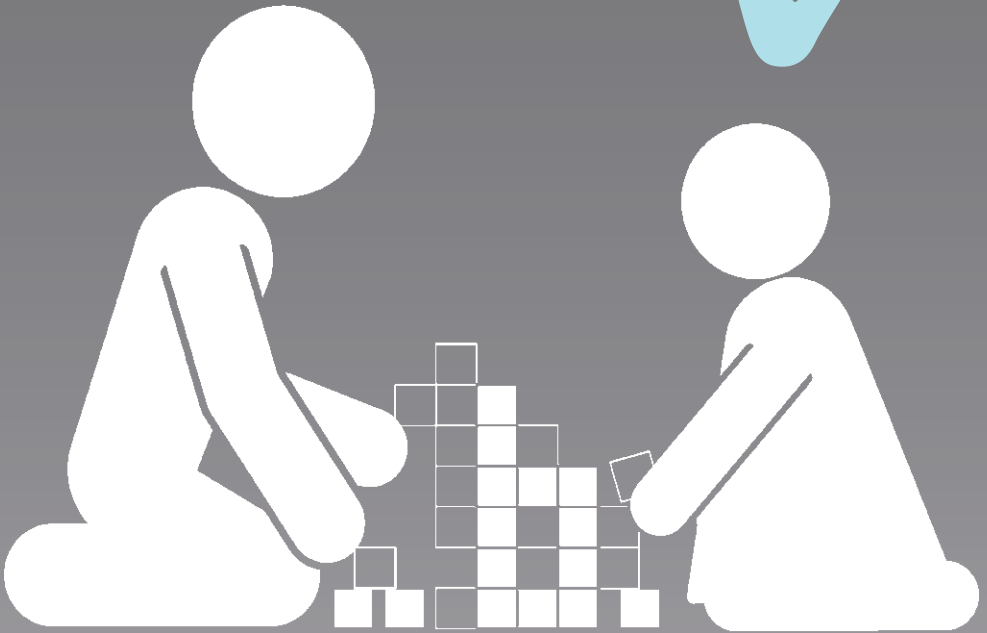


June 2022

# Bradford Standards Checklist



Bradford District Children's Services



**BRADFORD**  
working in partnership



*City of*  
**BRADFORD**  
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## **We have a checklist so that . . .**

- Children and Families benefit from a consistent approach to our work.
- Our staff know what is expected of them.

## **Our key priorities for our children and young people**

- Listening to the voice of children and young people.
- Safeguarding the most vulnerable and providing early support for families.
- Reducing health and social inequalities, including tackling child poverty.
- Supporting education attainment and achievement.
- Ensuring our children and young people are ready for life and work.
- Ensuring children and young people are supported with their emotional wellbeing.

## **The delivery of these priorities will be enabled by:**

- Engaging and supporting the workforce.
- Effective leadership.
- Providing access to the right resources at the right time.
- Enabling innovation.
- Engaging partners.



## **Our vision . . .**

is to ensure that children are given the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient.



## **Our aim . . .**

to consistently deliver services and support with care and compassion to strengthen families through a positive working relationship.



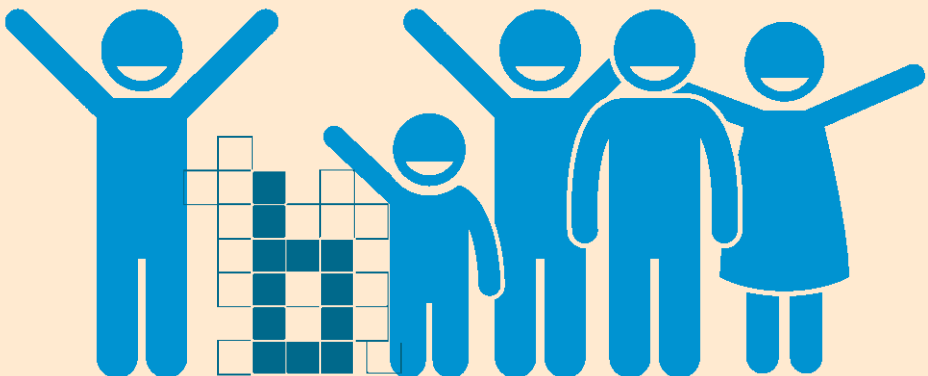
## **Our mission . . .**

To always put children at the heart of all we do.



## **Our standards . . .**

are in place to ensure consistency in best practice and achieve good outcomes for children & families.



# Young people say . . . “

## Accessibility

I know my social worker and I have their direct phone number and I know who to contact if they are not in work

## Accessibility

Tell me in advance if my social worker can't meet me and if someone else is going to come

## Accessibility

I want a worker who will stick with me and not be changed unless they leave

## Trust

Tell me who you share my details with and why

## Trust

I need to know that I can trust my social worker with my private information

## Trust

Don't break promises and be honest about what you can and cannot do and if you say your going to do something then do it

## Stigma

If we have to meet in school please be don't make it obvious

## Stigma

If we are out together please take off your badge – I don't want everyone to know my situation

## Stigma

Treat me just like you would with any other child

## Support

Encourage and support me to be the best that I can be and help me reach my dreams

## Support

Support me to take part in meetings about me and help me understand what is happening and why

## Relationships

My behaviour is because of the situation I am in, it is not me as a person

## Support

Support me to have regular family time with the people who are important to me

## Relationships

When I leave care don't just cut off contact, some workers have been important people in my life for a long time and that should be able to continue

## Relationships

Talk to me using words I can understand and help to make sense of my situation

## Relationships

Sometimes you need to stop and think before you react to what I am saying

”

## Direct work with Children

- I use direct work tools that are engaging and appropriate to children's age, need and level of understanding.
- I take the time to get to know the child that I work with.
- I listen to what children want, making sure that this informs my work and recommendations.
- I understand each child's journey, circumstances and family background from reading their file.
- I talk to the child to understand what is important to them and what is happening for them.
- The child's voice is recorded clearly in all my assessments and plans.
- I record information clearly and accurately so that a child is able to understand decisions that have been made about what is happening should they want to read their file.

### Glossary of acronyms

CF	– children and families
CIC	– children in care
CICC	– Children in Care Council
CIN	– child in need
CP	– Child Protection
ICPC	– initial child protection conference
IRO	– independent reviewing officer
PLO	– Public Law Outline
RCPC	– review child protection conference
YJS	– Youth Justice Service

## 1.0 Case recording

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1.01



I understand the importance of having accurate and up to date recording of my case work.

