

Scheme of Delegation for Children's Social Care in Bracknell Forest

Introduction

This scheme of delegation indicates the level at which key decisions can be taken. It covers those decisions within Children's Social Care which are particularly critical in determining the actions of the service in promoting the welfare of a particular child. The scheme also covers core issues of financial delegation.

The scheme does not cover all eventualities. If furthermore detailed information is required it will be necessary for staff to consult specific policies relating to the case in question, or to consider the matter further with their supervisor.

For decisions covered by the scheme this is the level at which decisions of this kind will be taken. However, decisions are not taken in isolation and without consultation. Staff at all levels are expected to consult and take advice as appropriate. Where for many reason decisions are taken above the level of immediate line manager, the decision should go through the line management chain.

This scheme of delegation is intended to place the decision making as close to the front line as is consistent with guidance and regulation, while maintaining accountability and safe decision making.

Review

The format for this document was developed and approved by the Children's Social Care Management Team in 2010 and has evolved since that time with at least annual reviews and forms part of induction when a new leader joins the leadership team.

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	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
	FAMILY SUPPORT			
1	To arrange support services to children living with their families	S17 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager, can delegate to Assistant Team Manager
2	To chair a child in need planning meeting, family support meeting, first meeting and closing meetings.	S17 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager can delegate to Assistant Team Manager or Senior Practitioner
3	To chair the review of the child in need plan or family support plan	S17 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager can delegate to Assistant Team Manager to agree case by case
4	To agree short break care and respite care for children with disability	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Larchwood Statement of Purpose	Head of Service via Resource Allocation Panel (RAS)
5	Agree direct payment for Children and Families service provision	Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996	BFC Direct Payments Policy	Team Manager, subject to financial limits in no. 13. below. Via RAS
	REFERRAL, ASSESSMENT, CASE CLOSURE			
6	Approve no further action on referral about a child		End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager, or Assistant Team Manager
7	Agree Single Assessment be carried out		End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager, or Assistant Team Manager
8	Agree the closer or work for a child (case closure)		End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager, or Assistant Team Manager
	PRIVATE LAW PROCEEDINGS			
9	Sign off a report to the court under Section 7 in private law proceedings	S7 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	The SWs line supervisor (TM or ATM)
10	Sign off a report to the court under Section 37	S37 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service or delegate Team Manager
	FINANCIAL			

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11	To provide financial assistance to children living with their families, as per agreed limits a) up to £500 b) up to £50k c) up to £200k d) over £200 and up to 300k e) Over £300k	S17 CA 1989	Corporately set	a) Team Manager b) Head of Service c) Assistant Director, Children's Social Care d) Executive Director may delegate to the Assistant Director. In those circumstances the Executive Director must be informed of the decision. e) Executive Director
12	To provide financial assistance to a young person approaching adulthood /care leavers - financial limits as above	S24 CA 1989	See Leaving Care Policy and Procedures for details of current limits	As above
13	To guarantee rent a) for YP/care leavers or child/ren looked after b) for any other relevant individual / families	S24 CA 1989 Para 10 Schedule 2 CA 1989	As above	Head of Service, following consultation with the BFC Legal Section
14	To approve setting up home grant to care leavers above agreed limit in procedures	S24 CA 1989	As above	Children's Social Care, Head of Service
15	To agree time limited payment of S17 to support a child / family prior to child arrangement order	S17 CA 1989 Family and Friends Statutory Guidance 2010	Family and Friends Policy and Procedures	Head of Service
16	a) To agree payment of a residence order or special guardianship order allowance b) To waive the financial assessment c) To agree in exceptional circumstances ongoing fostering payments, post adoption / SGO until child is 18 yrs	Para 15 Schedule 1 CA 1989	Residence Order Policy and Procedures	a) Head of Service b) Assistant Director, Children's Social Care c) Assistant Director, Children's Social Care
17	To agree legal costs for applicants for child arrangements or special guardianship order	Legal Services Commission Funding Code for Legal Aid	Residence order Policy and Procedures	Head of Service, in consultation with Joint Legal Team

