

# Children & Family Services Transfer Process

Reference:  
Version No: V 5  
Issue Date: June  
2023

## Document Control

<b>Document Ref:</b>		<b>Date Created:</b>	January 2015
<b>Version:</b>	v.5	<b>Date Modified:</b>	September 2018
<b>Revision due</b>	June 2025		
<b>Author:</b>	Karen Atalla	<b>Sign &amp; Date:</b>	June 2023
<b>Head of Service:</b>	Dave Wraight	<b>Sign &amp; Date:</b>	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment: (EIA)</b>	Date undertaken:		
	Issues (if any):		

## Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1	January 2015	Final version for publication post final changes and approval by Children's Services Management Team	
2	March 2017	Final version for publication post final changes and approval by Children's Services Leadership Team	
3	September 2018	Final version for publication post final changes and approval by Children's Services Leadership Team	
4	November 2020	Final version for publication post final changes and approval by Children's Services Leadership Team	
5	June 2023	Final version for publication approved by Children's Services Leadership Team	



## Related Documents

Reference	Title	Tier

# Contents

---

1. Purpose.....	5
2. Applicability .....	5
3. Roles and Responsibilities .....	5
4. Transfer Points.....	5
5. Manager responsibilities .....	7
6. File Standards for transfers between all service areas.....	8
7. Handover Process.....	10
8. S.H.I.P .....	13



1. Purpose
  - 1.1. This document sets out the arrangements for transfers between social work teams in West Berkshire's Children and Family Services, together with a summary of the standards required and management responsibilities to be met before cases transfer

## **2. Applicability**

- 2.1. It applies to the following teams:
  - Contacts Advice & Assessment
  - Family Safeguarding
  - Children with Disabilities
  - Children in Care Services
  - Leaving Care Team
  - Early Response Hub
  - SHIP

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 3.1. The Head of Children & Families Service has overall responsibility for ensuring that transfers are managed appropriately in accordance with these agreed standards/processes.
- 3.2. The Service Manager of CAAS (Contact Advice & Assessment Team/MASH) is responsible for:
  - Directing and reviewing this standard.
  - Ensuring that there is effective consultation and communication on all related matters
  - Publishing and promoting the adoption of this standard.
- 3.3. The managers of the teams detailed in para 2.1 above are responsible for the day-to-day management of the processes related to transfers including ensuring implementation of this standard.
- 3.4. All staff in the teams detailed in para 2.1 above are responsible for familiarizing themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with these standards/processes.

## **4. Transfer Points**

- 4.1. Contact Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) will always endeavour to inform the receiving teams at the earliest opportunity of children who are requiring transfer to another team/service.. There will be weekly transfer meetings held to ensure there is no delay in transferring and to prevent potential drift and 'bottle neck' of case work. A transfer spreadsheet has been developed for all service areas to use to identify cases for transfer with dates for ICPC, CIN meetings and CIC reviews. A weekly transfer meeting will take place to pre-empt possible transfers. Children requiring longer term involvement will be transferred to the relevant team/service at the following points:
  - 4.1.1. Children subject to child protection will transfer at the first Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), where the child or young person is made subject to a Protection Plan. When the decision is made for ICPC Contact Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) will notify the relevant Family Safeguarding Team, adding the child's name and id to the transfer sheet.

C.A.A.S will ensure that the case files are ready for transfer at the Initial Child Protection Case Conference. The relevant Family Safeguarding Team will identify a worker who will attend the conference and the child will transfer at this point. (The receiving team must provide a named worker so that Care Director can be updated immediately following transfer. *(If a named worker is not provided the case/s will need to be assigned to a manager in the receiving team to enable the CP plan to be placed on Care Director)*; this is essential to prevent drift and delay for children and their families.