1.02



I record evidence that I have seen my child alone if they are age three or over, unless they have refused to see me, or it is an agreed decision by my manager. When I have not seen my child alone I record the reason for this.

1.03



For statutory visits I will tick my child has been seen and seen alone when appropriate (on Liquid Logic).

1.04



I record my visits within 48 hours of seeing my child, unless there is a significant event in which I will record on the day. When I am unable to do this, I will inform my manager.

1.05



I record my visits using our agreed format and ensure the voice of the child is in **BOLD** and **BLUE**. This includes what my child has told me in their own voice about their wishes and feelings and this will influence my planning for them.

1.06



My case recording will capture my child's lived experience through information about what is important to my child.

1.07



I distinguish between fact and opinion in case recordings.

1.08



All records are respectful of my child and their family including their identity, educational, communication, language, cultural, gender, sexuality and disability needs.

1.09



I access and consider any previous information we know about my child and family as part of my assessment and reference this appropriately.

1.10



All key decisions impacting on my child's life including team managers decisions, case decisions and closure are recorded on my child's file.

1.11



Every case file has an up to date genogram, chronology and case summary using our agreed format.

## 2.0 Assessments

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2.01



Wherever possible I seek consent from parent / carers to speak with professionals and their wider family.

2.01



I clearly explain to my child and their parents/carers the purpose of my involvement and how I will undertake the assessment. My assessment will address the concerns that have been raised.

2.03



I see my child and family within the timescale set by the manager in allocation.

2.04



I develop good working relationships with my child and parents/ carers using the appropriate resources to support this.

2.05



I observe babies and toddlers when they are awake and plan my visits around their routine.

2.06



I agree a plan of work with my manager which includes seeing my child alone at least once whilst I am completing the assessment.

2.07



My engagement with children is informed by their needs age and ability. My observations will support my assessments visits and plans.

2.08



The views of parents and relevant adults including those who do not live in the family home, are used to understand my child's needs or risks and these have been evidenced and detailed in my recording.

2.09



I contact all agencies involved with my child and family and their information informs the assessment. When a decision has been made to do this without consent, a record of why this was done with clear information about what was shared.

2.10



I consider the needs and safety of siblings and any other children living in the household or network. Where appropriate I refer any concerns to the relevant person or agency.



**2.11**



I identify and communicate to the relevant people what we are worried about, what is working well and what needs to happen next.

**2.12**



I record the child's journey to distinguish between fact and opinion, so that my child and family understand why decisions are made.

**2.13**



I complete my Child and Family assessment promptly to meet the needs of my child or young person (no later than 45 days). My manager has oversight of the assessment at day 10 if it will take longer than planned.

**2.14**



Using a chronology and genogram, I identify trends, patterns and the family history, in order to understand how this may impact upon parental capacity, which will inform my assessment.

**2.15**



The assessment is evidenced based and not self-reporting. My findings are discussed with my manager about what needs to happen next and there is a clear rationale for the outcome

**2.16**



I share a copy of the assessment and explain the outcome, including the next steps, to my child, their family, the referrer and other agencies.

**2.17**



A copy of the completed assessment is given to the family and my child, so their feedback is part of the record.

**2.18**



My assessment accurately reflects the levels of need or risk and I am confident in my recommendations.

**2.19**



Management rationale is clearly recorded on assessments for authorised outcome.

**2.20**



Where the assessment results in a 'step-down' to another service, I correctly follow the early help procedures to ensure a smooth transition.

**2.21**



I continue to update my assessment every six months (or sooner if required) for all children that I work with to ensure that our plans are based on their needs.

### 3.0

## Section 47 Child Protection Investigations

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3.01



A strategy discussion is undertaken between the social worker, team manager, police, education and health services (minimum) who will provide the relevant information. I will share the outcome with involved agencies within 24 hours of the discussion.

3.02



I make it clear to parents/carers and my child, the purpose of my involvement and what the likely outcomes may be.

3.03



I see my child alone if they are three or over, within 24 hours of the strategy discussion unless they have refused to see me or it is an agreed decision by my manager.

3.04



I engage with my child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background or ability. My work and observations reflect my child's voice and experiences and inform my practice.

3.05



I consider the needs and safety of siblings and any other children living in the household or network. Where appropriate I refer any concerns to the relevant person or agency.

3.06



I gather information from other agencies regarding their involvement with my child and this informs and influences the outcome of the section 47 enquiries.

3.07



I obtain consent from a person with parental responsibility and my child (if age appropriate) or through legal proceedings, for a medical assessment if appropriate.

3.08



The outcome of the section 47 provides an analysis of the impact on my child about the likelihood of significant harm. I have a plan to keep my child safe and, if required, I seek legal advice.

3.09



I explain the outcome of the enquiries including next steps to my child and family, the referrer and other agencies.

**3.10**



I ensure that the ICPC is convened within 15 working days from the start of the strategy discussion.

**3.11**



I contact the Safeguarding Unit to complete checks and provide a list of attendees within 48 hours of booking the ICPC.

**3.12**



Following the outcome of the section 47, there are always at least two visits to the child and family prior to the ICPC. The frequency of the visits will be recorded by the manager to reflect professional judgement to manage risks.

**3.13**



I complete an ICPC report which describes what life is like for my child. I am clear about what we are worried about and what is working well. My report has been authorised by my manager.

**3.14**



I share my report with the family and relevant professionals three days (as a minimum) prior to the conference, to ensure a timely meeting.

**3.15**



For children above the age of eight, I inform and offer them an advocate to ensure that their voice is heard.

**3.16**

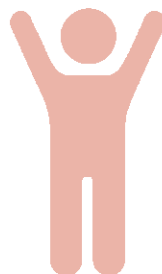
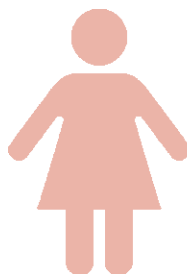


If my child is too young to attend the ICPC, I will make sure their voice and lived experience is part of the ICPC and understood.

**3.17**



I invite key agencies to the ICPC, who can provide the right information to make the right decisions for my child.



