

Dual Status Guidance – Children Looked After (CLA) and Child Subject to Child Protection (CP) Plans

Policy Owner: Quality Assurance Service Manager – Safeguarding

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Contents

1. Introduction and Purpose	1
2. Scope of Policy	1
3. Guidance	1
Decisions to end a CP plan outside of conference	2

1. Introduction and Purpose

Good practice indicates that children who are looked after (CLA) should not also need a Child Protection (CP) plan. Where a child is looked after, the Local Authority is the corporate parent, and should therefore not place a child in a situation where they are at risk of significant harm. Only in exceptional circumstances might a child who is looked after also need a CP Plan.

2. Scope of Policy

Children at risk of significant harm and children who become looked after.

3. Guidance

Where a child who has a Child Protection Plan has become looked after, the first Review Child Protection Conference (RCPC) following the child becoming looked after should consider whether a CP Plan is still necessary. Members of the core group may wish to consider bringing the date of the next RCPC forward if appropriate.

If it is determined that a CP plan needs to continue while the child is also looked after, the circumstances and reasons why should be made explicit in the meeting and set out in the record of the conference.

If the conference agrees that a CP plan is no longer required because of the child being looked after, the conference should consider whether there needs to be a contingency safety plan if these safeguards are no longer in place.

Where the court has made an Interim Care Order (ICO) and the child is placed away from the parents, a CP plan may also be ended outside of the conference process, following written consultation with all core group members.

Decisions to end a CP plan outside of conference

This decision may only be made in the following circumstances:

- When a child is made subject to an ICO placed away from parents
- When a child turns 18
- When a child leaves the country
- When a child has died