

Children's Social Care

Scheme of delegated case management decision making framework

POLICY INFORMATION SHEET	
Name of Document:	Scheme of delegated case management decision-making framework
Purpose:	To set out the authority required to undertake a range of key case management decisions.
Service area:	Children Services, Children's Social Care
Target Audience:	All staff in Children's Services, Children's Social Care
Forum Policy/Procedure/Strategy was approved:	Children Services Senior Leadership Team
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Date review due:	June 2025
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Status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory (all practitioners and managers must adhere to guidance) • Optional (procedures and practice can vary between teams) 	Mandatory
Location of Document	Sharepoint
Related document(s)	Not applicable
Superseded document(s)	Not applicable.
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Application and Scope

This scheme of delegation case management decision-making framework sets out who has the authority required to undertake a range of decisions. In each case the posts designated represent the minimum level at which the decision can be taken (i.e., a manager more senior than the post holder listed is also authorised to take this decision subject to them being in the same specialist management area).

Its purpose is to provide for consistency and appropriate oversight and expertise in the level and authority at which decisions are taken.

All the decisions set out in this framework must be recorded on the child's case file by the person who is making the decision on a management decision case note which concisely records the decision made, the rationale for the decision and any required actions as set out in the table below.

Scheme of Delegation of Decision-Making

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Case Management Decision and guidance note.	Designated Managers with Specified Area of Responsibility
1. Decisions in relation to Children in Need of Help and Protection.	
Decision to step a contact down to Early help or to sign post.	Post title: Team Manager MASH/Early Help
Decision to progress a Contact to Referral	Post title: Team Manager MASH
<p>Decision to hold a multi-agency Strategy meeting.</p> <p>The police, health professionals, teachers and other relevant professionals should be engaged.</p>	Post title: Team Manager
Decision to initiate a S47 enquiry when a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.	Post title: Team Manager following a multi-agency Strategy Discussion
Decision to apply for an Emergency Protection Order if it is necessary to remove a child from their home, where the child's safety is at immediate risk.	Post title: Head of Service in Consultation with Legal.
<p>Decision to progress a child to Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC).</p> <p>Section 47 threshold decision.</p>	Post title: Team Manager

<p>Decision to progress a child to Legal Gateway Panel.</p> <p>It is expected that there is a case discussion with the Service lead before progressing to Legal Gatekeeping Panel.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service following a Care Planning meeting or in an emergency without.</p>
<p>Decision to enter pre-proceedings.</p> <p>The forum that considers and agrees pre-proceedings is Legal Gatekeeping Panel Chaired by a Head of Service.</p>	<p>Post title: Chair of Legal Gateway Panel following legal advice.</p>
<p>Decision to agree to Care Proceedings being initiated.</p>	<p>Post title: Chair of Legal Gateway Panel following legal advice.</p>
<p>Decision to approve a Final Care Plan for Court.</p>	<p>Post title: Service Manager</p>
<p>Decision to approve Court Reports</p>	<p>Post title: Service Manager (Including Section 37 report and COPDoLs) report via Legal Gateway Panel Chaired by Director of Social Care and Early Help.</p>
<p>Decision to progress Dols request to Legal Gateway Panel.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service</p>
<p>Decision to make application for a DOLS being initiated.</p>	<p>Post title: Chair of Legal Gateway Panel. following legal advice.</p>
<p>Designated Manager (Death or Serious Injury to a Child)</p> <p>Note: Executive Director of Children's Services should be immediately notified in the event of death or serious injury to a child via the Director of Social Care and Early Help or Head of Service in their absence.</p>	<p>Post title: Team Manager, Service Manager and Head of Service.</p>

<p>Change of Social Worker. The manager who can approve to a change in social worker.</p> <p>*Changes of Social Worker for a child should only be considered when absolutely unavoidable.</p>	<p>Post title: Team Manager</p>
<p>Decision to step down a case via case transfer or decide to close a Child in Need case.</p>	<p>Post title: Team Manager</p>
<p>Decision to agree the timescale for a child assessment.</p>	<p>Post title: Team Manager</p>

Designated Managers with Specified Area of Responsibility	Post Title and forum
<p>2. Decisions in relation to Adoption.</p>	
<p>Should be placed for adoption (SHOBPA) - decision about whether a child should be placed for adoption or not.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Corporate Parenting /Agency Decision Maker</p>
<p>SHOBPA re-confirm - decision to reconfirm that a child should be placed for adoption (SHOBPA) in circumstances where there has been new assessments or a change in circumstances since the original SHOBPA decision.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Corporate Parenting /Agency Decision Maker</p>
<p>SHOBPA rescind - decision in relation to whether a SHOBPA decision should be rescinded.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Corporate Parenting /Agency Decision Maker</p>