**4.0**

## Children subject to Child Protection Plans

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**4.01**

I inform my child and their family that I am the named social worker for them, and I give them details of how to contact me and how to obtain help when I am not available.

**4.02**

My child and family know how I will work with them, what needs to change and the timescales.

**4.03**

I see my child every 10 working days as a minimum, with each home visit to the child and family being purposeful and linked to the Child Protection Plan.

**4.04**

My recording of the visit to my child and family evidences how any risks are addressed and discussed.

**4.05**

I observe babies and toddlers when they are awake, and I plan my visits around their routine.

**4.06**

I engage with my child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability. My work and observations reflect my child's experience and inform my assessment.

**4.07**

Each visit adds to my knowledge of my child's circumstances, their wishes and their feelings. I discuss and agree with my manager the plan for unannounced visits to inform my work with my child and family.

**4.08**

I understand the role of other adults in my child's life and that any new adults visiting, living in the household or in contact with the family have been properly assessed.

**4.09**

I check where my child sleeps including beds and bedding.

**4.10**

The Child Protection Plan is written in a SMART way (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) and in language that my child and family can understand. The plan is linked to the identified risks and needs as determined by the assessment.

**4.11**



The first core group meeting takes place with the family and professionals within 10 working days of the ICPC. This meeting is chaired by the Team Manager and will update and confirm the CP Plan.

**4.12**



Subsequent core group meetings will take place in accordance with the needs of my child or young person, at a minimum of 30 working days (6 weeks). I will be responsible for the minutes. The agenda for the meeting will be the Child Protection Plan which will be reviewed and updated.

**4.13**



A record of the core group meeting minutes is shared with parents/carers and key professionals involved in the plan within 72 hours of the meeting.

**4.14**



The core group meeting prior to the review child protection conference (RCPC) considers whether a CP Plan is still required to reflect the level of risk identified.

**4.15**



Core group meetings are held with at least two other professionals attending with the social worker. In exceptional circumstances if a professional is unable to attend, a summary report is provided to assist with reviewing the Child Protection Plan.

**4.16**



I update my assessment for the Review Child Protection Conference (RCPC) and share this with parents/carers and my child at least 3 working days before the review. My report has been authorised by my manager.

**4.17**



I use my supervision to review the impact and progress of the plan to ensure that I am putting my child first in my work.

**4.18**



I consider with my manager, prior to each review, whether a Child Protection Plan is still required and give consideration to other options that reflect the level of risk identified.

**4.19**



I obtain the view of Child Protection Chairs if I go to legal gateway panel or if the PLO process is started.

**4.20**



I continue to update my assessment every six months (or sooner if required) for all children that I work with, to ensure that our plans are based on their needs.

## 5.0

# Standards – Children In Need

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5.01



I make contact with the family within five working days of being allocated the case and inform my child and their family that I am their named worker. I also provide my contact details.

5.02



I plan my first visit to my child and family and ensure I gain written consent from parents and carers and provide the family with a complaints, comments and compliments leaflet as well as a children in need leaflet.

5.03



I let parents/carers know that they can be supported by a relative, friend or advocate to enable them to be involved and supported at children in need reviews.

5.04



I provide the opportunity to the family to discuss and arranging a family network meeting at the first children in need review.

5.05



The children in need plan is written in a SMART way (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) and in language that my child and family can understand. The children in need plan is linked to the identified needs as determined by the assessment.

5.06



A Child in Need review will take place every 20 working days and the progress and impact of the plan has been explicitly reviewed with the family and professionals.

5.07



For children who have additional needs or complex health disabilities and are assessed as stable, a Child In Need meeting will take place every 6 months as a minimum and be linked with the EHCP annual review.

5.08



If the Child in Need plan is not helping to make a positive change within 4 months, I discuss this with my line manager to reflect on my plan of work and for my manager to chair the 6-month review meeting.

5.09



I see my child every 20 working days as a minimum on their own. For children who have additional needs or complex health disabilities and are assessed as stable, I see them every 12 weeks as a minimum.

**5.10**



I observe babies and toddlers when they are awake, and I plan my visits around their routine.

**5.11**



I engage with my child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability. My work and observations reflect my child's experience and inform my assessment.

**5.12**

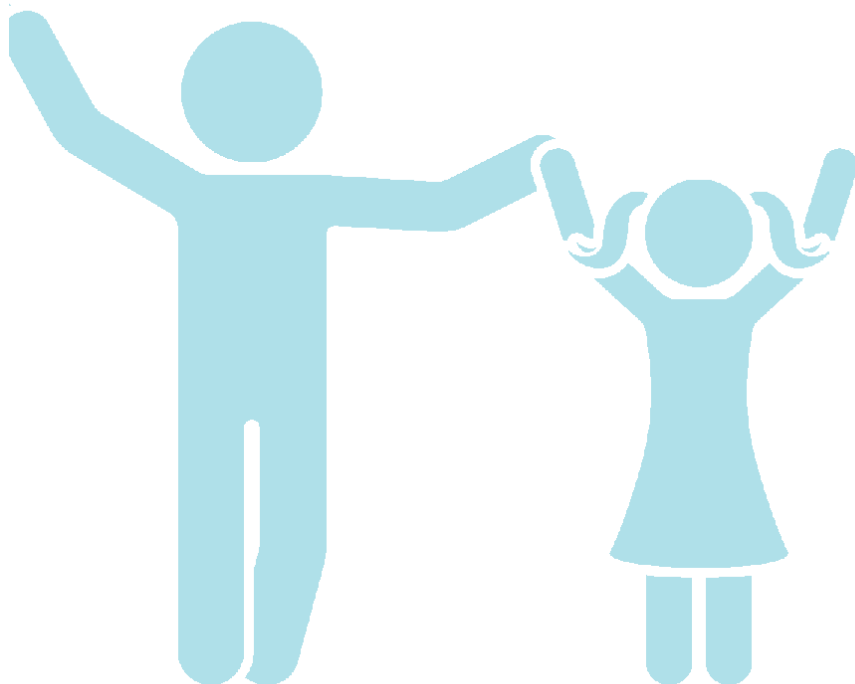


Child in Need reviews will be arranged outside school unless the child has complex needs.

**5.13**



I continue to update my assessment every six months (or sooner if required) for all children that I work with, to ensure that our plans are based on their needs. For children with additional needs or complex health disabilities, the assessment will be updated every 12 months.



