

Children and young people who are waiting to be allocated to a worker (unallocated work) Practice Guide

Children without an unallocated social worker

- Any child who has an open referral/under assessment more than one working day is deemed as unallocated including:
 - Child Protection
 - Children in Care
 - Children in Need
 - Open for assessment
- Any child whose worker has left the authority and there is no new identified worker.
- Any child or young person who allocated worker is on sick leave, after 10 working days.

Service priorities for the allocation of work

When considering priorities for allocations, managers need to consider factors that might increase risk and highlight the severity of the child's lived experience. The Team Manager should consider any characteristics which might elevate the risk and require a higher priority for allocation. For example, repeat referrals/ plan due to a similar pattern of concerns historically, age of the child, disability, SEND etc.

Management of unallocated children and young people

All unallocated children need to be held against the unallocated worker tray in each team; this tray will be accessible by the team manager, practice supervisor, service manager, Head of Service as well as all the workers in the team to undertake identified tasks when on duty. The responsibility of unallocated children is a shared responsibility.

All children will continue to be supported by social workers undertaking duty activity whilst awaiting allocation to one worker. The team manager must put management oversight in case notes. This oversight will task the duty worker with an initial plan to support the child and family.

From the point of being unallocated, the Team Manager will complete a case note on LCS using the following under "Manager's Oversight".

- **Safety Plan (how we know child is safe during the unallocated period)**
- **Date child will be next seen**
- **Date case will be reviewed by Team Manager (at a minimum of every 10 days whilst unallocated)**
- **The date of the next CiN / CP / CiC review and how this will be overseen**

Children who remain unallocated, will need to be reviewed every 10 days until allocated.

If a child cannot be allocated, the Team Manager must send a letter to the family and other involved agencies such as schools or health within 5 working days of becoming unallocated.

This letter should include details regarding how to contact the team in the event of any issues and details of the visiting frequency by the team duty worker.

To ensure that we keep children informed a similar letter will be sent by the Team Manager to the child if they are over 11 years of age (appropriate to the child's understanding and individual need) and also to the parents so that they are fully informed of plans where safe to do so and appropriate to a child's understanding and individual need.

Reviewing unallocated children and escalation

The Team Manager must notify the Service Manager as soon as a child is known to be unallocated. The Service Manager should review the unallocated child and support to allocate within their service area.

The Service Manager should also record Manager's Oversight on Liquid Logic and inform Head of Service on day 10.

The Head Service will inform the Deputy Director of the unallocated children being supported by duty social workers and to agree any safety planning. This discussion will also support identifying patterns or resource implications.

The service must balance their allocation decisions to prioritise the children most at risk.

A weekly report will identify unallocated children's cases with the length of time unallocated for the DCS and Deputy Director. This report will be available for CSCMT every week.