

**Birmingham Children’s Trust and Birmingham Cafcass care proceedings practice – March 2022**

Care Proceedings Flowchart and Care Proceedings Indicative Timescales Planner

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| Version 1 | Approved 19.3.22 (Local Family Justice Board) |
| VERSION 1.1 | Formatting Minor Ammendments 27.06.22 |
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Social Worker to send to Legal Team: Initial SWET, chronology, interim care plan, birth certificates, assessments (including experts), agency and other professional reports, FGC plan, and pre-proceedings records.

**Flowchart for care proceedings**

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Stage 1 – Day 0 to 18

Stage 2 – By Day 45

Stage 4 – 16 to 25 weeks

**Stage 5 - Final Hearing – statutory timetable within 26 weeks**

This should take place in accordance with the timetable for the child. Court to determine remaining issues and make final orders

Stage 3 – 45 Days to 16 Weeks

**Indicative Care Application Timetable**

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| **Week no.**  | **Date Due**  | **Action required** | **Met**  | **Date met**  |
| **<0** |  | **Pre-proceedings -** *where possible to incorporate all of the below assessments and intervention, which should all be sent to legal and filed upon issue. Birth Certificate must be obtained and provided.* |  |  |
|  1 |  | **Issue Care Proceedings.** *If parenting assessment is not completed in pre-proceedings, you can commence this prior to initial hearing, be prepared to share any assessment schedule with legal.*Referral for permanence (adoption)/ family finding – book permanence medical (6-month validity if younger than 5)/ CIC medical.Arrange Family Group Conference if the parents’ consent and tell the parents they have 14 days to put forward any realistic alternative carers for assessment and no other carers will be considered save in exceptional circumstances. |  |  |
| Within 18 days |  | **Initial Case Management Hearing***Agree a date you will file parenting assessment, if expert assessments are required you should build this into schedule, so you can take this into account.* Ensure that CiC review meeting date is set when the evidence is available and also built in time for decision making after that date. |  |  |
| Within 20 days |  | **Care plan meeting to occur within 10 days of the child coming into care,** or from date of order. Parent/s, carers to be invited. Guardian to attend, or send report summarising initial thoughts. Parents should identify any wider family if not already. |  |  |
|  |  | **Viability assessment(s) – 10 working days from identification**Where possible aim to complete screenings/ viabilities/ full assessment of wider family prior to issue. Assessment to be completed within 12 weeks and panel date identified within 2 weeks. Fostering team to work with the potential carer/s to ensure the DBS and medicals of carers are received at the earliest opportunity. |  |  |
| 6 wks |  | **Cognitive / capacity assessment(s)** |  |  |
| 6 wks |  | **Psychological assessment(s)***Decide* ***if necessary*** *– are they needed to provide new knowledge? Can the social worker demonstrate the underlying causes of problems and maltreatment?* |  |  |
|  |  | **Intervention and Other Expert Assessment** and **reports** to be filed: eg, PAMS Assessment (6-12 weeks)/ FDAC (19 weeks) Residential and non-residential parenting assessments/ DNA/ Drug and Alcohol testing and intervention/ Medical; Health; mental health expert assessments, intervention and reports – bones, brains and bruises/ paediatric assessment/ Education reports. *Letter of instruction will be required.*  |  |  |
| 10 to 12 |  | **Parenting Assessment filed, Risk Assessment of parent/ partners and family time if appropriate.** This will include any multi-agency support and intervention services - as outlined in parenting assessment template. Guardian to be updated at midway stage. |  |  |
| Wk 12 |  | **Together or Apart - Brother and Sister Assessment** |  |  |
| 10 to 16 |  | **Connected person’s assessment** – Currently 12 weeks *from allocation, 16 weeks including panel date and ADM decision.* Guardian to be updated at midway stage.  |  |  |
| Week 13 |  | **Care permanence planning meeting to take place around week 13** - Meeting with SW Team, senior manager and Legal to discuss *progress and permanence plan for the child.* Following this Social Worker to discuss care plan with Guardian and family at a care planning meeting – see week 14 meeting below.  |  |  |
| 12 to 14 |  |  **AIM FOR ALL ASSESSMENTS TO BE IN BY THIS POINT OR EARLIER – *Usually 4 weeks for decision making processes below once all assessments concluded*** |  |  |
| 12 to 14  |  | **Final draft of Child Permanence Report to be completed.** |  |  |
| Week 13,14 |  | **Care Plan discussion with Guardian. Ideally a care plan meeting with all key stakeholders. Parents, Family, social worker, Guardian and relevant professionals.**  |  |  |
| 14 |  | **CIC review – care plan endorsed by IRO once relevant assessments are completed and shared.** |  |  |
| 14 to 16 |  | **Agency Decision Maker - Decision on care plan. There should be a clear preliminary guardian view on the evidence available by this stage.**  |  |  |
| 16/17  |  | File final evidence, statements, and care plan and placement order application if appropriate. |  |  |
| 18 |  | Respondent’s final evidence |  |  |
| 19 |  | Children’s Guardian report |  |  |
| 20 |  | **Issues Resolution Hearing** |  |  |
| 26 |  | Final hearing  |  |  |