## 6.0

# Children In Care (CIC)

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6.01



My child in care, their carers and their family know who I am, how to contact me and also how to get help when I am not in work.

6.02



There is a photograph of my child on their case file.

6.03



I take time to get to know my child, their likes and dislikes and their interests. I find out about their origins, culture, beliefs and language. I know their wishes, feelings and aspirations.

6.04



I engage with my child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability. Where my child's first language is not English, I use an interpreter to support our communication. My work and observations enable me to build a good relationship with my child.

6.05



I take pride in all of my child's achievements and recognise these in meetings and when I am writing my reports. I nominate my child for awards when appropriate. I celebrate each successful step in my child's journey.

6.06



My child is supported to have good quality family time with their family and other people who are important to them and that the safety of this has been assessed. Where my child's family and other significant people are not resident in the UK, I make every effort to support communication and ask other services to help with this.

6.07



My child's needs are reassessed at least every six months and that their Care Plan is updated within 10 days of each Children in Care Review.

6.08



My child has been able to tell me their wishes, feelings before a review and know how to get involved with the Children in Care Council (if age appropriate), along with any other participation activities.



6.09



When completing placement request forms, the information that I provide gives equal weight to my child or young person's strengths as well as their challenges.

6.10



When I am identifying a placement for my child, I do everything (the full spot needs removing) I can to make sure that the new placement is the right one. This includes (where it is possible), visiting the placement in advance, reading published inspection reports and statements of purpose and speaking to the potential carers.

6.11



Wherever possible, I arrange introductory visits to new placements.

6.12



When placing my child subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order with a person who has parental responsibility, Placement with Parents approval has been given by a Head of Service and that this decision has been recorded.

6.13



When placing my child with a connected person who has not been assessed as a foster carer, regulation 24 approval has been given by a Head of Service and that this decision has been recorded.

6.14



All relevant information is shared with carers. This includes family history, the vulnerability of my child and any identified risks. The voice of my child will be central in this.

6.15



Within two working days of my child coming into care I make the necessary arrangements for an initial health assessment to be carried out.

6.16



My child has a health assessment every 6 months if they are under 5 years old and every 12 months once they are over 5 years old. My child will also see the dentist regularly.

6.17



I follow up any actions from the health assessment in a timely manner.

6.18



I see my child at their home within five working days of my child's first or any subsequent placement and explain to them the reasons for them coming into care and try to answer all of their questions.

6.19



After my child is placed in any new home, I hold a Placement Planning meeting within 72 hours. If for any reason this cannot happen, the meeting will take place no later than 5 days on when my child moved.

- I hold a care planning meeting before my child's decision making child in care review (2nd review) to agree a plan of permanence.
- I hold subsequent care planning meetings as agreed on an individual basis at the child in care review with the IRO which will be in accordance with the child's needs and circumstances.

6.20



I visit my child where they live and see their bedroom on a regular basis so that I know that their accommodation is suitable.

6.21



I will see my looked after child in line with the Care Planning, Placement and Case Planning Regulations (England) 2010 and statutory guidance. Namely:

- Within one week of the start of any placement.
- Thereafter at intervals of not more than six weeks.
- Visits in the second or subsequent year of placement can be at intervals. of not more than three months if the placement has been agreed as a permanent placement intended to last until the child is 18.

6.22



I see and observe babies and toddlers when they are awake, and I plan my visits around their routine every 30 working days (6 weeks) as a minimum.

6.23



I engage with my child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability. My work and observations reflect the child's experience and inform my assessment.

6.24



My child always attends at least part of their review, unless they choose not to, or it is agreed with their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) that it is not in their best interests to attend. My child's attendance at their review is supported by an interpreter where English is not their first language.

6.25



Children in Care Reviews are held within 20 working days of my child coming into care and then at month 4. . Children in Care Reviews will then be held every 6 months.

6.26



If my child does not attend their review, their views will be shared through an agreed approach with the child.

**6.27**



If there is a significant change to the care plan such as a placement change, I discuss with the IRO whether an earlier Child in Care Review is required.

**6.28**



My report for the Children In Care Review has been shared with my child and family before the meeting.

**6.29**



My Children In Care review reports are shared with the IRO at least two working days before the Children in Care review, so that the IRO has time to read it in advance.

**6.30**



The IRO is informed or consulted about any significant changes in my child's circumstances as they happen.

**6.31**



I am actively involved in my child's education and ensure that there is an up-to-date personal education plan for them, which is reviewed at least twice per year.

**6.32**



I contribute appropriately to the annual review of foster carers who are looking after my child.

**6.33**



Where my child has an EHC Plan I attend their EHCP review meetings and provide information to help assess their educational needs.

**6.34**



By the time my young person is 16 years old they have helped form their own pathway plan and that this is consulted as part of their review. If my young person is an asylum seeking child, a Triple Planning approach will be followed in forming the pathway plan, in which all possible outcomes for my young person are discussed and considered.

**6.35**



I use my supervision to reflect on the work that I do with my child and what impact it is having on their life.

**6.36**



I carry out planned life-story work for my child and collate information for their life-story book on a regular basis.

**6.37**



If my young person is seeking permission to remain in the UK (asylum) I link them with an immigration lawyer who is experienced in supporting the cases of young people. I represent my young person when they are facing difficult times in the immigration process.

## 7.0 Care Leavers

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7.01



My young people and their network know who I am, how to contact me and also how to get help when I am not in work.

7.02



There is a recent, up-to-date photograph of my young person on their file.

7.03



I take the time to get to know my young person. I know their wishes, feelings and aspirations.

7.04



I engage with my young person in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability. My work and observations enable me to build a good relationship with them.

7.05



I am aware of any risks that my young person may be exposed to and that they are safe from harm, including exploitation. I take the necessary steps when I am worried about them to support their safety and wellbeing.

7.06



I encourage my young person to stay in care until they are 18 years old so that when they chose to leave, they have all the information and skills needed to help them live independently.

7.07



I see my young person who is aged eighteen or over every three months and keep in touch with them every six weeks as a minimum.

7.08



I promote and encourage family time between my young person and their family and friends, when safe to do so and support them to develop new support networks in their community.

7.09



I celebrate my young person's successes and achievements with them and those who are important to them.

