***Logo

Description automatically generated*Devon County Council**

**Children Services Research Governance Pack**

Contents

[Introduction 1](#_Toc147136627)

[When is Research Governance approval required? 1](#_Toc147136628)

[Research Governance Application 3](#_Toc147136629)

[Research Governance Application Checklist 6](#_Toc147136630)

# Introduction

At Devon County Council we are committed to engaging and learning from research to inform and improve our practice. We welcome approaches from university, practice bodies, research institutions and students to take part in research which will progress how we and the wider sector work with children and families.

To make an application to undertake research involving Devon County Council staff and/or children and families, applicants must complete the Research Governance Application or submit their own research proposal for consideration. When submitting the latter, applicants should ensure the information sought in the Research Governance Application is contained in their own submission. Where additional information is needed, this will be sought, but could delay the approval process.

We aim to decide on applications within two to four weeks depending on demand. Your application will be assessed in terms of quality, relevant and feasibility considering our organisation resources and demands. We will prioritise research we believe is greatest benefit to our clients, our organisation, and the social work profession.

Applications will be assessed by the Principal Social Worker and expert colleagues in relevant areas of Children’s Services. Applications will need in principle support from the Head of Service and Service Manager involved in the approval of staff time. Once this is confirmed, it will go to our Deputy Director for final agreement.

If you receive a letter of support for your research this may contain conditions you will need to accept and/or make amendments to your research to continue, these will be made clear to you in the letter.

## When is Children Services Research Governance approval required?

If you are undertaking an evaluation, this does not need research governance approval. The decision whether Devon Children’s Service will be involved is up to the Head of Service in the teams who are being asked to participate.

Research:

* Creates generalisable knowledge and seeks to make a contribution to knowledge
* Is more theoretical
* Focused on testing theories or questions, or explorative research areas
* The quality and results are judged by peers
* Draws conclusions
* Intended to be published in academic and/or peer reviewed publications

Evaluation:

* Creates applied knowledge and judges the effectiveness of specific interventions of programmes against set goals
* The knowledge is intervention of programme specific
* The quality and results are judged by stakeholders who use the findings
* Is often linked to funding requirements and decisions
* Report to stakeholders and professionals, not academic or per reviewed publications

Research governance approval is **not** required when Devon Children Services staff are collecting routine management and feedback information as part of business-as-usual services and support. This includes feedback from children and families unless it meets the definition of research above.

However, when children and families are being engaged by Children’s Services staff and/or others to obtain feedback it is important individuals overseeing and implementing the activities give careful thought to the way in which people are engaged and the potential impact on individuals.

For example, information gathering exercises should:

* Consider whether this information is already being gathered, and avoid duplication in feedback exercises
* Inform people why information is being sight from them and how it will be used, particularly how it may feature in public arenas
* Be clear whether information provided will be treated in confidence and reported anonymously.
* Inform people if they indicate they or another individual is at risk of harm, this information will be passed onto relevant parities such as allocated children’s social workers, adult’s social care and the police.
* Consider the potential to cause harm or concern to the people from such information being sought by the process of information gathering and whether any potential support mechanisms need to be put into place, such as providing information on support services
* Engage people in safe, accessible and comfortable surroundings; using methods that meet the needs of the people being engaged. For example, the following factors should be considered: venue, time days of week, language and interpretation requirements, the type of information gathering tools, tailoring approaches to meet different needs e.g. learning or physical disability.

# Children’s Services Research Governance Application

Please complete this application form **OR** submit a copy of your research proposal/plan.

**Title of project or study:**

**Name of main researcher:**

Status / job title:

Organisation address:

Department / Location:

Office phone:         
Work mobile:

Email:

**Names of any other researchers**:

Organisation Address:

Department / Location:

Phone:

Email:

**Name of research supervisor or supervising manager**:

Job title:

Organisation address:

Phone:

Email:

**Name of research sponsor**:

Sponsor’s address:

Phone:

Email:

**Finance and insurance**

1. What is the total budget/ source of funding for the project?

2. Will anyone benefit financially from the project?

Yes  No

If yes, who and how?

3. Is your organisation insured should they need to pay compensation or insurance?

Yes  No

4. If applicable for this research project, do you have a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check?

No  Yes Standard  Yes Enhanced

If yes,

Issue date       Registration number

5. Is this your first research governance application for this project?

Yes  No  If no, date of previous application

6. Are you also applying to any other local authority for research governance for this project?

No  Yes  If yes, name of authority/ authorities

**Project background**

1. What is the purpose of your project and why is this topic important?

2. What is your particular area of interest?

3. What other projects / studies have been carried out in this area (if any?)

4. How will your research add to any previous work?

**Aims and Objectives**

1. What is the main question you want to answer?

2. What specific questions will you ask to address the main question?

**Participants: Scope and Sample**

1. Who will be your participants? (Inclusion / exclusion criteria)

2. How will you select your sample?

3. How many people do you need to recruit to take part?

4. Where will the research take place?

5. What experience do you have of working with this particular group of participants?

**Collecting your data**

1. How in detail, are you going to collect your data? For example: questionnaire, interview.

2. Will you be recording or taking video of participants?

3. What are your reasons for choosing these methods?

4. What experience do you have of using these methods?

5. What sort of data will you be collecting? (Quantitative and /or qualitative)

6. How will you analyse your data?

**Ethics and Safeguards**

1. How are you going to recruit your participants?

2. How will you comply with equal opportunities when recruiting and communicating with participants?

3. How will you obtain informed consent?

4. How will you comply with the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act?

5. Are you going to involve your participants in planning the way the research will be carried out?

6. Will you be paying your participants?

7. What potential risk of harm is there to your participants or yourself?

8. How will you give participants details about how to complain should they need to?

9. How will participants be given the opportunity to withdraw from the study if they feel the need to do so?

10. Will your data be used for any purposes other than your project?

11. How do you propose to store your data? For example: on a database, hard files, paper records.

12. How long will you keep the data?

13. How will you ensure the data is kept confidential and anonymous?

**Sharing the research findings**

1. Who will have ultimate ownership of the data?

2. How and to whom will you present the findings of your research? For example: presentation, report, publication in journal.

3. How will you ensure you present the findings of your research in an appropriate format for your participants?

4. How will you give participants the opportunity to view the findings of your research?

Please email **either** your completed Research Governance Application Form **or** a copy of your research proposal/plan, along with supporting documents and a completed application checklist as follows:

* For research involving Devon County Council Childrens Service, please email: Rachel Nall Principal Social Worker [Rachel.nall@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.nall@devon.gov.uk)

# Children Services Research Governance Application Checklist

To help us process your application for research governance approval as quickly as possible, please remember to include supporting documents as applicable, and a completed Application Checklist when submitting your research protocol/plan.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Documents** | **Included √** |
| Copy of research protocol/plan or completed RG application form |  |
| Contact details of lead researcher |  |
| Contact details of research sponsor |  |
| Name of research supervisor/ supervising manager, if applicable |  |
| Confirmation of indemnity insurance |  |
| Copy of independent ethics approval |  |
| Copy of independent methods review. (In the case of student projects, we require confirmation from the research supervisor that methods have been approved) |  |
| A copy of the project timetable |  |
| Letter(s) of information for participants |  |
| Consent form(s) for participants |  |
| Copies of questionnaire(s), topic guides, interview schedules |  |
| Copy of research contract |  |
| ADASS/ADCS approval |  |
| Funding confirmation letter |  |
| **Declaration** – I have read Devon Children’s Service Application Pack. I agree to carry out my project in accordance with the research governance requirements and understand that failure to do so may result in approval for the research being withdrawn. |  |