

Children's Services
Children's Social Care (CSC)

Permanence Planning Tracking Meetings

Terms of Reference

January 2023

1. Introduction

As corporate parents we want to be the most successful and ambitious parents that we can be for the children we care for, ensuring that we continue this into our support for those young people who are leaving our care. We want all our children and young people to reach their full potential, academically, socially and emotionally. We must therefore strive to provide them with the best opportunities to enable this to happen.

Permanence is the long-term plan for a child's upbringing and provides an underpinning framework for all children and their families from family support through to adoption. This framework comprises of three elements which are emotional, physical, and legal status which are pivotal in enabling children and young people to experience stability, consistency, and the opportunity to develop their identity which are essential for healthy growth and development which will endure in adulthood and beyond.

2. What is "Permanence"?

Permanence is the long-term plan for a child's upbringing and provides an underpinning framework for all children and their families from family support through to adoption. This framework comprises of three elements which are emotional, physical, and legal status which are pivotal in enabling children and young people to experience stability, consistency, and the opportunity to develop their identity which are essential for healthy growth and development which will endure in adulthood and beyond.

In BCP, Children and Families teams and the PLO & Court Team take responsibility for the initial care planning for all children entering the care system, either through voluntary arrangements or the courts, supported by the Aspire Permanency Coordinators who advise on adoption and Early Permanence, The Child in Care teams take responsibility for children who will be looked after long term by BCP, in foster or residential care.

Cases are transferred to the Children in Care teams at the second review, where the care plan is for long term care. In respect of children who are unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors they are subject to triple planning until such time the home Office make decisions for their asylum claim. These young people are referred directly into the CIC service and do not wait for the second CLA review. Children who are subject to care proceedings, will transfer at the conclusion of the case where the care plan is for long term local authority care.

Children concluding care proceedings with a placement order and/or a plan for adoption, are transferred to the Aspire Regional Adoption Agency which holds the children on behalf of BCP. If the plan for adoption does not progress and the placement order is revoked, the child is then transferred back to the BCP Child in Care teams.

3. Aim of Permanency Panel

To ensure good practice in the delivery of care planning across operational services.

To consider a child's case within 6 weeks entry into Local Authority Care and review at regular intervals, (frequency based on the care plan for the child and court timescale) until the child's permanent placement is secured.

To oversee and approve the permanence plans, offer advice, and challenge drift and delay.

Attendance is required by the Team Manager who will present the care plan and the contingency plan with appropriate dates.

The aim of the panel is to ensure there is robust oversight of all children in our care to ensure that at all stages there is a persistent focus on achieving the right permanent option avoiding drift and delay ensuring that we achieve we find the “right home at the right time.

Achieving permanency is a consistent area for development – the panel will ensure that we have the right level of management oversight and grip.

4. Process

Permanency panel will be held weekly (likely to be Thursday afternoon). The panel will be chaired by the Service Manager for Children in Care (Corporate Parenting).

Business support personnel will co-ordinate children to be discussed, arranging invite slots for team managers to attend. Following the review of the plan the paperwork will be uploaded onto the child’s record.

A ‘Teams Channel’ will be available for tracking the actions agreed at the panel, team managers will be able to go into the channel and update when the actions that have been undertaken.

Permanency panel is not a decision-making forum it is a system designed to ensure we are responding and planning permanence within timescales that meet the needs of the children. The panel will make recommendations if deemed appropriate with the expectation that any recommendations will be acted upon.

Membership:

- Service Manager for Permanence (Chair)
- Relevant Service Managers
- Business Support Officer
- IRO Manager
- Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher for the Virtual School
- Fostering Service Manager
- Family Finding Service Manager Aspire Adoption

5. The following cohorts of children will be reviewed:

- Children who have been in care for a period of 6 weeks.
- Children in care who are not long term matched to their carers
- Children who have been subject to Section 20 for 12 weeks or more
- All children who are placed at home under Placement with Parent Regulations.
- Children who do not have a Permanence Plan or the plan needs to be changed due to permanence not being achieved within 6 weeks.
- Children who are progressing to SGO/CAO/Adoption

The permanence tracker can be found in the ‘Teams Channel’ is used to identify the respective cohort and the team manager will be asked to attend to provide updates.

Actions from the permanence planning for a child or young person will be uploaded to the child's record on Mosaic within 3 working days.

FREQUENCY

Cases open to Children and Family Teams and Children with Disability Teams

The permanence tracker is used to identify the respective cohort, the Team Manager will be asked to attend.

The Team Managers will be expected to be fully prepared for the panel.

The case file information will be checked as necessary during the meeting.

The panel will review in a cycle:

- Children whose care plan has changed or needs to change to return to parents or are now placed with parents and the service is working to the safe revocation of the care order.
- Children where permanency plan needs to be changed or where permanence has not been achieved.
- Children whose placements are unstable and those who have experienced frequent moves.
- Cases who are progressing to an SGO/CAO/Adoption.
- Preparation for independence and move on plans.

The permanence tracker is used to identify the respective cohort and the Team Manager will be asked to attend.

Case files information is checked as necessary during the meeting.

Actions from the Permanence Planning and Tracking Panel relating to specific steps for a child or young person will be uploaded to the child's records on MOSAIC within 3 working days.

A summary will be produced of the cases discussed and actions required and entered into the tracking sheet in the Teams Channel.

Cases Open to Aspire (Regional Adoption Agency)

Cases are tracked **every six weeks** and will look at ADM decision through to Placement Order.

- Children waiting to be linked to an adoptive family following Placement Orders.
- Children placed for adoption.
- Children placed for adoption and now waiting to be adopted.
- Children who need a change of care plan from adoption.

Review:

- Panel will run on a 6-weekly cycle on the seventh week panel will review any outstanding actions, where Team Managers will be invited to attend.
-

- A Team's channel will be available for all managers to track the actions agreed it will be the responsibility of the Team Manager to keep this up to date.

NB: Aspire holds case responsibility for children from BCP waiting for adoption.

Terms of Reference to be reviewed annually.
