

*Together...Keeping Children Safe*

# **Children's Social Care Transfer Protocol**

**Responsible Manager: Service Director Children's Social Care**

**Version number: V3**

**Date created: July 2016**

**Date updated: January 2017**

**Date of next review: January 2018**



## Version Control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>When</b>
V2	Addition of appendix 1 - checklist	Principal Social Worker – Andrea Stone	October 2016
V3	Amended to reflect new Children’s Safeguarding Service structure launched 1/2/17	Improvement Programme Manager – Hannah Dell	January 2017

# Contents

<b>VERSION CONTROL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. TRANSFER FROM FIRST RESPONSE TO ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. TRANSFER FROM ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Children in Need	5
3.2 Children on Child Protection Plan	5
3.3 Section 20	6
3.4 Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs)	6
<b>4. TRANSFER FROM CHILDREN IN NEED TO CP/COURT TEAMS</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 Escalation from CIN Plan to Child Protection Plan	7
4.2 Escalation from CIN Plan to Emergency Protection Order	7
<b>5. TRANSFER FROM CP/COURT TO CHILDREN IN NEED TEAMS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6. TRANSFER FROM ASSESSMENT TO CHILDREN IN CARE</b>	<b>8</b>
6.1 Relinquished Babies	8
6.2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	9
<b>7. TRANSFER FROM CHILDREN IN NEED OR CP/COURT TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>8. TRANSFER FROM CP/COURT TO CHILDREN IN CARE</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>9. TRANSFER FROM CHILDREN IN CARE TO AFTERCARE</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10. TRANSFER FROM CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE TO ADULT SERVICES</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1 – TRANSFER / CLOSURE CHECKLIST</b>	<b>11</b>

## 1. General Principles

- Whenever transferring a child between teams, ensure that the child is the primary focus of your work.
- Only one team should have primary responsibility for the child and family.
- Good communication, reliable, up to date and clearly recorded information is essential at the point of transfer.
- The Transferring Team / Unit should complete a full audit of the child's electronic record and confirm that it is up to date and accurate prior to transfer. Any outstanding work should be completed prior to transfer and the child should not be accepted by the Receiving Team / Unit if the record is not up to date unless this has been agreed by the Receiving Team / Unit. Please use Appendix 1 as a checklist for this audit.
- Where a child has been closed to social care within the last 3 months and a re-referral occurs they should return to the unit / team that they were previously allocated to.
- All newly transferred children should be discussed at the next available Group Supervision Meeting.
- The Transferring Team / Unit should ensure that any funding is agreed at least one month beyond the point of transfer. Placement funding should be agreed through the Resource Panel. Dates of renewal / review should be clearly noted.
- Contact arrangements with details of contact supervisors, venues etc should be in place for at least one month after the transfer date.
- Prior to transfer, a discussion will take place between the Transferring Team / Unit and the Receiving Team / Unit to ensure that key information and risks are shared. During this discussion it should be agreed who will inform interested parties. As a minimum this will include: the child, their parents/ carers, other significant family members, key involved agencies, any individuals with a statutory, regulatory or advisory responsibility (e.g. Carer Services, Independent Reviewing Officer, LAC Nurse, Legal Services).
- The Transferring Team / Unit will make arrangements to introduce a member of the Receiving Team / Unit to the child. If this was not possible then the reasons should be recorded on the child's file.
- Any issues causing barriers to the transfer process should be referred to the appropriate Practice Improvement Manager.

## **2. Transfer from First Response to Assessment**

- FRT team manager decides if threshold met for assessment.
- If C&F Assessment, allocate to appropriate Assessment Team Managers tray.
- If threshold is met for CWD, contact CWD PIM to determine who to allocate it to.
- If Section 47, telephone appropriate team and inform them a visit is needed. Section 47 allocated to appropriate Assessment Team Managers tray.

## **3. Transfer from Assessment**

### **3.1 Children in Need**

- The Assessment Team Social Worker completes the C&F Assessment and the Assessment Team Manager decides on whether the child needs to have a Child in Need Plan.
- The Assessment Team Social Work completes the CIN Plan and sends to their manager for authorisation.
- The Assessment Team Manager alerts the relevant CIN Team Manager (based on child's postcode) at least 5 working days before the CIN Meeting that the child will be transferring to their team via email (copying in the Business Support Officer) and puts a case note on LCS.
- The CIN TM reviews the child's record and clarifies any queries prior to transfer.
- The CIN TM identifies a Social Worker for the child. If the TM is unable to allocate a worker for the child, they discuss alternative options with their Practice Improvement Manager.
- The Assessment Team Social Worker arranges the CIN Meeting and sends an outlook invite to the CIN TM and Business Support Officer or directly to the allocated CIN Social Worker if they have been identified.
- The Assessment Team Social Worker and allocated CIN Social Worker attend the CIN Meeting.
- The Assessment Team Social Worker updates LCS with the outcomes from the CIN Meeting.
- The CIN Social Worker takes the minutes of the CIN Meeting.
- The Assessment Team Manager audits the child's electronic record (as per the Transfer Checklist, Appendix A) and initiates the Transfer Process on LCS.
- The CIN TM completes the Transfer Process on LCS.