**7.10**



I actively involve my young person in the development and review of the Pathway Plan which will take place at least every six months and fully reflects their life, needs, wishes and feelings.

**7.11**



I update my young person's file with information on Education, Employment and Training, including accommodation type every three months unless there is a change in circumstances. I keep in touch with my young person every 2 months.

**7.12**



My young person is supported to obtain a National Insurance number, Birth Certificate, bank account and a passport if they do not already have them.

**7.13**



My young person will have a personal advisor who will help them prepare for independent living by making sure all support identified has been provided.

**7.14**



My young person will know how to access education, training and employment as well as understand how to access financial support if they want to attend university.

**7.15**



My young person is aware of how to access their records including their health history.

**7.16**



My young person is supported to get a suitable place to live and is aware where appropriate that they can live with their foster carers until they are 21 years old.

**7.17**



My young person will know how to access to Leaving Care Services until they are 25 years.

**7.18**



Where my young person has an EHC Plan, they receive the right support after they are eighteen.

**7.19**



My young person will know how to access Leaving Care Services until they are 25 years old.

**7.20**



If my young person is going to be a parent, I take the necessary steps to ensure that they and their unborn baby are supported and safe as early as possible.

## 8.0

# Foster Care Recruitment

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8.01



I respond to initial enquiries within 5 working days and provide the enquirer with any further information they require to inform their decision in relation to pursuing a career in fostering.

8.02



Where enquirers are not known to the fostering service or children's social care I send an information pack to them within 5 working days of the initial enquiry.

8.03



Where the enquirer or member of the household is known to the fostering service or children's social care I pass the enquiry to a manager for a decision on how to proceed.

8.04



If the manager's decision is not to progress the enquiry I communicate this decision and the reasons for the decision the enquirer and follow this up in writing before closing down the referral.

8.05



I keep track of initial referral forms I have sent out and verbally prompt enquiries after 1 week and 2 weeks of the form not being returned, providing them with a further 1 week deadline for completion thereafter. If the initial referral form has not been returned after 3 weeks of it being sent out, the enquiry will be closed, and a manager will be informed of the outcome.

8.06



I undertake a stage one telephone discussion and home visit within 3 weeks of the initial enquiry during which I explore the applicant's suitability to foster. I consider all members of the household, the suitability of the home, previous fostering/adoption applications or experience, previous significant relationships and the health of the carers. I also obtain details for two personal referees.

8.07



If after the telephone discussion and home visit, it is my assessment that the applicant is not suitable to foster, I discuss the reasons for this with a manager and notify the applicant in writing of the decision and the reasons within 10 working days of receiving the information that has informed the outcome. I also include a copy of my record of the home visit with managerial oversight to ensure transparency.

8.08



I inform all enquirers and applicants of their right to make a complaint to the fostering service and how to do this, if they do not agree with the outcome of their enquiry or stage 1 assessment.

8.09



I obtain written consent to share information from all parties contributing to the stage 2 assessment. If consent is refused, I discuss this with a manager to determine how to proceed.

**8.10**



I complete checks of all household members over the age of 18 including but not limited to DBS, Probation, Children's Social Care, Education and applicants right to work in the UK. I record the dates these checks have been requested and the outcomes of these checks. I review the outcomes of all checks to inform my assessment and notify a manager where check outcomes raise concerns.

**8.11**



I request 4 references in respect of the applicants, 2 who are unrelated and have known the applicant for a minimum of 5 years and 2 who can be family members or friends. I obtain references in written form.

**8.12**



I request medical oversight of each applicants' fitness to foster.

**8.13**



All applicants are booked onto and attend preparation training and consider their engagement and learning from this as part of my assessment.

**8.14**



I undertake a stage 2 assessment of the applicants and prepare a written report that includes all relevant information, a recommendation as to the applicants' suitability to foster and proposals in relation to terms of approval. I undertake health and safety checks of the applicants' home as well as any relevant risk assessments including transportation and pets.

**8.15**



Where I become concerned about the applicants' suitability to foster part way through the assessment, I compile a brief report documenting the work undertaken to date and present this to fostering panel for consideration as to whether the assessment should be terminated.

**8.16**



I share my completed assessment with the applicants for their comments and agreement. I take into consideration issues of consent for information sharing and redact the assessment if necessary and in consultation with a manager.

**8.17**



Upon completing the assessment, I present the applicants' assessment to fostering panel and will fully prepare the applicants for fostering panel attendance.

**8.18**



If the applicants choose not to attend fostering panel, I inform them of the outcome of panel within 24 hours.

**8.19**



I complete the entire assessment process, from initial enquiry through to approval at fostering panel and ADM in no more than 32 weeks.

## 9.0

# Foster Care Supervision and Support

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9.01



The child and their foster carers know how to contact me and also know who to get help from when I am not in work.

9.02



The child and their foster carers have all the relevant telephone numbers to be able to access support at any time.

9.03



All placement options are explored so that the best placement matches can be made.

9.04



I remind foster carers of their responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any significant changes. For example, changes in employment, offences or deteriorating health issues.

9.05



A Placement Agreement Meeting (PAM) with the child/children's social worker and any other relevant professionals takes place to agree whether or not the placement is suitable as a long term option for the child. I record this meeting within 72 hours on LCS including the outcome and rational.

9.06



The child is given the opportunity to meet with the fostering family prior to their placement starting whenever possible and appropriate.

9.07



A placement planning meeting takes place within three working days of a new placement, to agree how the child/children's needs will be met in placement including completion of delegated authority.

9.08



I complete a health and safety checklist on a foster carer's home every year to ensure good standards are maintained.

9.09



Supervisory visits to foster carers take place once a week during the first 4 weeks of their initial placement. Subsequent visits will take place at a minimum of 4 weeks in their first year of fostering and at least every 8 weeks after their first review.

9.10



At least one unannounced visit will take place every year to the fostering household to provide a safe home environment for the child in care.

9.11



I record supervision of carers using LCS forms. The guidance on the form is followed to capture the expectations of the supervisory visit and fostering minimum standards, recording how the foster carers evidence these in their care of children.



**9.12**



When the child has been in placement for 1 year, discussions will take place with the child's social worker / IRO / foster carer about long term matching. If agreed, the proposed match will be presented at foster panel for consideration with the child's social worker. When required, approval will be sought for foster carers to change from short term to long term.

