



# **TRANSFER PROTOCOL**

## **Transfer of Children Between Teams and Services**

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### **Children's Services**

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## **1. Children's Services Transfer Protocol- Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that when it is necessary to transfer practitioner responsibility for a child / young person between services this is achieved in a timely and effective manner, has a focus on the child and is in line with our Practice Standards.

1.2 This Transfer Protocol sets out the agreed process and points of transfer for children, young people and their families when they require an ongoing service.

## **2. Principles of transfer**

- 2.1 Our model of practice is based on building strong relationships with children, families and networks, keeping a clear focus on children during the transfer process. All decisions will be made in the best interests of the child, and to ensure a seamless service. The following points explain the principles that sit behind the transfer process.
- 2.2 All children transfer at a meeting which produces the plan eg EH meeting, CIN meeting, ICPC, CiC, CGM, PLO meeting etc. The child must be seen by the assessing worker within one week prior to that meeting being held, to enable time for the receiving worker to be able to read up on the case and arrange a visit, but also to ensure the child and family are able to understand the transfer and who will now working with them. The practitioner's responsibility will transfer within 24hrs of the meeting being held.
- 2.3 There is the principle of 'no delay' thus ensuring that children and their families receive support with no gap in service provision.
- 2.4 The child's experience, their needs and journey will remain at the heart of decisions to transfer.
- 2.5 It is the assessing team's decision as to the outcome of the assessment, including what service a child needs to transfer to. It may be that the assessing team

invites a worker from another team to help establish the plan prior to transfer. There should be no delay in transferring, as the process is child focused. Any concerns in relation to the assessing team's decision should be discussed between Service Managers, however, this should not delay the transfer.

- 2.6 Good quality information will be passed from the transferring team to the receiving team to prevent gaps in knowledge and to ensure that the welfare and protection of the child is paramount.
- 2.7 Allocations are reviewed on a weekly basis and occur between services with any challenges being resolved by service managers.
- 2.8 The will transfer at the arranged CIN, ICPC, CiC meeting/ visit which will occur within 10 working days after the transfer is agreed. This timeframe ensures that the receiving social worker has time and notice to attend any meetings.
- 2.9 The assessing worker will remain responsible for all statutory duties until the point of transfer to the receiving worker.

### **3. The Transfer Process**

- 3.1 Step Down to Early Help and Targeted Support will work in a similar manner, therefore when the responsibility is ready to transfer, the child's details are added to the Weekly Allocations list, and the worker identifies the date and time when the child's situation will be heard at the weekly Early Help Panel. This date should be the earliest possible date where the child can be heard, and where the assessing worker can attend to present the child at the Panel. By contrast, an allocated Social Worker can refer directly to the Reunification Team, on completion of a positive Reunification Assessment. Co-allocation of a Reunification Early Help Worker, to work alongside the allocated Social Worker, takes place within one week of a referral form being received by the Reunification Team.
- 3.2 There are limited circumstances where more than one social worker will be allocated to a family. There may, however, be some exceptions, for example,

a Child in Care who becomes pregnant and there is a need for a separate referral in relation to their unborn child; or instances involving child-on-child abuse within the family home necessitating the need for two workers. Where a child is Care experienced, they will have a Personal Adviser as a dual worker from the age of 16, with this PA then becoming the sole allocated worker when the young person reaches 18 years old.

- 3.3 It will be the responsibility of the MASH to ensure the transfer-in Conference is scheduled, and to ensure the agreed case closure/ transfer checklist is completed so that the child can transfer directly to CFF. The Transfer-In child should be added to the Weekly Allocations list as soon as the transfer-in is requested, and the preliminary date for the Transfer-in Conference must be shared with the CFF team receiving the child, with the ICPC being held within 10 days.

#### **4. BCP Transfer Standards**

- 4.1 No child's name will be added to the Weekly allocations until all the tasks as outlined on the agreed case closure/ transfer sheet are completed. In terms of S. 47s, it is the expectation that all file closure/ transfer tasks will be completed prior to the ICPC/ RCPC and the child will not transfer to the receiving worker until such time that the tasks are completed. The assessing worker's team manager is ultimately responsible for ensuring the tasks are completed and the work is of good quality prior to transfer.

#### **5. Team to team transfer arrangements**

##### **5.1 Integrated Front Door /the MASH**

- Children requiring an assessment will be transferred to the assessment service.
- Children who have been accommodated out of hours will be transferred to the assessment service.

- Transfer-in CP conferences will be transferred directly to CFF from the MASH. The expectation will be that the transferring Local authority will need to attend the transfer-in ICPC to present their case.
- Where a referral is received for a child who has been open within the last 3 months, the child will transfer directly to the previous team.
- Where a referral is received about a child with a disability and the criteria is met for CHAD [Children with Health and Disabilities], the child will transfer directly to this service. This also includes carer assessments where the child meets the CHAD criteria, otherwise these assessments transfer to Assessment Team.
- Where a referral has been received about an Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child in need of support, they will be transferred directly to the CIC service with all relevant information gained.
- In these circumstances MASH managers will telephone or email the appropriate receiving team manager within CiC to alert them of the transfer.