### **3.2 Children on Child Protection Plan**

- The Assessment Team Social Worker completes the Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) Request Form and emails it to the CP Admin mailbox within 5 days of the Section 47 Enquiries decision.
- The Assessment Team Manager alerts the relevant CP/Court Team Manager (based on child's postcode) at least 5 working days before the ICPC that the child will be transferring to their team via email (copying in the Business Support Officer) and puts a casenote on LCS.
- The CP/Court TM reviews the child's record and clarifies any queries prior to transfer.

- The CP/Court TM identifies a Social Worker for the child. If the TM is unable to allocate a worker for the child, they discuss alternative options with their Practice Improvement Manager.
- The CP Admin Team arranges the ICPC and sends an outlook invite to the Assessment Team Social Worker and the CP/Court TM and Business Support Officer, or directly to the allocated CP/Court Social Worker if they have been identified.
- The Assessment Team Social Worker completes the C&F Assessment and shares it with the family at least 48 hours prior to the conference.
- The Assessment Team Social Worker and allocated CP/Court Social Worker attend the ICPC.
- The CP Chair updates LCS with the outcome of the ICPC and Child Protection Plan.
- The Assessment Team Manager audits the child's electronic record (as per the Transfer Checklist, Appendix A) and initiates the Transfer Process on LCS within 24 hours of the ICPC.
- The CP/Court TM completes the Transfer Process on LCS.

### **3.3 Section 20**

- The Assessment Team Social Worker completes the C&F Assessment and the Assessment Team Manager decides on whether the child can return home or needs to be remain in care.
- If the child is not able to return home within the 6 week assessment process, the Assessment Team Manager alerts the relevant CP/Court Team Manager (based on child's postcode) that the child will be transferring to their team via email (copying in the Business Support Officer) and puts a casenote on LCS. In most cases children who become looked after by the local authority do not require a Child Protection Plan. If there are circumstances where this is required follow the process as described in 3.2.

### **3.4 Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs)**

- The Assessment Team give the relevant CP/Court Team Manager advance warning of any children where it is their assessment that there is a need to make an application to the court for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).
- Where protection is an immediate requirement, the Assessment Team will liaise with the Police to consider appropriateness of Police Protection Powers (PPPs) if time does not allow for an immediate Emergency Protection Order application.
- In the absence of EPO or PPPs, consideration should be given to other safe arrangements. This may include Section 20 agreement or Section 17 support (this may involve the perpetrator being moved out of the house).
- If an EPO is required 24 hours notice needs to be given to the court. Where Police Protection is agreed, there is a 72 hour window to get the case to court if needed.
- Transfer to the CP/Court Team will occur at the making of the Interim Care Order (ICO).
- The Assessment Team will be responsible for the court process following the EPO and provision of any initial evidence in this respect (written or otherwise) during this period and afterwards.

- For children where a Legal Planning Meeting (LPM) is held and an immediate Interim Care Order (ICO) application is recommended, it will be the responsibility of the Assessment Team to make this application.
- When an ICO application is recommended from an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), the CP/Court Team are responsible for convening the LPM and making the initial application.
- The Assessment Team Manager and the CP/Court Team Manager will ensure a child focussed smooth transition.

## **4. Transfer From Children In Need to CP/Court Teams**

### **4.1 Escalation from CIN Plan to Child Protection Plan**

- Where safeguarding concerns are raised for a child subject to a Child in Need plan, a Strategy Meeting or Legal Planning Meeting will be held. If the decision is made that an ICPC or Court Proceedings are required, the CIN Team Manager alerts the relevant CP/Court Team Manager (based on child's postcode) as soon as possible that the child will be transferring to their team via email (copying in the Business Support Officer) and puts a casenote on LCS.
- CIN Social Worker completes the Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) Request Form and emails it to the CP Admin mailbox within 5 days of the Section 47 Enquiries decision and copies in the relevant CP/Court Team Manager and Business Support Officer.
- The CP/Court TM identifies a Social Worker for the child and informs the CIN Team Manager. The CP/Court Social Worker attends the ICPC. The ICPC is the point at which the child transfers from CIN to CP/Court.
- The CIN Team Manager audits the child's electronic record (as per the Transfer Checklist, Appendix A) and initiates the Transfer Process on LCS within 24 hours of the ICPC.
- Both Team Managers are to consider learning opportunities for CIN ASYEs and to consider retaining their input through an additional worker role on LCS in order for them to get experience of child protection and court work.
- In some instances it may be appropriate, with the agreement of the PIM, for a child to move onto a CP Plan but remain allocated to the Senior Practitioner in the CIN Team.