**9.13**



In relation to connected persons, when a child is placed with any carer under Reg 24, the assessing social worker will adopt a dual role of the supervising and assessing social worker during the period of assessment to meet timescales for all visits.

**9.14**



Foster carers have a review every 12 months, or sooner if concerns warrant this.

**9.15**



Areas of concern or need for additional support that are identified between reviews are addressed at the time they are identified, where appropriate, rather than waiting for a review.

**9.16**



I attend meetings to represent the fostering service and investigate any concerns raised about foster carers.

**9.17**



I request medical and DBS renewals for foster carers every three years.

**9.18**



I am available as and when needed for additional support to promote the best possible fostering experience and outcomes for the child/children.

**9.19**



I assess how foster carers meet fostering minimum standards through an annual review. I submit these reports to the fostering panel for approval.

**9.20**



I support foster carers in completing their training support development standards workbook in their first year of fostering.

**9.21**



I regularly review a foster carer's training needs and support them in their development. I complete a personal professional development plan with foster carers.

**9.22**



My case recording is up to date and critical incidents are recorded within one working day. If I am unable to do this, I will inform my manager.

## 10.0 Securing permanence

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10.01



When it has been identified that parents will need help to care for their child/ or there is a need for alternative care arrangements, I organise a family network meeting or a Family Group Conference to help identify suitable family members to help the child(ren) remain at home or provide alternative care. I ensure that the family understand it is important they share this information at this early stage so that decisions can be made for their child as quickly as possible.

10.02



I complete viability assessments on connected people identified by the family as alternative carers. I understand these assessments need to be progressed promptly.

10.03



I complete a Regulation 24 assessment on any potential carers. If there are more than one carer I work with the family to identify the most appropriate carer.

10.04



After my child is placed in any new home, I hold a Placement Planning meeting within 72 hours. If for any reason this cannot happen, the meeting will take place no later than 5 days on when my child moved.

- I hold a care planning meeting before my child's decision making child in care review (2nd review) to agree a plan of permanence.
- I hold subsequent care planning meetings as agreed on an individual basis at the child in care review with the IRO which will be in accordance with the child's needs and circumstances.

10.05



By the second Children in Care review, all permanence options have been explored and a permanence plan has been created for my child.

10.06



I will notify One Adoption West Yorkshire when my child has brothers or sisters who have been adopted.

10.07



When adoption is being considered for my child I make a referral to One Adoption West Yorkshire as soon as possible to ensure there is no delay.

**10.08**



Where an approved permanence plan is for long-term fostering I contact the placement team who will identify the right placement for my child to live. The placement team have a copy of all the assessments I have completed so that my child's unique needs are clearly understood. When the right home has been identified, the plan to match my child to his or her carers will be presented to the Fostering Panel.

**10.09**



When the approved permanence plan is for adoption this is ratified by the Agency Decision Maker. I complete the Child's Permanence Report for the ADM to consider my child's plan prior to filing my final evidence with the Court.

**10.10**



My child's permanence report will support decision making to assist with family finding and help my child understand their life story in later life.

**10.11**



For all connected carers of special guardian placements, a support plan will be formulated, and the relevant financial assessments are undertaken.

**10.12**



My child is supported to move to their new family through an introduction period that meets their age, understanding and needs.

**10.13**



If I am concerned about the stability of a placement, an urgent Care Planning Meeting will take place to identify what support can be offered to my child and their carers.

**10.14**



A Placement Disruption Meeting will be held if the placement breaks down to understand what support is needed for my child and what happened to support learning to improve decision making.

**10.15**



My child understands their journey through life story work which they will have full access to prior to any Final Order being made by the court. If my child remains looked after, this work will be updated regularly to support their journey and understanding.

**10.16**



Birth parents are given the opportunity to access independent support and counselling.

## 11.0 Youth Justice Service

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11.01



My child and their family understand the nature of my involvement. When there is an order, the family will understand the requirements of the order and what the consequences are for breaching this order.

11.02



I engage with my child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability.

11.03



My work and observations reflect my child's experience and inform my assessments which are completed throughout my involvement with my child.

11.04



As a court officer, all recommendations made will be in the best interest of my child and in line with the assessed risk. I challenge the court if the disposal being proposed does not meet the needs of my child.

11.05



I check the relevant databases for all new children referred to the service and identify key professionals.

11.06



Prior to sentencing I see my child alone at least once as a minimum when completing a pre-sentence report. I also see the family and am informed by relevant professionals.

11.07



When an order has been made, I see my child according to the scaled approach which links the frequency of seeing my child to their needs and level of risk identified. I see my child at home at least once a month. I also see the family and am informed by relevant professionals.

11.08



As part of my assessment I give consideration to issues relating to the risk of re-offending, the potential harm posed to the public and any safety/wellbeing issues my child or family may have.

11.09



When a child is known to Children's Services or MAPPA, I understand my role in the multi-agency structure and I participate in relevant meetings, including the production of appropriate and timely reports.

11.10



When my child is in care, I assess whether their offending behaviour is fully or in part linked to their experiences, circumstances and family background.

11.11



When my child is in care, I will always contribute to their child in care review meeting.

**11.12**



I recognise that young people in the criminal justice system have complex experiences with multiple needs. I see my child first and foremost and offender second.

**11.13**



I am creative and determined in my efforts to build a meaningful relationship with children and families that I work with. Where flexibility is needed, I discuss this with my manager and agree if it is appropriate to suspend National Standards.

**11.14**



I am mindful of issues relating to safeguarding. I seek advice and guidance from relevant individuals and agencies and refer cases to Children's Services when required. I record the decisions in the appropriate place on the case file.

**11.15**



When working with a young person who goes to custody, I liaise with the custodial institution to ensure that my child is well and all their needs are being met. I see my child at least once per month and act as an advocate for my child in terms of their safety and wellbeing. I am part of a sentence plan that supports my child's identified needs and integration back into the community.

**11.16**



All children are supported to spend time with their family or meaningful people when in custody.

**11.17**



I work closely with the specialist staff when appropriate to support my child.

**11.18**



I work with my child to support their independence, help them to build support networks within the community and signpost them so that they can access appropriate services. This includes planning an Exit Strategy with my child and their family or support team to manage a positive exit from YOT service.

