

Placement Endings and Notice on Placements

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care:

- [Standard 2 - Understand your role as a foster carer.](#)
- [Standard 4 - Know how to communicate effectively.](#)

RELATED GUIDANCE

- [Understanding Placement Plans and Looked After Reviews](#)

BfFC's IFA is fully aware of the pressures that looking after children from traumatised backgrounds can put on foster carers and their families. It is recognised that where these pressures are ongoing, they can at times lead to the placements breaking down in an unplanned way.

BfFC's IFA differentiates between placements ending in a planned and an unplanned way.

A planned ending describes a child moving on to their adopters, their long-term carers, family, independence, etc within the timescales identified in their care plan.

An unplanned ending means a premature end to the placement which is not in line with the child's care plan. This could be related to notice being given on the placement due to safeguarding concerns or foster carers resigning and the child needing to move to another carer prior to permanency being achieved. A child might also voice the wish to move to another foster family.

When a placement comes to an end, planned or unplanned, BfFC's IFA will collate feedback after each ending from the foster carers, the child, the foster carer's children, the child's social worker and any professional who has been working closely with the child and the foster carers. The feedback will be evaluated by the agency to understand why placements have come to an end prematurely and equally what has made a placement successful. At BfFC's IFA's discretion, a disruption meeting might be convened to allow for a deeper understanding of any issues that might have arisen from the feedback received.

Please note, that foster carers cannot give notice on a placement. This can only be done by the agency or the local authority via the process described below.

Placement Stability Meetings

Placement stability meetings are proactive interventions aimed at preventing disruptions in placements. Foster Carers and Social workers should initiate these meetings when they identify signs of difficulty that could potentially lead to a placement breakdown. It is crucial

that these meetings are arranged timely. Some triggers for calling a stability meeting include concerns raised through reviews or complaints, a child missing/absconding or regular absence by the child, strained relationships between the child and the foster carer, expressed desire by the child to end the placement, or concerns raised by professionals regarding the suitability of the placement. The purpose of these meetings is to assess the situation, determine necessary support or interventions, and decide on the best course of action to maintain placement stability. The supervising social worker organizes the meeting, and relevant professionals and significant people in the child's life attend, if appropriate the child can attend too or part of the meeting. This meeting will be chaired by BfFC's IFA's Consultant Practitioner or the Assistant Team Manager. Meeting outcomes include documented action plans and responsibilities for addressing the concerns and maintaining the placement. Placement Stability Review Meetings should be scheduled at intervals that seem appropriate in line with the support needs. Minutes of the meeting will be distributed to all attendees and any others working with the child.

If it is felt during a Placement Stability Meeting that the placement needs to come to an end, the child's Local Authority or BfFC's IFA might give 28 days' notice. BfFC's IFA will complete a 'Notice form' which is shared with the placing local authority and the commissioning team (if the child is placed by BfFC). A Placement Stability Review Meeting should be convened if it becomes apparent that the 28 days' notice period needs to be shortened.

Local Authority Placement Disruption Meetings

Some Local Authorities hold disruption meetings after a placement has broken down to review the situation, understand the causes of disruption, reassess the needs of the child and carers involved, and identify learning opportunities for future support and policy development. These meetings are not meant to assign blame but rather to facilitate information sharing and open discussions. The attendees include various professionals and stakeholders associated with the child's care, such as social workers, managers, foster carers, residential providers, advocates, previous social workers, educational representatives, health professionals, and birth parents/family. The purpose is to review the circumstances leading to the disruption, learn from the experience, plan for the child's future, ensure necessary actions are taken, and address post-placement arrangements. Usually, accurate minutes are recorded and distributed to participants, and follow-up actions are implemented based on the meeting's outcomes.