As a key part of the Team around the Child it is an expectation that Dudley MBC Foster Carers attend meetings relevant to their role and the young person to be / placed in their care.

**Placement planning meetings**

When a child is placed with you, a placement planning meeting is held within five working days. The people invited to the meeting are the child, the parents, you, the child / young person’s social worker, and your supervising social worker.

The purpose of this meeting is to make sure that all parties are aware of routines and arrangements for the child / young person and agree with them. The aim of this is to share important information about the child and to allow any worries or concerns that the child, parents, or foster carers may have to be shared and addressed wherever possible.

It also includes information about the child’s health, medication, and Family Time arrangements, as well as exploring the arrangements around delegated authority to the foster carer and support for the child and for the foster carer to enable the child’s needs to be met and for the placement to be a success.

The meeting is informal and usually takes place at your home. Both the child’s social worker and your supervising social worker have responsibilities in relation to this meeting. The paperwork completed for the purposes of this meeting should be copied to the parents, child (if age appropriate) and yourself.

**Child in Care (CiC) Reviews of children’s cases**

The requirements relating to the reviews of children and young people looked after by local authorities are set out in the Care Planning and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.

The purpose of the review is to ensure that the child’s welfare is safeguarded and promoted throughout the time the child or young person is looked after by the local authority. The CiC review meeting will consider the Care Plan, monitor progress, and make decisions to amend the care plan in the light of changed knowledge and circumstances.

**When do CiC Reviews take place?**

The reviews tend to follow a set format as specified by government guidelines. A review may also be held at other times, for example, following an investigation of a complaint which may indicate a need for a review, a disruption of a placement and in all circumstances where the need arises for a change in the Care Plan.

CLA reviews may be held in the foster carers’ home or in a neutral place and are intended to be as relaxed as possible for the child. During the review areas such as health, education, placement issues, contact and future plans for the child are covered.

**Who is invited to the CiC Reviews?**

CLA reviews are the children’s review. Children and their parents may also bring someone who can provide friendly support (such an advocate or friend).

The child and the child’s family are more likely to feel able to participate if the meeting is small. Other people may be invited if they have a specific contribution to make and it is considered that their written views or a report would not be enough.

The attendance of other professionals should always be discussed in advance with the child or young person and their views obtained. The guidance recommends that where a long-term plan has been set in place a small group should be identified as essential attendees and those to be invited will consist of the social worker, the child, the child’s parents and foster carers and the reviewing officer.

Where it would not be in the interests of a child or young person for a parent to attend the review, separate arrangements will be made.

If there are any issues that need to be discussed outside the CLA reviews, foster carers are encouraged to request professional meetings or signs of stability meetings in between reviews.

**Who chairs CiC Reviews?**

Reviews are chaired by independent reviewing officers. Independent Reviewing Officers do not have any direct line management responsibility for children and young people looked after by the local authority.

The role of the reviewing officer is to bring a degree of oversight and objectivity to the monitoring of practice and decision-making in relation to the making and implementation of the Care Plan.

**How can foster carers prepare for CiC Reviews?**

Foster carers play a key role in every review because of their knowledge of the child or young person and their progress and development since placement or the previous review.

At all reviews you will be invited to share your experiences of caring for the child or young person. While these may be positive, most people find it quite difficult to hear what others think about them and this is particularly difficult for children.

It is therefore helpful if you can think quite carefully about what you want to say and how to say it and that you sit down with the child or young person beforehand and talk to them about the issues that will be raised.

You will be asked to complete the [Foster Carer Report.](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/children-and-families/adoption-and-fostering/fostering-documents-forms-and-guidance/foster-carer-report.docx)

**Questions foster carers may be asked**

At most reviews, depending on the age and plans for the child or young person, reviewing officers are likely to ask you some or all of the following questions:

* What is the child or young person’s routine?
* What is their role in the family and their relationship with you?
* What are your expectations and what are the boundaries?
* What level of contact is there with the child or young person’s family?
* What friends does the foster child have?
* Who liaises with the school and, where applicable, what are the transport arrangements for example which carers transports the child?

At the end of the review, the reviewing officer completes the report.

The child, the child’s parents, and others with [Parental Responsibility](https://www.proceduresonline.com/resources/glossary-cs/) must be notified of all review decisions, with details of who is responsible for their implementation and the timescales. Where the decision is made to change the Care Plan, then a new Care Plan must be made.

**Placement stability meetings and disruption meetings**

When placements that were planned to be permanent or short term come to an end or are disrupted, it's upsetting for everyone involved. This is because it's not been possible to achieve what everyone wanted for the child – namely the security of belonging to a new family.

A placement stability meeting can be called at any time to look at how the placement can be supported to avoid the placement disrupting and to explore how the placement could be supported to meet the child’s needs.

If the placement disrupted, what is helpful in these circumstances is to have a formal meeting, called a [disruption meeting](https://www.proceduresonline.com/norfolk_cs/chapters/p_place_disrup_meet.html) to look at the sequence of events leading to the placement breakdown and possibly to the child leaving the placement and to learn from the experience so that:

* The child’s needs can be met
* You can be supported
* Recommendations can be made to assist future planning and preparation for short term or permanent placements

All placements are different, but it has been found that placements tend to disrupt for one or more of the following reasons:

* The existence of unidentified factors when the placement was made –which were not recognised by the social workers or yourself at the time – but which later proved to be critical to the placement
* An assessment of the capacity or ability of you and the child to make a permanent attachment
* The emergence of circumstances that could not have been predicted

Matters that may be considered at a disruption meeting are the:

* Child’s wishes and feelings
* Child’s early history
* Circumstances leading to the child being looked after by the local authority and what has happened to the child since being looked after by DMBC Fostering Service
* Decision to seek an alternative short term or permanent foster family for the child – and preparation of the child
* Process of selecting you for the child – and reasons for the decision
* Introductory process
* Reasons for the decision to proceed with the placement following introductions
* Support and supervision planned and provided
* Difficulties that have developed

At the end of the meeting a report should be prepared by the chairperson and sent to all participants. This will set out the information contributed to the meeting, the issues identified and a summary and recommendations.

**Child protection review**

A Child protection review is held within three months of the Initial Child Protection Case Conference and then every six months or as determined by the chairperson of the review.

A decision is made at each review as to whether the child should still be subject to a Child Protection Plan. Child protection reviews are chaired by independent reviewing officers and are different from reviews held for all children and young people looked after by Dudley MBC.

**Personal Educational Plan (PEP)**

Foster carers are also required to participate in the educational plan for all Children in Care. The arrangement of the meeting will be undertaken by the social worker for the child or young person. A representative from the child or young person’s school will also be present.

A PEP summarises the child’s developmental and educational needs, short-term targets, long-term plans and aspirations and which contains or refers to the child’s record of achievement.

**Other relevant meetings**

Please note this is not an exhaustive list of meetings that Foster Carers will be required to attend both the carer and the Supervising Social Worker should discuss and agree on which meetings outside of those listed above would be relevant for the foster carer to attend.

**Standards and regulations**

Fostering Services National Minimum Standards (England) 2011

* Standard 1 – The child’s wishes and feelings and those significant them
* Standard 15 – Matching the child to a placement that meets their identified needs
* Standard 11 – Preparation for a placement

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care

* Standard 1 – Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people
* Standard 2 – Understand your role as a foster carer
* Standard 4 – Know how to communicate effectively

|  |
| --- |
| Policy date: 16.06.22 |
| Reviewed by Fostering Managers: 16.06.22 |
| Approved by SMT: 27.06.22 |
| Policy Review Date: 27.06.23 |