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	CHILD PROTECTION			
18	Duty to convene a strategy discussion to decide whether a S47 is initiated	S47 CA 1989	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
19	Decision to convene a Child Protection Conference	Working Together to Safeguard Children	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures	Team Manager
20	Decision not to convene a CP Conference (CPC) following S47 enquiries	Working Together to Safeguard Children	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures	Duty Team Manager and in consultation with Conference and Review Team Manager where it is felt this would be beneficial. If any disagreement, refer to a Head of Service
21	Sign off on the social work recommendation to all CPC re whether not a child needs a Protection Plan	Working Together to Safeguard Children	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
	PUBLIC LAW			
22	To agree issuing of 'Letter Before Proceedings' and commence pre-proceedings case management in accordance with the Public Law Outline guidance	Public Law Outline, April 2008	Public Law Outline, Case Management Guidance, April 2008, Ministry of Justice, Tri.X	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team) via legal planning gateway
23	To make decision to instigate care proceedings	Part IV, CA 1989	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures/Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team) via legal planning gateway
24	To agree application for a Child Assessment Order	S43 CA 1989	Take to Legal Advice Meetings	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)
25	To agree application for Emergency Protection Order	S44 CA 1989	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures section 7.6	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)
26	To agree application for a Recovery Order	S50 CA 1989	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board Child Protection Procedures section 7.6	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
27	To request Police Protection in an emergency	S46 CA 1989	Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Child Protection Procedures section 7.6	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)
28	To agree the initial care plan to court in care proceedings	Public Law Outline 2008	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)
29	To agree the final care plan to court in care proceedings	LAC (99)29	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)
30	To agree application to court to vary a care or supervision order, or to discharge a care order	S39 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service (in consultation with Joint Legal Team)
	CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER			
31	Agree accommodation of a child with parental consent	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance BFC Looked After Children Policy and Procedure	Head of Service via Entry to Care Panel
32	Agree accommodation of a child over 16	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance	Head of Service, via Entry to Care Panel
33	Chair care planning meeting of a child who becomes looked after (S20 or EPO, ICO, remand to local authority accommodation etc)	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	BFC policy and procedure for the Statutory Review of children looked after	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
34	Chair statutory looked after child review	Review of Children's Cases (Amendment) Regulations 2010	BFC policy and procedure for the Statutory Review of children looked after	Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) or non-line Team Manager in an emergency
35	Agree discharge of a child accommodated under section 20	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service (advisory only as this a parental right). Must be determined in consultation with parents, or with the young person if 16+ IRO
36	Approve an unregulated placement of a child under 16	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance BFC Looked After Children Policy and Procedure	DSC, who can delegate to Assistant Director (Ofsted must always be notified)

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
37	Agree placement of child/young person for whom accommodation has been agreed with local Bracknell Forest foster carers or supported lodgings carers	S31/20 CA1989	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance	Head of Service, via Entry to Care Panel
38	Agree placement of child for whom accommodation has been agreed with foster carers from another local authority	S31/20 CA1989	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance	Head of Service, via Entry to Care Panel
39	Agree to fund placement of child with IFA	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care (the nominated officer), via Entry to Care Panel
40	Agree to fund out of borough placement of child in residential placement	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care (the nominated officer), via Entry to Care Panel
41	To agree a child placement at a distance	Commissioning Individual Placements Guidance	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Executive Director can delegate to the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care (the nominated officer), via Entry to Care Panel – Executive Director to be informed
42	Agree to withhold placement address from parents	Children Act 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service with legal advice
43	Agree placement of child in secure accommodation	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Secure Accommodation Policy and Procedure	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care via secure panel in consultation with the Executive Director
44	Agree the placement of a child subject to a care order to live with his/her parent(s)	CA 1989 S23 (4) and (5) and according to Placement of children with parents regulations S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Reunification Policy	Head of Service Life Chances, via Entry to Care Panel A discussion with Head of Service whose team has case responsibility will be needed
45	Approve plan for permanency for looked after child in principle	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	BFC Policy and Procedure for Permanency Planning for Looked after Children	Head of Service