- 4.1.2. Children in Care with a S20 status (*where care proceedings are not anticipated*) will be transferred at the first statutory Child in Care review. Transfer will be to the relevant Family Safeguarding team unless FSM and the Children in Care Services agree transfer directly to the relevant CIC service at this point. (This cannot be negotiated by CAAS), and decisions must be based on the needs of the child/YP. CAAS will ensure that the case is ready for transfer at the first review. The receiving team will identify a worker to attend the first review. The **Leaving Care Team** takes transfers when the young person reaches their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. There should be proactive planning prior to this with secondary allocation to **LCT** when the YP reaches 15yrs and 9months of age.
- 4.1.3. Those families presented at Legal Planning meeting will be transferred at the first Public Law Outline meeting to the relevant Family Safeguarding Team.
- 4.1.4. Children who become the subject of Care Proceedings will be transferred from the initial Court hearing to the relevant Family Safeguarding Team who will receive notification as soon as the date of this hearing is known. Receiving social worker/team should attend the Court hearing alongside the holding social worker.
- 4.1.5. Child in Need will transfer from CAAS, at the point of the initial Child in Need meeting. Family Safeguarding team will be notified via the transfer spreadsheet and transfer meeting. FSM team will ensure an identified Social Worker or Senior Social Worker attends the Child in Need meeting. If a worker from the receiving team is not able to attend the meeting, the point of transfer will not be delayed.
- 4.1.6. The Early Response Hub is part of the Earlier Help and Response strategy and sits under the umbrella of CAAS. Children and Families can be identified as requiring an early help intervention at the point of a 'contact' being received into CAAS. If during the course of ERH work there is an escalation of concerns, CAAS and ERH manager will meet to discuss and a single assessment will be completed by CAAS if appropriate.
- 4.1.7. Children moving from FSM to ERH will require a child in need review meeting. At that meeting information will be shared and informed decisions taken regarding the most appropriate plan for children and their families. A My Family Plan or equivalent support plan will be explored determined by the threshold of need. A lead professional will be identified and a plan of support agreed. (Lead professional can contact the MFP facilitators based within the ERH who offer advice, consultation and direct support to lead professionals.
- 4.1.8. Transfer to the ERH from CAAS will take place following completion of a single assessment which identifies that the most appropriate service is the ERH. Parental agreement to this will be gained prior to transfer taking place.
- 4.1.9. Transfer from the ERH to CAAS will take place once a Family First Assessment is completed and identifies a higher level of need that requires transfer to CAAS. The FFA will be completed within 25 working days and will provide a foundation for the Single Assessment.
- 4.2. Transfer from Early Response Hub to Family Safeguarding. Children and Families who have been subject to a single assessment with an outcome of intervention from the ERH will be provided with full support to prevent escalation of the challenges they **face. If these**

challenges escalate during the course of intervention, ERH will complete a Family First Assessment to assess new information/change in family circumstances and need. The Family First Assessment in this instance will be completed by a social worker based in the ERH. Following completion if the need has escalated and longer term involvement is required transfer to FSM will be progressed.

**4.3** If **within** 6 weeks of completion of a single assessment by CAAS (*where the outcome from the previous assessment was for further work to be completed by the ERH*) - there is an escalation of concerns that requires statutory involvement, the family will be transferred to the relevant team for further work. The most appropriate team to meet the needs of the child and family will determine the transfer. (*This would follow the usual transfer process*).

**4.4.** The Children with Disabilities Team undertakes Single Assessments and Child Protection Enquiries. Any family requiring an assessment in which child/ren/young person/s has a disability and is the sole child/YP this assessment would be undertaken and work completed by CWD, including Child Protection enquiry/referral and SA.

4.5. If an assessment is required on a family with a number of children including a child/young person that reaches criteria for CWD, a joint SA should be undertaken. If further work is required following the SA, a decision regarding transfer would be based on outcome of the SA and the best interest of the child. If assessment determines that the main area for further work is the child/yp with the additional needs, then CWD would continue the work. If SA determines further involvement with the whole family the case would transfer to the most appropriate team with specialist advice / input /joint working from CWD.

## **5. Manager responsibilities.**

5.1. All designated managers for the service areas will identify cases for transfer. An updated transfer sheet will be used to inform the meeting. Any children not on the list that are discussed at the transfer meeting must be subsequently added to the list for tracking purposes. A nominated manager from the service areas to attend the transfer meeting whenever possible. If this is not possible the transfer list will be used as the tool for confirmation of notification of transfer.

5.2. Manager to ensure that the spreadsheet for their service area is updated as this can be used as a tool to provide early identification of cases to transfer and dates of meetings, i.e. ICPC, CIN meeting, CIC review.

5.3. All children will have a completed transfer audit/checklist form signed off by the individual team managers prior to transfer to ensure quality of case work. Copy of the file audit/checklist form will be entered onto Care Director for the receiving team to access.

5.4. In order to monitor, manage capacity issues and prevent drift/delay, the following process and timescales must be maintained: Each service area must manage their individual issues i.e. capacity due to staffing issues, annual leave, and sick leave. A child who requires a service from the relevant team should not remain with the holding team past the agreed points of transfer identified in this document.

**5.4.1.** Receiving Team Managers to view the transferring case audit/checklist form within 24 hours

**5.4.2** On receipt of the audit /checklist if there are any omissions or deficits this must be discussed with the relevant team manager and rectified as necessary. Once a transfer has taken place, families **are not to be**

'transferred back' via CD. Any Issues need to be resolved via the Team Managers in the first instance, if not resolved escalated to Service Managers.