**11.19**



I understand the importance of accurate and timely recording of case work on Child View and Asset+. My knowledge of Child View and Asset+ is kept up to date through training.

**11.20**



My recording is clear and accurate in line with both the National Standards for Youth Justice and our own local standards.

**11.21**



All key decisions impacting on the child's life are recorded, including manager's decisions and case discussions.

## 12.0 Children Subject to Public Law Outline (PLO)

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12.01



When I assess that my child is at risk of significant harm and I have been unable to engage with his or her parents to sufficiently address the risk through the child protection process, I discuss the family with my team manager and service manager and seek approval from my Head of Service for my child's case to be considered at the Legal Gateway Panel (LGP).

12.02



I provide a referral, an up to date assessment any up to date medical information, a genogram and a chronology to the LGP administrator 3 days before the panel takes place. This helps panel members to understand the risks and enable legal advice to be given about threshold.

12.03



In the case of unborn children I refer the family to LGP as early as possible if I consider there to be high risks or if a decision about pre proceedings PLO needs to be considered. This will be no later than 24 weeks into the pregnancy.

12.04



In the case of unborn children where either parent has had a previous child subject to care proceedings, I refer the family to LGP as soon as I am allocated the case to consider if pre-proceedings PLO should apply while the pre-birth assessment is being completed.

12.05



I refer any cases that have been agreed as urgent proceeding or Section 20 to LGP legal advice and planning.

12.06



If pre-proceedings PLO are agreed at LGP I provide the parents and anyone with parental responsibility a Letter Before Proceedings within 5 working days of the panel decision. The letter will be sent to parents even if they are not involved in my child's life.

12.07



I write the letter before proceedings using simple and plain language which is jargon free. The letter clearly identifies why I am concerned about my child, why my child needs their parents/carers to change and how the family can avoid care proceedings. I detail how I will work and support the family, what needs to change to improve their child's situation and detail the timescales.

**12.08**



I ensure that parents/carers understand that they are entitled to receive free legal advice and representation and encourage them to obtain it.

**12.09**



The first PLO meeting will take place within 5-7 working days of the letter being shared with the family and involves the attendance of a legal representative where possible. This meeting will be chaired by the Team Manager and will confirm with parents the plan outlined in the letter before proceedings.

**12.10**



To help parents and carers understand how they can avoid court I provide them with an assessment plan at the initial PLO meeting. This plan will be clear about the purpose of an updated multi-agency assessment and what it will focus on. I seek agreement where necessary for: attendance at support groups or activities, attendance at a family group conference, information about alternative carers for the children, agreement to a specialist assessment, my child's current placement, and expected social work visits.

**12.11**



I ensure that every effort is made to keep my child within their immediate/extended family but at the same time evidence parallel planning to reduce any potential delay.

**12.12**



Subsequent PLO review meetings take place with the family every 30 working days. I determine my child and family's wishes and feelings at each stage. My team manager continues to chair these meetings. It is expected that the pre-proceedings process will last no longer than 60 days unless there are exceptional reasons for further time.

**12.13**



I record the minutes of all PLO meetings on the PLO minutes form on LCS and distribute them within 5 working days.

**12.14**



I record that a PLO meeting or review has taken place, including the outcome on the child's LCS file within 24 hours.

**12.15**



If, following assessment and the interventions identified in the pre proceedings PLO plan, it is my analysis that change is too slow and my child remains at risk of significant harm then I seek approval from my Head of Service to present the case at LGP to determine whether threshold is met to issue S31 proceedings.

## 13.0 Public Law Proceedings

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13.01



I discuss the case with the allocated lawyer in Legal Services.

13.02



I provide Legal the evidence and supporting documents in the form of the updated assessment, a SWET statement, a chronology, genogram and an interim care plan within 5 working days of LGP agreeing proceedings and within 3 working days of birth in a new-born case.

13.03



I complete viability assessments and the regulation 24 assessments if my child is to be placed with connected carers.

13.04



I know what the risks and protective factors are for my child and the impact on them of living in their current situation. My statement provides a confident evidence based explanation of the decision making and the recommendations detailed in the interim care plan.

13.05



I consider the need for expert assessment and my statement will give clear reasons why it may, or may not, be necessary and what it will add to the evidence already available.

13.06



I make sure that I inform anyone with parental responsibility of the intention to apply for a court order. When this is done in a planned way I provide parents/ carers with a letter before proceedings to notify them of the plan.

13.07



At the Case Management Hearing (CMH), I provide an assessment plan. The assessment plan will reflect my understanding of the child's circumstances, their wishes and feelings and their lived experience. The assessment plan details who will complete the assessment, what it will include and give details of the sessions.

13.08



At the CMH the timetable for the filing of evidence will be agreed through to the Issues Resolution Hearing (IRH). I add all filing and hearing dates to my calendar so that I know exactly when to file my evidence and attend court.

13.09



I comply with all court directions. Where compliance becomes a problem I raise this quickly with my team manager and legal services so that the parties and the court can be notified without delay.

13.10



If the child is made the subject of an interim care order I liaise with the IRO so the child in care reviews can be diarised in line with the child's timescales and the timescales of the court process. The final care plan is ratified by the IRO prior to finalising my evidence.



**13.11**



I contact the children's guardian (CAFCASS) and liaise with them throughout the proceedings. Any changes to the child's interim care plan should be discussed with the children's guardian.

**13.12**



I know the timescales for any relevant panels e.g. fostering panel, adoption medicals, ADM and I arrange dates to prevent any delay in considering a permanent plan for the child.

**13.13**



I plan and complete a sibling assessment when necessary to support any decisions regarding family time and placements.

**13.14**



I complete direct work with my child so that I know who and what is important to my child within and beyond their immediate family and will share their wishes and feelings within my evidence.

**13.15**



I ensure my child understands in an age appropriate way what is happening in court and when decisions are going to be made.

**13.16**



I gather information from all relevant multi agency professionals involved with my child and the family.

**13.17**



I use care planning meetings and supervision to discuss the progress of the case as well as consider my assessment, expert assessment, analysis and possible recommendations, and any concluding order that may be necessary to safeguard my child and drift for my child.

**13.18**



I consult with legal services throughout the proceedings so that they are fully aware of any changes and progress of the case.

**13.19**



I send my final assessment and final care plan to my team manager one week before they are due to be filed so that the documents can be quality assured. The final care plan is agreed by the Service Manager.

