**Understanding Placement Plans and Child in Care Reviews**

**Standards and Regulations**

**Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care:**

* [Standard 1 - Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf);
* [Standard 2 - Understand your role as a foster carer](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf);
* [Standard 4 - Know how to communicate effectively](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf).

Also see [Working with Families and Other Professionals](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/working_with_fam.html).

[The PCFSW & Social Work England Best Practice Guide for Video Call / Contact and Virtual / Online Home Visit](https://esafeguarding.org/publications/PSW-and-SWE-Best-Practice-Guide-for-Video-Call-and-Virtual-Home-Visit-20200505.pdf).

1. **Introduction**

You will need as much information as possible about a child/young person before they come into your home. Wherever possible planning meetings are held and relevant documents / information provided prior to a placement starting. There should also be an opportunity for the foster child to have introductory visits prior to a placement starting. However, where this is not possible, there should be a planning meeting and a Placement Plan within 5 working days and Care Plan within 10 working days of the placement / child coming into care. No information should be withheld from you without a manager’s approval and this will only be in rare cases.

1. **The Child's Care Plan**

A [Care Plan](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/care_plan.html) must be completed before the child’s first placement or within 10 working days of them coming into care.

The Care Plan is a document which must be drawn up where a child/family is receiving a service from a local authority. It should provide information relating to the child and their family, and will record what work must be done to meet the needs of the child or young person in relation to future plans for them.

One of the key functions of the Care Plan is to ensure that each child has a [Permanence Plan](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/permanence_plan.html) by the time of the second Child [Looked After Review](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/looked_aft_review.html). The Care Plan is subject to scrutiny at each Child Looked After Review.

The child’s overarching Care Plan should include:

* Placement Plan (setting out why the placement was chosen and how the placement will contribute to meet the child’s needs);
* Permanence Plan (long-term plans for the child’s upbringing including timescales);
* [Pathway Plan](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/pathway_plan.html) (where appropriate, for young people leaving care);
* [Health Plan](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/health_care_plan.html);
* [Personal Education Plan](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/pers_education_plan.html);
* [Education, Health and Care Plan](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/ed_health_care_plan.html).

1. **The Placement Plan**

This is a document that must be completed either on the day or within 5 working days of a placement being made with you. This plan is drawn up by the child/young person’s social worker, with you and your Supervising Social Worker, family members and the child (where appropriate). This plan details the expectations and routines of the child, as well as how their needs will be met in the foster placement.

The Placement Plan covers the following areas:

* Objectives and purpose of the placement;
* Arrangements for the child’s education and training, including the name and address of the child’s school/other educational setting/provider and designated teacher; the Local Authority maintaining any, Education, Health and Care Plan;
* If there are any known child protection concerns relating to the child, or the child has gone missing from the placement or from any previous placement, the day-to-day arrangements to be put in place to keep the child safe;
* The child’s personal/cultural history;
* The child’s likes/dislikes;
* Details of the expectations and routines of the child, as well as how their needs will be met in the foster placement;
* Arrangements for the child’s health (physical, emotional and mental) and dental care, including the name and address of registered medical and dental practitioners; arrangements for giving/withholding consent to medical/dental examination/treatment;
* The guidance and boundaries of the placement, including how the child should behave;
* Agreements for family time between the child, their family and others;
* Frequency of social work visits to the child and yourself, and any review meetings;
* If an [Independent Visitor](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/independent_visitor.html) is appointed, the arrangements for them to visit the child and their contact details;
* Delegated Authority where appropriate;
* The Placement Plan must show who can make decisions about situations such as:
  + Medical and dental treatment;
  + Education and school trips;
  + Overnight stays;
  + Leisure and home life;
  + Faith and religious observance;
  + Use of social media;
  + Any other matters which the local authority/person with Parental Responsibility consider appropriate.

The Placement Plan must also identify any matters about which Bradford Children and Families Trust person with Parental Responsibility considers that the child may make a decision about.

