**Transfer and Allocation between Children’s Services at Complex (FIS) and Child in Need (Children’s Social Care) - April 2022**

Head of Service - Prevention

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| **Version number** | **Date updated** | **Updated by** | **Review date** |
| Version 1 | 08.06.2022 | Samantha Fahey/Kelly Brewer | 08.06.2023 |

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# Introduction and Purpose

This internal to CSC practice note is intended to provide clarity about the process for transfer to support consistent practice across the county.

The services provided within Somerset County Council Children’s Services should all be in line with the Working Together 2018 guidance: [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf).

***The Effective Support document we use in Somerset defines four levels of need, and it is complex and acute that this guidance note seeks to address. The Effective Support document can be found on the Somerset Safeguarding Children (SSCP) website,*** [***here.***](https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/effective-support/)

For some children, a referral into a social work team for a Child and Family Assessment may be necessary, even though the outcome may be for the child (and their family) to continue to receive intervention from a non-social work service.

# Transfer and Allocation Meetings

The decision making around where the child/family’s needs are best met should be made in consultation and collaboration between Children’s Social Care social work service (SW), FIS, and CWD ESS and their managers. Ordinarily this will be via the Transfer and Allocation Meeting (TAM) for children already receiving a service unless a need for urgent Step Up for child protection reasons is apparent.

Each locality area will use a consistent format to track and record the weekly TAM in terms of children discussed, decisions made etc. in addition to the outcome form on LCS/EHM

# Step-Up

* For when needs have escalated to the point a referral to social work services is suggested – TAM discussion to take place
* A Step-Up form details risks and strengths, work completed so far and its outcome, and records the decision made and rationale in the meeting.
* The Step-Up form should be completed by the FIS Team Leader or Professional Practitioner with case responsibility following a case discussion / supervision with the Family Intervention Worker and shared 2 working days ahead of the TAM for the Social Work Team Manager to make any enquires they need ahead of the actual TAM
* Social Work Team Manager will create the contact and referral record using the information from the Step-Up form shared at TAM

Following the TAM and an agreed Step-Up a social worker will visit the family alongside the FIS worker to help build relationships and hand family case responsibility over (no return to TAM needed).

# Step Up / post -TAM decision SW view required

* A Step-In should take place in the week after the initial TAM and before the next TAM session in each locality with a nominated social worker and the family FIS case worker
* Record as a Step-In on EHM as a case note type by the FIS Team Leader or PP who brought the case to TAM with explanatory narrative comment
* Follow below process

# Step In

* For a social worker to offer advice and guidance to a FIS worker and the family or to confirm the needs in the family whilst not requesting a formal Step-Up at this point.
* The outcome of a Step-In could still be a formal Step-Up to social care or for FIS to continue working or other action.
* The Step-In case note type should be used to identify such a meeting, with information copied from the Step-Up TAM form and updated as necessary by the FIS worker on EHM and the Social Worker on LCS.
* Any Step-In should come back into the next TAM for managers to review / agree the actions suggested by the home visiting social worker.

# Urgent Step-Up for CP reasons

* FIS worker will always try to support the family in working with a social work colleague.
* Local FIS Team Leader will speak with the local Assessment Team Manager to facilitate a swift transfer and pick up.
* FIS staff can remain involved in supporting the family during the transfer period.
* Team Managers at the Family Front Door may be contacted by Assessment Team Managers to seek assistance as necessary.

# Step Down

* No emergency / quick access Step-Down as this needs to be a planned move with a well-designed family plan and full, informed consent in place.
* A three-way (family, social worker and new worker) introduction and Step-Down planning meeting is to take place before formal transfer of the family with recommendations of the intervention requested from FIS.
* Step-Down form (which is in effect minutes of the Step-Down meeting/ post Step down TAC) will be completed by the social worker after the Step-Down meeting and sent with the Step-Down from LCS to EHM, along with a copy of the completed C&F assessment, before the LCS referral is formally closed.

# Neglect

It is recognised that identifying and working with neglect is an area of prime importance and one where a degree of ‘normalisation’ can lead to a lack of clarity. For this reason, where a FIS worker is concerned about neglect, a joint home visit with their Senior Professional Team Leader will take place before the family is taken to TAM for discussion. [The Family Strengths & Needs Toolkit](https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/working-with-children/neglect-abuse/) must also be completed. This will ensure high degree of managerial oversight and aid the manager-to-manager TAM discussions about whether a family should be stepped up to social care. Where a family is not accepted for Step Up on a neglect issue, the FIS SPTL may escalate this for review and potential further action to their Operations Manager.

# Resolving Professional Difference

* If a step up is not agreed within TAM, and the FIS are concerned that they are not able to continue working with the family due to high levels of risk or need, then the escalation process would be to request a step in from the local SW team.
* If there is a disagreement between the SW and FIS teams that is not resolved by a step in visit, the relevant Operations Managers will hold a review and come to a final decision with a management oversight note on both EHM and LCS
* If a professional outside Children’s Social Care disagrees with a decision made to Step Up (or not) a family, they can be sent a copy of the rationale recorded on the finalised Step Up form from the TAM
* If a professional retains concerns about the decision made, they should alert their line manager and follow the Resolving Professional Differences protocol.
* It is always an expectation that the team who are holding the case clearly communicate with partners and ensure their views on the step up /down are represented in TAM to an appropriate degree
* TAM will not be opened to non CSC partners