### **4.2 Escalation from CIN Plan to Emergency Protection Order**

- The CIN Team Managers gives the relevant CP/Court Team Manager advance warning of any children where it is their assessment that there is a need to make an application to the court for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).
- The CIN Team Manager ensures that a Senior Practitioner is identified to support and mentor the Social Worker through the process.
- Where protection is an immediate requirement, the CIN Team will liaise with the Police to consider appropriateness of Police Protection Powers (PPPs) if time does not allow for an immediate Emergency Protection Order application.
- In the absence of EPO or PPPs, consideration should be given to other safe arrangements. This may include Section 20 agreement or Section 17 support (this may involve the perpetrator being moved out of the house).

- If an EPO is required 24 hours notice needs to be given to the court. Where Police Protection is agreed, there is a 72 hour window to get the case to court if needed.
- Transfer to the CP/Court Team will occur at the making of the Interim Care Order (ICO).
- The CIN Team will be responsible for the court process following the EPO and provision of any initial evidence in this respect (written or otherwise) during this period and afterwards.
- For children where a Legal Planning Meeting (LPM) is held and an immediate Interim Care Order (ICO) application is recommended, it will be the responsibility of the CIN Team to make this application.
- The CIN Team Manager and the CP/Court Team Manager will ensure a child focussed smooth transition.

## **5. Transfer from CP/Court to Children In Need Teams**

- The CP/Court Team Manager will need to carefully consider the appropriateness of transferring children to CIN. The TM will consider the child's journey and make a judgement over allocation/reallocation.
- The CP/Court Team Manager alerts the relevant CIN Team Manager (based on child's postcode) as early as possible of a RCPC (Review Child Protection Conference) for a child that will be transferring to their team via email (copying in the Business Support Officer) and puts a casenote on LCS.
- The CIN Team Manager identifies a Social Worker for the child.
- The CP/Court Social Worker sends the outlook invite for the RCPC to the CIN TM and Business Support Officer or directly to the allocated CIN Social Worker if they have been identified.
- The CP/Court Social Worker and allocated CIN Social Worker attend the RCPC.
- The CP Chair updates LCS with the outcome of the RCPC and Child Protection Plan.
- The CP/Court Team Manager audits the child's electronic record (as per the Transfer Checklist, Appendix A) and initiates the Transfer Process on LCS within 24 hours of the RCPC.
- The CIN Team Manager completes the Transfer Process on LCS.
- Similar processes will apply when step down from court proceedings takes place and a CIN Plan has been issued.

## **6. Transfer from Assessment to Children in Care**

### **6.1 Relinquished Babies**

- The Assessment Team will transfer birth parents who have confirmed that they are relinquishing their baby directly to the Children in Care Unit (via the PIM) and notify the Adoption Team.
- The Children in Care Unit will take responsibility for the child and the Adoption Team will take responsibility for the birth parents. The Adoption Team will offer support and counselling prior to the birth of the baby.
- The Children in Care Unit and Adoption Team will work closely to ensure appropriate planning for the baby and ensure the birth parents receive the appropriate support.

## **6.2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)**

- Following receipt of contact from Thames Valley Police in respect of unaccompanied asylum seekers, the Assessment Team will alert the PIM for Children in Care that an age assessment is needed.
- A joint visit will be undertaken by the Assessment Team Social Worker and CIC Social Worker to carry out the initial Merton screening.
- If the child is assessed to be under 18 they will be accommodated and transferred on LCS to the CIC Social Worker.
- The CIC Social Worker will complete the full Merton Age assessment if required.
- The CIC Business Support Officer will ensure all original documents relating to the application for asylum status are on the young person's file (NB: photo copies will not be accepted as the originals will be required for new applications for leave to remain).

## **7. Transfer from Children in Need or CP/Court to Children with Disabilities**

- If any children need to transfer from CIN to CWD, the CIN and CWD Practice Improvement Managers will discuss prior to transfer.

## **8. Transfer from CP/Court to Children in Care**

- Children will transfer to a Children in Care Unit once it has been established that the Care Plan is permanence outside of the family and the potential for rehabilitation has been completely ruled out (i.e. following the conclusion of Care Proceedings and/ or decision by a looked after review).
- Where the Care Plan is likely to be Care Order with permanent placement outside the family then the CIC CSWM should be invited to attend all Permanency Planning Meetings.
- Where the final Care Plan is adoption then a Placement Order should be secured prior to transfer to the Children in Care Unit.
- If Proceedings are initiated in the Children in Care Units they will retain responsibility for the child.
- Responsibility for children who remain at home but who have siblings in care will also transfer to the Children in Care unit.
- Children subject to a Care Order and placed at home with their siblings will remain the responsibility of the CP/Court Team post order, with a view to the Order being discharged. If it is not possible to discharge the Order within a year, a Legal Planning Meeting should be convened and a Permanency Plan agreed.