1. **Child's Looked After Reviews**

A Child’s [Looked After Review](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/looked_aft_review.html) (also sometimes known as LAC, Statutory or Looked After Review ) is a meeting that covers the arrangements for making sure the plans put in place for a child in care happen.

Child’s Looked After Reviews (CLARs) are held at specific intervals. They are normally chaired by an [Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/indep_reviewing_officer.html). They will discuss with all those involved in the child’s life including the child/young person how they are progressing and how their needs will continue to be met. The Independent Reviewing Officer has a monitoring role for the child overall so is a good source of support if needed.

Looked After Reviews take place at the following intervals:

* Within 20 working days of the child becoming [Looked After](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/looked_after.html);
* Then within 3 months (91 days) of the initial Looked After Review;
* Then subsequent looked after reviews should be conducted not more than 6 months (183 days) after any previous review.

Child’s Looked After Reviews should be brought forward by the Independent Reviewing Officer, or by anyone involved in the care planning for the child, where the circumstances of an event has a significant impact upon the child’s Care Plan, as suggested in the following sorts of circumstances:

* A proposed change of Care Plan for example arising at short notice in the course of proceedings following directions from the court;
* Where agreed decisions from the review are not carried out within the specified timescale;
* Major change to the contact arrangements;
* Any safeguarding concerns involving the child, which may lead to enquiries being made under Section 47 of the 1989 Act (‘Child Protection Enquiries’) and outcomes of Child Protection Conferences, or other meetings that are not attended by the IRO;
* Complaints from or on behalf of the child, parent or carer;
* Unexpected changes in the child’s placement provision which may significantly impact on placement stability or safeguarding arrangement;
* Significant changes in birth family circumstances for example births, marriages or deaths which may have a particular impact on the child;
* If the child is charged with any offence leading to referral to Youth Offending Services, pending criminal proceedings and any convictions or sentences as a result of such proceedings;
* If the child is excluded from school;
* If the child has run away or is missing from an approved placement;
* Significant health, medical events, diagnoses, illnesses, hospitalisations, or serious accidents; and panel decisions in relation to permanency;
* If the child is moved from one placement to another on an unplanned basis, or a significant change in the child’s circumstances suggest the placement is no longer appropriate (in which case this should happen as soon as practicable);
* If the child, parent or other significant person so requests (unless the Independent Reviewing Officer considers the request is not justified)

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This is not an exhaustive list and other events considered to be significant may prompt an earlier review. The decision whether to have an early review is the IRO’s.

The parents and child should also be consulted about the need for an additional review.

You should therefore:

* Discuss with your social worker any changes that occur for yourself or for your family;
* Ensure the social worker for the child is fully informed and aware of any of the issues that have been highlighted;
* Any other matter that you feel could reflect significantly or impact upon the child or their Care Plan.

The IRO can then review and consider whether an earlier review should be convened.

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The first [Looked After Review](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/looked_aft_review.html) following a young person’s 16th birthday should consider whether a [Staying Put](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/staying_put_plac.html) arrangement (whereby the young person remains in the foster home after the age of 18) could be an option.

You should attend the reviews of the child/young person you are caring for.

Also at the meeting may be the child/young person (if appropriate), the child’s teacher, their family, the child’s social worker and any other professionals working with the family.

If you are worried about these meetings discuss it with your Supervising Social Worker.

If you wish to receive an emailed copy of your child’s looked after review minutes, give your email address to the IRO at the meeting and request a copy. You can also email [SSVCPUAdmin@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:SSVCPUAdmin@bradford.gov.uk) (please use Galaxkey so they know the minutes can be sent on to you securely – your SSW can help you set up your free Galaxkey account or you can click on this link and set up your own free account <https://manager.galaxkey.com/Services/RegisterMe>). You can also use this email address for any enquiries you may have about receiving your copy of the child’s looked after review.