility of the receiving team).

(Note that a transfer audit/checklist form must be completed by each team/service transferring a case).

In addition

6.1.2. For LAC cases:

- Up to date statutory visits
- Initial Health Assessment has happened or is booked
- PEPs where possible. Where this is not possible a date should have been identified for the initial PEP meeting providing that this is not prevented by the child becoming looked after during school holidays.

- Up to date LAC Care Plan on file, including Pathway plan if appropriate
- Relevant LAC documentation completed
- Updated Single Assessment
- Updated Chronology to point of transfer
- Details of the placement

6.1.3. *For those where Legal Proceedings have commenced*

- Relevant statement and legal care/supervision plans along with court chronology
- As above for LAC if child is also looked after by the local authority
- Transfer audit completed by a manager

7. Handover Process

7.1. Child Protection

- The receiving team/service will ensure that there is a representative attending the Initial Child Protection Conference. This will be the receiving social worker or Team Manager.
- The case will transfer to the receiving team on the day the ICPC takes place.
- Receiving social worker to undertake a joint visit with the holding social worker to the family prior to the ICPC being held.

7.2. Proceedings/PLO/Pre-proceedings

- Whenever possible the receiving team to have a representative attending the Legal planning meeting and appropriate subsequent meetings or court hearing. This should be the receiving social worker but if this is not possible a duty social worker or Team Manager to attend from the receiving team.
- Transferring and receiving social workers will jointly attend hand over visit to the family, carers and child (ren) prior to case responsibility transferring. A case discussion will also take place between social workers.

7.3. Transfer of cases to Looked after Children Service.

7.3.1. *Children subject to legal proceedings - work to be completed prior to transfer.*

- A representative from LAC service will attend Legal planning Meeting to ensure they are fully conversant with all cases in Proceedings and Pre-Proceedings and can be involved in joint planning prior to filing the care plan.
- Booking for Permanence Panel will follow the issue of Proceedings.
- The Locality teams will send LAC and Adoption Service a spreadsheet showing all cases in proceedings, including the planned final hearing date to ensure that cases can transfer at appropriate times and that the family finding work proceeds in a timely manner. This spreadsheet will also support the monitoring of trends in care proceedings and will support targeted recruitment of adopters.
- LAC must also be informed of any statutory LAC review dates. The designated LAC Manager, in consultation with their Locality Manager counterpart, will decide whether LAC will attend any reviews prior to the final hearing.

7.3.2. *Work to be undertaken when the child's Care Order / Placement Order is granted.*

- The case will transfer from Locality team to LAC immediately after the making of a Care Order/ Placement Order
- The child's electronic Care Director File must be up to date at point of transfer, including key information, assessments and reports and the chronology. Where appropriate the PEP should be completed and all health checks undertaken/arranged.

7.3.3. *When a young person is subject to S.20 accommodation.*

- With regard to children who are accommodated and where the plan is not currently rehabilitation home the Manager will alert the LAC Manager and invite LAC to the 2nd review where it is evident that there can at this time be no return home and the case needs to transfer.
- Prior to transfer file standards need to be applied ensuring the audit/checklist transfer form has been completed and signed off by a manager.
- Case will transfer within 2 weeks of second review.
- All young people transferring in this way must have a long term care plan that includes their placement plan and for young people fewer than 12 then legal advice must have been sought.
- No young person can have their agreed long-term placement in an IFA or residential unit without the case having been discussed at Accommodation & Resources Panel. The SM and IRO and manager from either fostering or adoption must outline the rational why this is the preferred plan and why no in house resource can be utilised, and outline what activity has taken place to recruit individual carers for the young person where necessary.
- Looked after Children introductory visits with the transferring social worker to the young person is to be arranged.
- Where rehabilitation is the plan home the Family Safeguarding Social Worker will retain the case. The Family Safeguarding Team Manager will review the case after 6 weeks to assess progress against the rehabilitation plan. Where progress is slow and an imminent return home is not an option the case will be discussed with the Team Manager in LAC to discuss the case transferring within 2 weeks of second review.