**5.4.3.** Upon completed work reaching agreed and appropriate transfer points and a satisfactory file audit/checklist form completed; all those meeting transfer point will transfer via the respective holding team to the receiving team at the agreed transfer points outlined in this document.

**5.4.4.** Responsibility for the child will remain with the team transferring until re-allocated to the receiving team/social worker via Care Director. Should the receiving team not provide a named social worker transfer will progress into a named manager and the relevant Service Manager advised via email for swift allocation. The transferring team are responsible for the re allocation of the children on Care Director. An email to be sent to managers in the receiving team confirming re allocation and a copy of the email placed into a case note in Care Director.

**5.4.5.** **Practice Note** : Child Protection. If the Plan outcomes are not achieved within 12 months prior to the 3rd review conference the outcomes must be reviewed in supervision by the Social Worker and Team Manager. Legal Planning processes to be considered at this point. A mandatory referral to legal planning should occur at the 2 weeks prior to the third CPRC.

**5.4.6 Practice Note:** Re referrals. If a re referral is received within 3 months of closure/work completed by a service area, the responsibility for any further work would be that of the team that closed/had the last involvement with the family. Should a re referral be received outside of 3 months of closure/work completed the responsibility for any further work would be with the Contact Advice and Assessment Service. In all instances the best interest of the child will be the focus of decision making.

## **6. File Standards for cases transferring between all service areas.**

6.1. The following minimum file standards are required when transferring a case to and from any statutory team:

### **6.1.1. For all cases**

- There is a completed Single Assessment
- There is an up to date plan. (CP, CIN, SOS).
- Management oversight is evident via assessment sign off and management case notes.
- Due casework processes are evident and recorded and Care Director records up to date.
- Statutory visits (if applicable) have been recorded with the purpose and outcome of the visit explicitly stated
- There is evidence that the child/family are aware of the proposed transfer and the assessment has been shared. (with both parents unless assessed as a risk to do so).
- Transfer audit checklist/summary form has been completed and signed off by a manager in the transferring team.
- Chronology updated to point of transfer (continuation of chronology is the responsibility of the receiving team).

*(Note that a transfer audit/checklist form must be completed by each team/service transferring a child to another team).*

**In addition**



**6.1.2. For CIC transfers:**

- Up to date statutory visits
- Initial Health Assessment has happened or is booked
- PEPs where possible. Where this is not possible a date should have been identified for the initial PEP meeting when possible, providing that this is not prevented by the child becoming a child in care during school holidays.

- Up to date CIC Plan on file, including Pathway plan if appropriate
- Relevant CIC documentation completed
- Updated Single Assessment
- Updated Chronology to point of transfer
- Details of the identified placement for the child/YP

#### **6.1.3. For those where Legal Proceedings have commenced**

- Relevant statement and legal care/supervision plans along with court chronology
- As above for CIC if child is also looked after by the local authority
- Transfer audit completed by a manager

## **7. Handover Process**

### **7.1. Child Protection**

- The receiving team/service will ensure that there is a representative attending the Initial Child Protection Conference. This will be the receiving social worker or Team Manager.
- The transfer to the receiving team will take place on the day of the ICPC.
- Receiving social worker to undertake a joint visit with the holding social worker to the family prior to the ICPC being held as best practice.

### **7.2. Proceedings/PLO/Pre-proceedings**

- Whenever possible the receiving team to have a representative attending the Legal planning meeting and appropriate subsequent meetings or court hearing. This should be the receiving social worker but if this is not possible a duty social worker or Team Manager to attend from the receiving team.
- Transferring and receiving social workers will jointly attend hand over visit to the family when possible, prior to case responsibility transferring. A case discussion will also take place between managers if this has not progressed during the course of proceedings or joint attendance at meetings.

### **7.3. Transfer of cases to Looked after Children Service.**

#### **7.3.1. Children subject to legal proceedings - work to be completed prior to transfer.**

- A representative from CIC service will attend Legal planning Meeting to ensure they are fully conversant with all cases in Proceedings and Pre-Proceedings and can be involved in joint planning prior to filing the care plan.
- Booking for Permanence Panel will follow the issue of Proceedings.
- The Family Safeguarding teams will send CIC and the Adoption Service a spreadsheet showing all listed proceedings, including the planned final hearing date to ensure that transfer is progressed at the appropriate time and that the family finding work proceeds in a timely manner. This spreadsheet will also support the monitoring of trends in care proceedings and will support targeted recruitment of adopters.

□

- CIC must also be informed of any statutory CIC review dates. The designated CIC Manager, in consultation with their Family Safeguarding Manager counterpart, will decide whether CIC representatives will attend any reviews prior to the final hearing.