## **9. Transfer from Children in Care to Aftercare**

- 3 months prior to the young person's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday the CIC Social Worker will, in consultation with their manager, submit a "Request/ referral for a P.A. Form" to the Aftercare mailbox along with an up to date Care Plan, Assessment of Need and Risk Assessment.
- The CIC Unit will remain responsible for the young person and the Personal Adviser will be recorded as an involvement in LCS.

- The Personal Adviser will progress plans for independence using the Independence Workbook.
- The allocation of tasks should be recorded in the Pathway Plan.
- If a young person accommodated under Section 20 indicates that they intend to discharge themselves from care, this should be discussed at a LAC Review and implications considered.
- If the young person is still intending to leave care a Transfer Form should be completed by the CIC Unit and forwarded to the Aftercare mailbox as soon as possible, but not before the young person is 15  $\frac{3}{4}$  .
- On receipt of the paperwork the Aftercare Team Manager will allocate a Personal Advisor.
- Following transfer the Aftercare Team will become the Key Team and the Personal Advisor will be the Key Worker.

## **10. Transfer from Children's Social Care to Adult Services**

- This section includes all social care teams working with young people who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory needs and / or mental health needs.
- During Year 9 (ages 13-14), a Transitions Review (14+ Review) will be held at the child's school led by Education for all young people with an Education and Health Care Plan (or where still in place a Statement of Special Educational Needs). The child's Social Worker should attend this meeting.
- A Multi-Agency Transitions Plan will be developed involving the wishes and needs of the young person and their carers. The Social Worker must refer the child to the Transitions Team when they are 16 years 6 months.
- The child remains the responsibility of the Children's Social Care team, with the support of the Transitions Team until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- This Protocol will also apply to those vulnerable young people identified below where the professionals involved agree that formal planning will be helpful to the young person:
  - Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
  - Complex or long-term physical health needs
  - Mental health difficulties
  - Alcohol or Substance Misuse
  - Significant sensory needs
  - 'Looked After' by Buckinghamshire County Council or Care Leavers

## Appendix 1 – Transfer / Closure Checklist

Child's Name:

LCS Number:

	<b><u>INFORMATION REQUIRED</u></b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>
<b><u>PERSONAL DETAILS</u></b> (Checked & accurately recorded in LCS)	1. Child(ren)'s names 2. Home & placement address 3. Correct telephone number. 4. DOB entered. 5. Ethnicity 6. Disability/SEN		
<b><u>RELATIONSHIPS RECORDED</u></b> (Checked & accurately recorded in LCS)	<u>Personal relationships</u> 1. Mother 2. Father 3. Siblings 4. Extended family/Significant others 5. Clarity about who is main carer		
	<u>Professional relationships</u> 6. Social worker 7. Team Manager 8. GP/Other specialist Health 9. School/Nursery/College 10. Health Visitor/School Nurse 11. IRO* 12. Other agency involvement recorded on LCS		
<b><u>FORMS/REPORTS</u></b>	1. Evidence of parental consent to liaise with other agencies on file 2. Case summary up to date (within 3 months) 3. Updated chronology on LCS (within 1 month) - court version on Live Link 4. Updated assessment within the past 12 months/ 6 months for babies 5. Placement Plan completed/ authorised* 6. Care Plan/ Pathway Plan up to date, completed/ authorised* 7. SW Report to previous LAC Reviews completed and authorised on LCS* 8. IRO Outcome Minutes on LCS* 9. CIN/ CP Plans/ Outcome minutes/ core group minutes on LCS 10. Legal status accurately recorded		

	<p>11. Child's Journey on correct pathway on the map in LCS</p> <p>12. No 'draft' forms sitting in LCS forms</p>		
<b><u>ADDITIONAL KEY DOCUMENTS</u></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IHA/ RHA's up to date and recorded in LCS*</li> <li>2. All legal documents from care proceedings, inc. court chronology, saved into Live Link*</li> <li>3. Case notes updated, including statutory visits and Manager's explanation on LCS, for visits out of time</li> <li>4. Management oversight and supervision evident on LCS</li> <li>5. ePEPs complete and cross referenced in LCS*</li> <li>6. Completed transfer summary, to also include contact arrangements and meeting dates</li> <li>7. ADM/ Resource Panel decisions recorded*</li> <li>8. PwP paperwork on file (if appropriate)*</li> </ol>		
<b>Signed (Team Manager)</b>			
<b>Signed (Allocated Worker)</b>			

*\* where applicable to the child*