**13.20**



I share my final recommendation with the family and with my child before I file my final evidence.

**13.21**



I arrange for my child to visit the court and meet the judge if they so wish.

**13.22**



I am prepared to give evidence if the case is listed for a contested hearing.

## 14.0 Youth Homeless

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14.01



My young person who identifies as homeless or at risk of homelessness is allocated a Social Worker and Personal Advisor at the point of referral.

14.02



I have consent from my young person to speak to other professionals and their parents/carers.

14.03



My young person is aware that an assessment will be completed to understand their needs. As part of this, my young person is offered an opportunity to speak to NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service) to make an informed choice with regard to their legal status; either a Child In Need or to be subject of Section 20 of the Children's Act.

14.04



If my young person does not wish to have a legal status of Section 20 voluntary accommodation, child in need reviews will take place as set out in Practice Standard 5 and a discretionary pathway planning process until their needs are fully met.

14.05



I complete a single assessment to determine the current situation of my young person; this is completed in partnership with the Integrated Front Door, Care Leavers Service and Housing Options.

14.06



Where appropriate I attempt to mediate between my young person and their parents/carers.

14.07



Where possible and safe to do so, my young person is supported to return home with the right support.

14.08



If required, a placement request form will be completed that provides a clear and balanced understanding of my young person's needs, strengths and challenges.

14.09



I apply standards regarding Children in Care (6.0) and Care Leavers (7.0) to my young person.

## 15.0 Private Fostering

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15.01



I contact my child, the parents / carer and the prospective private foster carers within five working days of the local authority being notified.

15.02



I complete the Private Fostering Assessment, checks and references within 45 days of the notification.

15.03



I inform the Designated Manager for Private Fostering once the Private Fostering Assessment has been completed for a Ratifying Letter to be issued.

15.04



I develop a Private Fostering SMART Plan (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) in a language that my child and family can understand. The Private Fostering plan is linked to the identified needs as determined by the assessment.

15.05



I visit my child and review the Private Fostering Arrangement in line with Child in Need Practice Standards (Practice Standard 5).

15.06

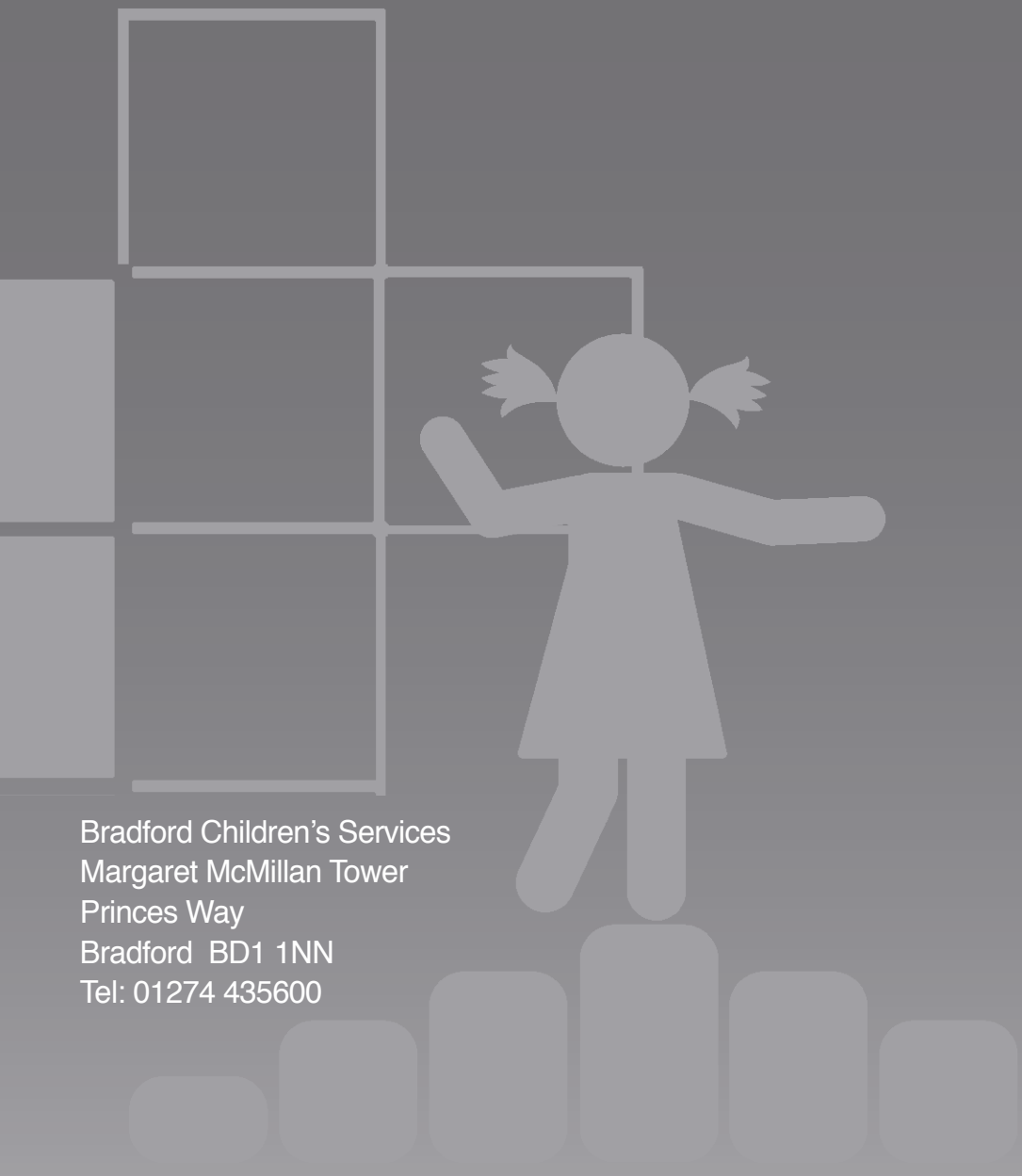


I review the suitability of the Private Foster Carer on an annual basis and send a copy of the report to the Designated Manager.

15.07



Should the Private Fostering Arrangement continue beyond 4 months, I discuss this with my Line Manager to discuss a plan of permanence for the child / young person.



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The wording in this publication can be made available in other formats such as large print or Braille. Please call 01274 435600.