

Foster Carer Reviews

A Fostering's Panel's primary legal function is to make recommendations about the approval of foster carers. In Birmingham City Council all panels are Permanence Panels.

The legal functions include the following as required under the Foster Services Regulations 2011,25(1):

- a) to consider each application for approval and to recommend whether or not a person is suitable to be a foster carer;
- b) where it recommends approval of an application, to recommend any terms on which the approval is given.

The legal functions of a fostering panel also include the following as required under the Fostering Services Regulations 2011,25(1).

- c) To recommend, or not, whether a person remains suitable to be a foster carer, and whether or not the term of their approval (if any) remain appropriate-
 - i) On the first review carried out in accordance with Regulation 28(2); and
 - ii) On the occasion of any other review when requested to do so by the fostering service provider in accordance with Regulation 28(5);and
- d) To consider any case referred to it under Regulation 27(8) or 28(10).

Permanency Panels also hear:

- First reviews of all new carers
- Reviews following child protection concerns or allegations about standards of care provided by foster carers
- Reviews following changes in their approval circumstances
- Changes and terminations of approval under Regulation 28(7)

All other reviews are to be presented to the FCR (Foster carer review) mini panel which meets every 2 weeks.

The panel consists of an Independent Chair, a Fostering Manager, an Area Manager and an Audit Manager. There is not an issue of quoracy but key to the meeting is the Panel Chair and the Fostering TM who acts as ADM.

Papers are sent out 2 weeks before the panel meeting and at this point there is no QA function so that when the FCR meet, if they deem that paperwork is not sufficient, they will defer back to the fostering service with action points that will need attending to within 7 working days.

The panel also have the option to refer any case to the Permanency Panel if they feel that the issues raised are so great that they would warrant discussion at the fuller panel. Or, if inadequate or poor reports/paperwork needs to be challenged and recommendations deferred for better quality information and assessments to be provided.

The meeting is a paper exercise only as Foster Carers and Social Workers are not expected to attend.