**7.3.2. Work to be undertaken when the child's Care Order / Placement Order is granted.**

The transfer will take place moving from Family Safeguarding Team to CIC team immediately after the making of a Care Order/ Placement Order

- The child's electronic Care Director File must be up to date at point of transfer, including key information, assessments and reports and the chronology. Where appropriate the PEP should be completed and all health checks undertaken/arranged.

**7.3.3. When a young person is subject to S.20 accommodation.**

- With regard to children who are accommodated and where the plan is not currently rehabilitation home the Manager will alert the CIC Manager and invite CIC representative to the 2nd review. Where it is evident that there can at this time be no return home and transfer needs to progress.
- Prior to transfer file standards need to be applied ensuring the audit/checklist transfer form has been completed and signed off by a manager.
- Transfer will take place within 2 weeks of second review.
- All young people transferring in this way must have a long term care plan that includes their placement plan and for young people fewer than 12 then legal advice must have been sought.
- No young person can have their agreed long-term placement in an IFA or residential unit without discussion at the Accommodation & Resources Panel. The SM and IRO and manager from either fostering or adoption must outline the rational why this is the preferred plan and why no in house resource can be utilised, and outline what activity has taken place to recruit individual carers for the young person where necessary.
- Children in Care introductory visits with the transferring social worker to the young person are to be arranged.
- Where rehabilitation is the agreed plan, the Family Safeguarding Social Worker will retain responsibility. The Family Safeguarding Team Manager will review this after 6 weeks to assess progress against the rehabilitation plan. Where progress is slow and an imminent return home is not an option the transfer will be discussed with the Team Manager in CIC to discuss progressing transfer within 2 weeks of the second review.

On the child's electronic Care Director File the following documents must be fully completed prior to child's electronic record transferring to CIC

- Placement and Information Record
- Child's legal status and in the instance of a child being subjected to a legal order granted by the Courts a copy of the said order must be attached on the child's electronic file
- Child in Care - Care Plan and legal care plan - copy in Documents.
- Legal bundle - this must include all expert assessments and statements presented within the proceedings. This will be a separate paper file
- PEP
- Latest CIC Review.
- Up to date Health Assessment and Health Plan – attached to the child's electronic file

□

- Up to date chronology of events.
- Final supervision record outlining plan of work required and next significant events stating dates of last visit and dates of significant upcoming events such as review's, health assessment etc.

**7.3.4. Children who are remanded into local authority care under LAPSOA 2012.**

These children will be referred to Contact Advice and Assessment Service for an assessment and CIC procedures to be commenced. Liaising with the CIC Service and Youth Offending Team where required.

**7.3.5. Children whose adoption placement/SGO placement has broken down.**

- These children will be referred to Contact, Advice and Assessment Service. Should these children become CIC they will be allocated as per transfer protocol transferring as any other case.

**7.3.6. Children who are 16 years old and older and who present as homeless**

- These children will be assessed by the Contact Advice and Assessment Service and will be subject to the Joint Housing Assessment process. Should these children/YP become CIC they will be transferred to the CIC service at the initial CIC review.

**7.3.7. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People.**

- Contact Advice and Assessment Service to undertake an assessment of age and as appropriate transfer to Children in Care Service as per transfer protocol. (i.e. initial CIC review).

## **7.4. Transfer of Child in Need Cases.**

Transfer from Contact Advice and Assessment at the Initial child in need meeting that follows the completion of the Single Assessment that agrees the child is eligible for services under S17 1989 The Children Act.

## **7.5. Transfer of Cases to Children in Care Service from Child in Need.**

Where a child becomes Accommodated under S 20 The Children Act 1989. The transfer from the relevant Family Safeguarding Team to CIC will progress at the second review if Rehabilitation is deemed unlikely.

## **7.6. Transfer of Children in Care to the Child In Need Service**

Any child who becomes no longer a Child in Care that does not require an 18+ service but where a Child and Family Assessment clearly indicates the need for a time limited support package for a child and their family, would transfer to the relevant Family Safeguarding Team following the completion of an updated Single Assessment and completion of a Child in Need Plan. The Holding team would transfer responsibility at the Child in Need meeting which they would arrange and would invite the receiving FSM team to attend.

## 8. S.H.I.P

*Please note that S.H.I.P is part of the transfer process which provides a tracking function.*

*The S.H.I.P assessment is a specialist assessment to be undertaken by two SHIP workers in conjunction with any identified ongoing work that would need to be undertaken by the identified allocated worker in the receiving Family Safeguarding team. This assessment would usually be identified as part of the Single Assessment process, which upon completion in CAAS would transfer to the relevant Family Safeguarding team to progress the ongoing work and jointly work the S.H.I.P assessment. Both workers to be identified in order to progress as per the protocol for transfer of the case to Family Safeguarding Team following completion of a Single Assessment.*