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
46	Approve plan for child to be considered for adoption placement	CA 2004/1989	BFC Policy and Procedure for Permanency Planning for Looked after Children	Head of Service
47	Agree to care plan for placement of looked after child with family and friends carers.	CA 2004/1989	BFC Policy and Procedure for Permanency Planning for Looked after Children	Head of Service
48	Agree care plan for looked after child to become subject to special guardianship order.	CA 2004/1989	BFC Policy and Procedure for Permanency Planning for Looked after Children	Head of Service
49	Agree care plan for looked after child to become subject to child arrangements order	CA 2004/1989	BFC Policy and Procedure for Permanency Planning for Looked after Children	Head of Service, following which Independent Reviewing Officer reviews
50	To consent to emergency medical treatment for a looked after child on a care order	CA	Children Looked After Consent to Medical Treatment or Examination	Head of Service
51	To consent to medical treatment or give other consent for looked after children who are unaccompanied asylum seekers or without an adult with PR, who are looked after under Section 20	S3(5) CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service
52	To sign passport applications for a child looked after	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager / Assistant Team Manager
53	To agree a holiday abroad for a child looked after	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service
54	To agree for a child in care to live abroad subject to the approval of a court	Para 19 Schedule 2 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Assistant Director & Executive Director together
55	To approve the applications of children in care who wish to join HM Forces		End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service, via Panel
56	Consent for a young person to drive a Moped		Delegated Authority Policy	Team Manager

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
57	Consent for young person to have an E-scooter – not to be agreed	Law in relation to E-scooters	Delegated Authority Policy	Team Manager
58	To agree to place siblings separately	S20 CA 1989	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service
59a	To agree supervised contact can be unsupervised			Team Manager, via CLA review in agreement with IRO
59b	Approve the refusal or suspension of contact with parents	Schedule 2 Children Act 1989 paras 10/15	Take Legal Advice BFC Family Time Policy	Head of Service
60	To approve those subject to a Care Order taking part in activities		Delegated Authority Policy	Team Manager
61	Gender re-assignment and or Hormone Treatment Legally agree change of name for children in care To agree the change of a child's name internally and on Mosaic for children in care	Health S33 Children Act 1989	Legal Advice End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Assistant Director can delegate to Head of Service via Solutions Panel
	SECURE ACCOMMODATION			
62	Authority to apply for a secure order and seek a secure placement.	Children Act 1989, Section 25	Policy and Procedure for the use of Secure Accommodation	Secure Accommodation Panel, Assistant Director, Children's Social Care
63	Agree composition of secure accommodation review panel	Children (Secure Accommodation) Amendment Regulations 1992	Policy and Procedure for the use of Secure Accommodation	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care in consultation with the Executive Director
	ADOPTION			
64	To agree the assessment of prospective adopters	Adoption and Children Act 2002	BFC Adoption Procedures, Section 2	Adopt Thames Valley
65	Adoption agency decision maker	Adoption and Children Act 2002	BFC Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
66	To agree the payment of legal expenses for prospective adoptive parents for children who are being placed for adoption by BFC as an adoption agency	Adoption and Children Act 2002	BFC Adoption Agency Policy	Head of Service/Joint Legal Team
67	To approve the payment of adoption allowance (waiving the financial assessment, if appropriate)	Adoption and Children Act 2002	BFC Adoption Procedures, Section 10 & 11	Assistant Director, Childrens Social Care
68	To approve the Schedule 2 report to court	Adoption and Children Act 2002	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Team Manager
	FOSTERING			
69	To agree to the assessment of prospective carers, including Family and friends carers.	CA 1989 Guidance Vol 3	BFC Fostering Service Policy and Procedure	Life Chances Team Manager
70	Agency decision maker	CA 1989 Stat Guidance Vol 3 2010	BFC Fostering Service Policy and Procedure	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Head of Service in Assistant Director's absence
71	Agree continuation of foster carers approval following annual review (non panel)	Fostering Services Regs. Amendments 2013	BFC Fostering Services Policy and Procedure	Head of Service Life Chances or other Head of Service if not available
72	To sanction payment of the fostering allowance	CA 1989 Stat Guidance Vol 3 2010	BFC Fostering Service Policy and Procedure	Team Manager/Family Placement Team Manager
73	To vary allowances to foster carers / contributions by young people in placement in exceptional circumstances	CA 1989 Stat Guidance Vol 3 2010	End to End Procedures for Family Safeguarding	Head of Service
74	To vary the approval status of foster carers	CA 1989 Guidance Vol 3	BFC Fostering Service Policy and Procedure	Head of Service present to Foster Panel if continuing change of approval status sought
75	To agree exemption for foster carers from the usual fostering limit of a maximum of three children in any one placement	Fostering Service Regulations 2002	BFC Fostering Service Policy and Procedure	Head of Service Foster Panel to be informed