#### ***Requests for court reports***

- Child Impact reports and S. 37 reports, where there has been prior Social Care involvement within the last 3 months, will be allocated to the originating team.
- Where the child was allocated and closed by Children's Services within the last 3 months, the MASH will triage all requests and ensure swift transfer to the appropriate team.
- Where a s37 report is request for a child that has not been known to BCP Children's Services in the past MASH will transfer to the Assessment Team by notifying managers and adding the family to the transfer list.
- Requests for statements or reports by other Local Authorities or Courts for children not in the BCP area may not require any input from BCP, other than to respond to state the child is not BCP's responsibility.
- If there are requests to move a child into the BCP area, and therefore a request or Court Order to complete a statement/ report, this will be transferred to the Children and Families First Service upon receipt of the Court Order

- All children transferred will be overseen and managed by the team manager, however the team manager may delegate some of their responsibilities to their assistant team manager in line with the Practice Standards
- Pre-birth assessments will be assessed in line with S.17 general duties. Where the unborn baby has no older, open siblings, the Assessment Service will undertake the assessment. Where there are older siblings in the household who are open, the pre-birth would be transferred to the responsible team to assess
- Where a child is in Care or care leaver becomes pregnant, and where the allocated worker of the mother-to-be has concerns, a referral should be made to the MASH within the area where the mother-to-be resides.

## **5.2 Assessment Teams – Transfer Process**

- The team manager is expected to quality assure and ensure that all tasks on the case transfer/ closure list have indeed been completed prior to transfer
- Children and Young People requiring Looked After status are to be transferred to the Children & Families First team as soon as possible and within the 2-week standard at a maximum.
- Unborn babies whose siblings are currently subject to Care Proceedings- The Assistant Team Manager/ Team Manager of the MASH will telephone the Assistant Team Manager/ Team Manager of the PLO and Court team for discussion and agreement to transfer.
- Children requiring PLO process will be taken by the assessing team to a legal gateway meeting (LGM). If the assessment has been completed and the child has been added to the Weekly allocations for transfer, and the LGM determines PLO is required, then the PLO meeting and/or initial hearing [whichever is first] will be the transfer point. In addition, the assessing social worker is expected to attend this LGM to present the case and the PLO and Court team can then be present to hear the presenting concerns. If an ICPC occurs prior the LGM being held, it is still expected that the assessing social worker will attend the LGM, although the child may transfer at an earlier date to the receiving social worker.

### **5.3 Children & Families First Teams [CFF]**

- The transfer process is set out within this policy and applies to all children transferring between services/ teams.
- Where the ADM decision is agreement for adoption, referrals will to be made to Aspire Adoption within 24 hours for a secondary allocation of a Family Finding social worker to occur.

## **6. Children in Care Service – Transfer Process**

- All children transfer to CiC or CEYP will be heard at a weekly transfer meeting.
- Children will be transferred to the CiC service at the 2nd CiC review and after the permanence plan that includes the child remaining in Care has been agreed. If the permanence plan is for reunification within a 6-month period, the child will not transfer. Where the child is within Assessment, then there may be exceptions where the child could transfer to CIC if permanence of remaining in Care is clear and reunification and Family Network meetings have been explored.
- Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (USAC) will automatically become CiC, the MASH will ensure that checks are completed with the Home Office and any agencies including local accommodation provision establishing basic details, wider networks of support, needs and risks. Where the information gathered provides any indication the young person is under 21, they will be transferred to the CIC service for further assessment and support. If the information indicates the young person is highly likely to be an adult over 21, they will be transferred to the Assessment Team who will undertake a visit within 24 hours to gather further information.
- they are transferred from the MASH to the CiC service once checks are
- Children who cease to be Looked After by becoming subject to CIN/CP plans or Supervision Orders will transfer to Children and Families First teams.

- Allocations meetings with the CEYP team will take place. All eligible children aged 15 years and 8 months old will be discussed and will be allocated a Personal Adviser.
- As each child reaches 18 years of age, the Personal Adviser becomes the sole allocated worker.

## **7. CHAD- transfer process**

- New referrals will be received via the MASH in the first instance and, where the threshold criteria is met, the child will be transferred directly to CHAD for assessment.
- Where a safeguarding referral regarding a child with a disability is received this will transfer directly to CHAD for the S.47 and assessment. The process will be the same as it is for children transferring to the assessment service
- Any safeguarding concerns on closed cases will to be referred to the MASH
- Where safeguarding concerns arise and a child is open to CHAD, all siblings will be assessed by CHAD and remain open to CHAD if work is required.
- Where a child is subject to care proceedings the team will continue to support the child and their siblings if already open until their permanency is achieved. Thereafter, the team will liaise with the Children in Care teams as per transfer protocol to arrange transfer of the siblings.

## **8. Private Fostering Team - Transfer Process**

- Should safeguarding concerns arise or a need for additional services under S.17, the Private Fostering Team Manager will discuss with the allocated worker's responsible Team Manager to ascertain how best to assist the child and/or family and whether this requires further assessment/ transfer.
- Where a new referral is made to the MASH regarding a private fostering arrangement the child will be transferred from the MASH straight to the private fostering team
- Where safeguarding concerns are raised for the child, these must be assessed in line with safeguarding policies by the allocated worker



## **9. Case transfers to Aspire Adoption (RAA)**

- The local authority will take primary casework responsibility for all children for whom adoption is being considered to the point of Care and Placement Orders.
- In the case of relinquished babies, the local authority will take primary casework responsibility until the formal witnessed CAFCASS consent has been obtained.

## **10. Special Guardianship Assessments- process for referral to Aspire**

- The child will remain allocated to the allocated worker.
- The allocated worker will refer a child to Aspire for a full assessment of a family member or friend within 1 working day following the conclusion of a positive viability assessment.
- If a negative viability assessment is concluded and the Court orders an SGO assessment, then this will be referred within 1 working day from the Court's decision irrespective of whether the sealed or draft Order is received by the Local Authority to avoid further delay.
- Enquiries and notifications about Special Guardianship Order applications, which are received by the local authority where the child is not the subject of care proceedings, will be referred to Aspire within 1 working day

## Case Transfer Process