Adopter Approval - decision in respect of whether individuals should be approved as adoptive parents	Post title: Head of Adoption Now RAA
Adoption Match - decision in respect of whether approved adoptive parents should be matched with a particular child.	Post title: Head of Corporate Parenting /Agency Decision Maker
Concurrent placement or Foster for Adoption - the decision in respect of agreeing plans for a Concurrent placement or Foster for Adoption placement.	Post title: Head of Corporate Parenting /Agency Decision Maker
Change of Name - the manager who can authorise the change of name of a Looked After Child.	Post title: Director of Social Care and Early Help
Adoption Panel Appointments - the manager who can authorise appointments to the Central List of Adoption Panel members.	Post title: Head of Adoption Now Post title: Deputy Head of Service, Adoption Now
Adoption support - the manager who can authorise the level of adoption support to be provided to children, adopters (including financial support) and their family or birth family members.	Post title: Head of Adoption Now Post title: Deputy Head of Service, Adoption Now

Designated Managers with Specified Area of Responsibility	Post Title and relevant forum
3. Decisions in relation to Fostering.	
Main Fostering Panel Decisions - the manager who can make decisions on fostering matters based on recommendations from fostering panel.	Post title: Head of Service for Corporate Parenting and permanence (ADM). Deputy is Director of Children's Social Care and Early Help.
Main Fostering Panel appointments - the manager who can authorise appointments to the Central List of Fostering Panel members.	Post title: Head of Service for Corporate parenting and permanence
Annual Review Fostering Panel: the manager who can make decisions on fostering matters based on recommendations from the annual review fostering panel.	Post title: Head of Service for Corporate parenting and permanence
Placement of a Child under Reg 24 with a relative - the manager who can authorise the placement of a child with a relative and approval of a viability assessment.	Post title: Head of Service following an assessment having had oversight from the Fostering Manager.
Exemptions and Extensions from Fostering Limit - the manager who can authorise any exemptions from the usual fostering limit for foster carers living in the local authority area.	Post title: Head of Service, permanence and Corporate parenting
Long-term match of a child with foster carers - the manager who can approve a long-term match.	Post title: Head of Service following presentation to Fostering Panel.

Staying Put - the manager who can approve a Staying Put Arrangement.	Post title: Head of Service
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Designated Managers with Specified Area of Responsibility	Post Title and relevant forum
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4. Decisions in relation to children we look after and care leavers.

Final Care Plan - the manager who can authorise the final Care Plan to be taken before the Court within Care Proceedings.	Post title: Head of Service
Contact with Parents - the manager who can authorise the suspension or termination of contact between a Looked After child and his or her parents (subject to the Court's approval after 7 days for children on Emergency Protection Orders, Interim Care Orders or Care Orders).	Post title: Director of Social Care and Early Help
Decision to bring a child into the care of the local authority - the manager who can authorise a child becoming Looked After.	Post title: Head of Service in consultation with Director of Social Care and Early Help
Placement of a child outside of England or Wales - the manager who can authorise the placement of a Looked after child outside England and Wales.	Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services
Placements , the manager who can authorise placements of Looked After children with external providers of residential care or foster carers from an independent fostering agency within adjoining local authorities (Salford, Bolton, Rochdale, Manchester, Lancashire)	Post title: Head of Service

<p>Out of area beyond adjoining local authorities (Salford, Bolton, Rochdale, Manchester, Lancashire) the manager who can approve the placement of Looked After Children beyond an adjoining authority.</p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services</p> <p>or in their absence</p> <p>Post title: Director of Social Care and Early Help</p>
<p>Unregistered Children's Home placement.</p> <p>Unregistered Children's Homes should not be used and only in exceptional circumstances where there are no other placement options should they be considered.</p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services</p> <p>or in their absence</p> <p>Post title: Director of Social Care and Early Help</p>
<p>Pathway Plan - the manager who can approve a Pathway Plan.</p>	<p>Post title: Team Manager</p>
<p>Marriage of a Looked After Child - the manager who can authorise the marriage of a Looked After child aged 16</p> <p>- 18 years</p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services.</p>
<p>Notifications in relation to Looked After Children from another local authority placed in Bury - the manager who should receive notification and decide about whether challenge to the placing local authority should be made.</p>	<p>Notifications are managed by the Commissioning team.</p>
<p>Notifications to another local authority where we are placing a Bury child.</p>	<p>Responsibility for creating the notification sits with the allocated Social Worker. The Commissioning team are responsible for sending this notification to the local authority.</p>