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
	PRIVATE FOSTERING			
76	Confirm decision that private fostering arrangements meet the welfare needs of the child following fostering panel recommendations	Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005	BFC Private Fostering Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance	Head of Service Life Chances
77	Prohibit particular private fostering arrangements	Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005	BFC Private Fostering Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance	Head of Service Life Chances
78	Impose requirements on private foster carers	Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005	BFC Private Fostering Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance	Head of Service Life Chances
	RECORDS			
79	Full disclosure of child records to the Police	Data Protection	Data Protection	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager to delegate to Joint Legal Team
	DATA SUBMISSION & STATUTORY RETURNS			
80	To complete the final sign off Statutory Returns as listed below:		As per statutory/guidance requirements	Executive Director. This is delegated to Assistant Director in the absence of the Executive Director
a)	Children Social Work Workforce	Section 83 of Children Act 1989	Department of Education Children Workforces Guide	As above in 80
b)	Children Looked After	S20 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regs Vol 2 2010	Department of Education Children looked-after by local authorities in England Guide to the SSDA903 collection	As above in 80
c)	Children in Need Census Statistic: • Children in Need and Child Protection	Children Act 1989	Department of Education Children in Need Census Guide	As above in 80
d)	To approve the Section 251 Submission	Children Act 1989	Department for Education Section 251 Budget Guidance	Business Partner Finance in consultation with the Executive Director and Assistant Director

	FUNCTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	PROCEDURE/GUIDANCE	AUTHORISED OFFICER
	WORKFORCE			
81	Decision to refer a Social Worker employee to Social Work England			Assistant Director with HR Advice
82	Staff References written by Line managers			To be approved by Head of Service before submission
83	Secondment Requests			CSLT, requests for secondments to come to CSLT via Head of Service
84	Decision to appoint agency worker off matrix (after 2 week period)			Head of HR or HR Assistant Director

CSCMT

30 June 2009

Reviewed 30 Sep 2010

Reviewed Feb 2012

Reviewed May 2013

Reviewed CSCMT April 2014

Reviewed CSCMT March 2015

Reviewed CSCMT March 2016

Reviewed CSCMT March 2017

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Document Version	Changes Made	Date	By
V.2	Document created.	28/12/2022	Jade Elliott (Governance Project Support Officer) &

			Claire Garton (Operations Manager)
V.3	Youth Justice Scheme of Delegation integrated. Contents table updated. Confirmation that YJ SoD was approved by Exec Director on 27/09/2023.	09/10/2023	Jade Elliott (Governance Project Support Officer)
V.4	Line 56 & 57 added. Authorised officer changed, lines 19 & 52. Previous version 57a, 57b & 61 combined to make a new Line 61 for this version. Line 60, function expanded. Changes approved by Exec Director on 25/10/2023.	03/11/2023	Jade Elliott (Governance Project Support Officer)
V5	Youth Justice Scheme of Delegation removed, financial limits for Team Mangers reduced and additional items added onto the workforce section impacting references, secondments and recruitment	07/11/2024	Alison Hale (Senior Leadership Strategic Support Officer)