

SUMMARY: Children who Move Across Local Authority Borders

At any stage in the process of working with children and their families, the parents and/or the child/children may move from one household to another, on either a permanent or temporary basis. This could result in a change of address, possibly to another local authority area.

Such moves may be planned, and relevant information may be shared in advance with the practitioners working with the family and child/children. In some circumstances, however, the move may take place in haste, or even as a deliberate attempt to avoid the involvement of practitioners and agencies. Where this is the case, the agencies involved with the family must always consider the impact of the move on the child/children, including whether it increases the likelihood of the child suffering harm.

Where possible professionals should speak to families to ascertain the voice of the child and views of the parent in an effort to establish the reason for moving across boundaries, and help them consider what impact such moves may have on the child(ren) (such as school curriculum changing, health providers changing etc.)

The following circumstances associated with children and families moving across authority boundaries are a particular cause for concern:

- A child and family, or pregnant woman not being permanently registered with a GP;
- If a family is registered with a GP it can take time for their records to transfer from one practice to another, which can cause delays in understanding family members medical and other relevant history.
- Children and / or their parents / carers with complex mental health needs.
- A child not having a school place or whose attendance is irregular; A child or family having no fixed abode (e.g. being homeless or living temporarily with friends and relatives) in so far as it impacts on the welfare of the child;
- Several agencies holding information about the child and family, which is not co-ordinated, and/or which has not followed the child or family (i.e. information which is missing or has gaps);
- A move which disrupts an assessment or planned work with the child or their family which is likely to identify safeguarding concerns or address the child's needs
- Repeated assessments and interventions offered to a family with little evidence of improved outcomes
- Children moving out of a Local Authority and subject to a Court Order, including Children Looked After/Cared for Children
- Children with complex medical conditions.
- Children with an EHCP

Where children move to a new address - either within the same local authority area or to a new area – and there are concerns about the welfare of the children such that it is considered that a Section 47 Enquiry is required, the local authority for the last known address must make every effort to locate the children and complete the Section 47 enquiry.

Where a child moves across local authority boundaries, and a Section 47 Enquiry is being considered or is in progress and/or a Child Protection Conference is proposed but has not yet taken place, it is the responsibility of the local authority where the concerns originated to make decisions as to how to proceed.

It is normally advisable that assessments or particular pieces of work are concluded before transfer of case responsibility takes place.

Professionals in all agencies should be alert to the possibility that a child or family who has moved may not be in receipt of universal services. Professionals should engage with the family in order to link them into local universal services, e.g. Seeking information about the child / family (full names, dates of birth, previous address, GP's name, if attending any school, name of the Health Visitor etc.);

For this purpose, practitioners should:

- Ensure that all forenames and surnames used by the family are provided, and clarification is obtained about the correct spelling;
- Ensure that accurate dates and places of birth are obtained for all household members, wherever possible;
- Obtain the previous full addresses, and earlier addresses within the last two years;
- Clarify relationships between the child and other household members, if possible with documentary evidence;
- Ask the child / family with which statutory or voluntary organisations they are in contact.
- Providing information about relevant services;
- Following up to ensure that the family has managed to make contact and register with a local GP, Health Visitor, school and other relevant services to which the child is entitled;
- Engaging appropriately with relevant agencies regarding any concerns that emerge.
- The child's move may be temporary or permanent. If the parent is not prepared to give information or take advice, the destination authority should assume the move is permanent and act accordingly. Uncertainty about whether the move is permanent or temporary should not be allowed to cause a delay in the transfer of the case to services in the new area.

Working Together to Safeguard Children is clear that all practitioners should be particularly alert to the importance of sharing information when a child moves from one local authority into another; due to the risk that knowledge pertinent to keeping a child safe could be lost.

See: [Regional protocol for protecting children who move across local authority borders](#)

Developed in association with 10 North East Safeguarding Children Partnerships: Darlington; Durham; Hartlepool & Stockton; South Tees (Middlesbrough and Redcar); Newcastle; North Tyneside; Northumberland; South Tyneside; Gateshead; Sunderland.

Children Who Move - Subject to Child Protection Plans

Transferring Authority is where the child is moving **FROM**
Receiving Authority is where the child is moving **TO**

Moving out of Local Authority

Team Manager/Lead Social Worker from Transferring LA contacts Children's Social Care in receiving LA to:

- Agree arrangements for case management.
- Confirm how child will be protected
- Where appropriate request a conference to be held.
- Agree whether welfare visits required in the interim period.

Team Manager from Transferring LA to inform CP List Designated Manager of Receiving Authority

A Transfer Conference will be arranged by the receiving LA within 15 working days of notification. Except where:

- The Transferring LA agree to hold the CP Conference
- The period of move is less than 15 working days
- The child will be in the receiving authority for a short period and will be moving back or to a different authority.
- Child is in temporary accommodation.

In all situations it is vital that a written agreement is in place confirming case responsibility and action to ensure the child is safeguarded.

The Transferring Authority gives priority to representation at Transfer Conference.

The Transferring Team Manager/Lead Social Worker must ensure that the Receiving Authority has access to the child CP Plan and report of most recent CP Conference. 10 Days prior to transfer conference.

The Transferring Team Manager must inform the Child Protection List Designated Officer of the outcome to the transfer conference.

Moving into Local Authority

Team Manager/Lead Social Worker from Transferring LA contacts Children's Social Care in receiving LA to:

- Agree arrangements for case management.
- Confirm how child will be protected
- Where appropriate request a conference to be held.
- Agree whether welfare visits required in the interim period.

Transferring Team Manager to inform CP List Designated Manager

Receiving Team Manager to arrange transfer CP Conference in accordance with LSCB procedures within 15 working days of notification.

Except:

- The transferring LA agree to hold the CP Conference
- The period of move is less than 15 working days The child will be in the receiving authority for a short period and will be moving back or to a different authority.
- Child is in temporary accommodation.

In all situations it is vital that a written agreement is in place confirming case responsibility and action to ensure the child is safeguarded.

Arrangements are to be made to facilitate the transferring LA to be represented at the Transfer Conference.

The receiving team manager must ensure that they have access to the child's CP Plan and most recent CP Conference 10 days prior to Transfer Conference.

If arrangements are made for the Receiving Authority to undertake welfare visits in the interim period, agreement will be necessary concerning how this information will be presented to conference.

Outcome of conference to be reported to CP List designated manager