On the child's electronic Care Director File the following documents must be fully completed prior to child's electronic record transferring to LAC

- Placement and Information Record
- Child's legal status and in the instance of a child being subjected to a legal order granted by the Courts a copy of the said order must be attached on the child's electronic file
- LAC Care Plan and legal care plan - copy in Documents.
- Legal bundle - this must include all expert assessments and statements presented within the proceedings. This will be a separate paper file
- PEP
- Latest LAC Review.
- Up to date Health Assessment and Health Plan – attached to the child's electronic file
- Chronology of events that is up to date.
- Final supervision record outlining plan of work required and next significant events stating dates of last visit and dates of significant upcoming events such as review's, health assessment etc.

7.3.4. *Children who are remanded into local authority care under LAPSOA 2012.*

- These children will be referred to Contact Advice and Assessment Service for an assessment and LAC procedures to be commenced. Liaising with the LAC Service and Youth Offending Team where required.

7.3.5. *Children whose adoption placement/SGO placement has broken down.*

- These children will be referred to Contact, Advice and Assessment Service. Should these cases become LAC they will be allocated as per transfer protocol transferring as any other case.

7.3.6. *Children who are 16 years old and older and who present as homeless*

- These children will be assessed by the Contact Advice and Assessment Service and will be subject to the Joint Housing Assessment process. Should these cases become LAC they will be transferred to the LAC service at initial LAC review.

7.3.7. *Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People.*

- Contact Advice and Assessment Service to undertake an assessment of age and make the decision as to whether meets threshold to transfer to Looked after Children Service as per transfer protocol. (i.e. initial LAC review).

7.4. Transfer of Child in Need Cases.

Cases will transfer from Contact Advice and Assessment at the Initial child in need meeting that follows the completion of the Single Assessment that agrees the child is eligible for services under S17 1989 The Children Act.

7.5. Transfer of Cases to Looked After Child Service from Child in Need.

Where a child becomes Accommodated under S 20 The Children Act 1989. The case will transfer from the relevant Family Safeguarding Team at the second review if Rehabilitation is deemed unlikely.

7.6. Transfer of Looked after Children to the Child In Need Service

Any step down from Looked after status that does not require an 18+ service but where a Child and Family Assessment clearly indicates the need for a time limited support package for a child and their family with clear recommendations would transfer to the relevant Family Safeguarding Team following the completion of an updated Single Assessment with a Child in Need Plan. The Holding team would transfer the case at the Child in Need meeting which they would arrange.

7.7. Pathways for Targeted Intervention Service

Cases referred into TIS on CRR

CAAS agrees to take back for an assessment. Following manager to manager discussions. There is also to be a brief mention of these transfers at the transfer meeting for data collection.

Cases referred into TIS via a Single Assessment.

If the case has had a single assessment which was completed under 3 months, the step up will sit within the Locality teams. Following manager to manager discussions. If not an emergency the case to go via transfer meeting.

Transfer paperwork agreed to be submitted the Friday before next meeting.

Cases over 3 months old and at end of TIS intervention.

Will step up via CAAS. There is also to be a brief mention of these transfers at the transfer meeting for data collection.

Emergency/Sec47 concerns
Manager to manager discussions directly with CAAS/MASH.

8. S.H.I.P

Please note that S.H.I.P is part of the transfer process which provides a tracking function. The S.H.I.P assessment is a specialist assessment to be undertaken by two SHIP workers in conjunction with any identified ongoing work that would need to be undertaken by the identified allocated worker in the receiving Locality team. This assessment would usually be identified as part of the Single Assessment process, which upon completion in CAAS would transfer to the relevant locality team to progress the ongoing work and jointly work the S.H.I.P assessment. Both workers to be identified for case transfer and the transfer to progress as per the protocol for transfer of the case to Locality following completion of a Single Assessment.