

**Good Practice guide – case allocation**

**The Background**

Case Allocation is a key transition point for a child, family, and worker. In a recent staff survey, it was identified that case allocation was an area staff felt scored low in NCT and therefore has been identified as an area for improvement. This simple and short guide is intended to support staff in ensuring good case allocations which are clear in expectations and consider the child and family’s needs.

**Conversations**

Its always difficult to identify the best time to allocate a case, sometimes this is out of our control but there are a few good points to think about which support good practice.

* Always have a verbal conversation with a worker about a case you are going to allocate
* Never allocate to somebody when they are on leave or about to go on leave
* Think “is there a reason this case is not appropriate for this workers skills set?”

**Manager oversight at case allocation**

When allocating a case, either following team transfer or change of allocated work within a team, good practice is to add a manager’s oversight on the case. Things we could consider when writing a manager oversight.

* Referral summary/brief history
* What’s working well
* What are we worried about
* What needs to happen (SMART planning)
* VOC

You may want to give the new worker some direction in your oversight, like expectation of work to be undertaken and timeframes. Are any lone working risk assessments needed or any other risk assessment etc

**Recommended case numbers for NQSW**

Ensuring manageable caseloads are important for all staff and remember there is a recommended allocation numbers for NQSWs.

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|  | **DAAT** | **Safeguarding** | **Children in Care and DCT** | **Fostering & Adoption** |
| **Week 3** | 1-3 children in one family | 1-3 children in one family | 1-3 children in one family | 1-3 children in one family |
| **Week 4** | 2-6 children in 2 families | 2-6 children in 2 families | 2-5 children in 2 families | 2-5 children in 2 families |
| **Week 6** | 5- 8 children | 5-8 children | 4-5 children | 4-5 children |
| **Week 9** | 8- 12 children | 6-8 children | 4 – 5 children | Decided in teams |
| **Week 12** | 12-15 children | 8-10 children | 5-8 children |  |
| **Week 18** | 15 – 20 children | 10-12 children | 5-8 children |  |
| **Week 26** | 20-25 children | 12-14 children | 9-10 children |  |