Passports - the manager who can authorise a passport application for a Looked After child.	Post title: Service Manager
Passport signing - the manager who can sign a child's passport application.	Post title: Service Manager
Placement Orders - the manager who can authorise an application for a Placement Order or discharge of a Placement Order in line with SHOBPA decisions.	Post title: Head of Corporate Parenting/Agency Decision Maker
Consent for medical treatment - the person who can consent to a child in our care receiving surgery/medical treatment in hospital.	Post title: Foster Carer or Registered Manager for a registered children's home as per delegated Authority. If an operation or general anaesthetic is required Head of Service.
Education Health Care Plan - the manager who can authorise the social care advice for an EHCP assessment.	Post title: Team Manager
Private Fostering - the manager who can approve assessments of private foster carers, impose requirements on private foster carers or decide to prohibit someone from acting as a private foster carer.	Post title: Head of Service

<p>Secure Accommodation - the manager who can authorise:</p> <p>A placement of a Looked After child in secure accommodation for up to 72 hours without a Secure Accommodation Order; and/or</p> <p>An application for a Secure Accommodation Order; and/or</p> <p>A child's continued secure placement on the recommendation of the Secure Accommodation Review Panel; and/or</p> <p>Applications to renewal Secure Accommodation Orders on the recommendation of the Secure Accommodation Review Panel.</p> <p>Note: if the child is under 13yrs old secretary of state approval is required.</p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services</p> <p>or in their absence</p> <p>Post title: Director of Social Care and Early Help</p>
<p>Special Guardianship - the manager who can authorise Special Guardianship as the permanence plan for a Looked After child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering manager signs off the SGO assessment. 	<p>Post title: Head of Service</p>
<p>Special Guardianship support plan and packages- the manager who can authorise the level of special guardianship and kinship carer support to be provided, including financial support to special guardians within agreed policy.</p> <p><i>*The support plan needs to be approved prior to court.</i></p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Permanence.</p>
<p>Disruption of Education at Key Stage 4</p> <p>- the manager who can authorise the change of placement affecting a Looked After child in Key Stage 4</p>	<p>Post title: Service Manager in consultation with the Head of Virtual School.</p>

<p>Immediate Placement of a Looked After Child with Connected Person - the manager who can authorise the placement of a Looked After child with a family or friend ('Connected Person') who is not already approved as a foster carer.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service.</p>
<p>Placement of a Looked After Child subject to Care Order or Interim Care Order with Parents - the manager who can authorise the placement of a Looked After child with a parent, person with Parental Responsibility. This will include placements made by the Court under Section 38 (6).</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service</p>
<p>Discharge of a Care Order</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service via Legal Gateway panel with legal oversight.</p>
<p>S20 ceasing for under 16 year old who have been section 20 for over 20 working days. <i>Where a child has been looked after for at least 20 working days, the decision to cease to look after her/him must not be put into effect until it has been approved under regulation 39(5).</i></p>	<p>Post title: Director of Social Care and Early help</p>
<p>S20 ceasing for 16/17-year-old <i>Where a child has been looked after for at least 20 working days, the decision to cease to look after her/him must not be put into effect until it has been approved by the DCS under regulation 39(5).</i></p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services.</p>
<p>Application for a Supervision Order - the manager who can authorise an application for a Supervision Order for a child.</p>	<p>Post title: Head of Service via Legal Gateway panel with legal oversight.</p>

<p>Adaptations to a Parent/Carers Home - the manager who can approve adaptations to a parent/carers Home to enable them to care for a child.</p> <p>Note: Smaller adaptations can be approved by the Head of Service within financial delegations.</p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with finance and legal services.</p>
<p>Looked after child having a holiday in school term time - the manager who can agree for a looked after child to have time of school for a holiday in school term time.</p>	<p>Post title: Director of Social Care and Early Help.</p>
<p>Approval of a child we look after to go into the Army - the manager who can agree for a looked after child to go into the Army</p>	<p>Post title: Executive Director of Children's Services.</p>

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