



Policy Document

CHILD IN NEED PLANNING



Document Control

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Review of Policy

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Document Approvals

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SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy does not apply to children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan. Where the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, this will be drawn up in outline at the Initial Child Protection Conference and in detail at Core Group Meeting(s). It will be reviewed by a Child Protection Review Conference.

All children with a disability are by the virtue of having a disability as defined within legislation, Children In Need. For these children and young people the Child in Need process needs to be adhered to however there is a need to ensure the process is seen as relevant and proportionate.

CHAPTERS

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1. Introduction

Rochdale Children's Social Care is committed to improving outcomes for children and their families.

Universal and Targeted Services will meet the needs of the majority of children and families in Rochdale. There is an expectation that when families need support, their needs will be identified through the Local Partnership and addressed through an Early Help Assessment with support being provided through Universal or Targeted Services. Where identified, following a screening from the Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH), that a package of support is required to meet a child's needs under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, a Child and Family Assessment will be undertaken to ascertain whether the threshold is met to initiate Child in Need Planning. Following an assessment a Child in Need plan will be developed and confirmed at a multi-agency Child in Need Meeting.

Under Section 17 Children Act 1989, a child will be considered in need if:

- *they are unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority;*
- *their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the Local Authority;*
- *they have a disability.*

2. Our Pledge

In Rochdale, the Golden Threads of Practice, the Rochdale Family Safeguarding Model and principles of Motivational Interviewing will underpin all of our work with children and families.

Our principles of Child in Need Planning will rely upon sound assessments and collaborative working with children, their families, and partner agencies to ensure children's needs are understood and the best outcomes are achieved.

The Child In Need Framework will provide a whole family approach to engage with children and families with this based on effective joint planning, intervention and review from within multi-disciplinary teams and with other partner agencies.



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Child in Need Plans will be actively implemented and reviewed at all times ensuring that the right response for the child and family is provided at the right time by the right practitioner.

Social Workers will use motivational interviewing techniques alongside supervision to identify and overcome any barriers to working in partnership with children, families and the team around the child.

The child's voice will be central to all child in need planning. By developing meaningful relationships, Social Workers will see children alone to gain an insight into their daily lived experiences.

Social Workers and Managers will adhere to and consistently implement Rochdale's Children's Services, Practice Standards (appendix 1) to support purposeful and effective assessment and planning for children and their families.

3. Early Help and Safeguarding Hub

The multi-agency partnership works together through the Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) when responding to referrals. The EHASH is committed to ensuring that children and families receive timely and safe interventions that provide the right service, at the right time and in the right way. The EHASH requires consent that is clear and voluntary before contact is made, unless overridden due to concerns that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Following the screening of a referral by the EHASH a decision will be made by a manager in relation to next steps which could include:

- No requirement for Social Work Assessment or Early Help Assessment
- Early Help Assessment to be initiated with the consent of the family
- Threshold met to undertake a Child and Family Assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989/ concerns a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm of significant harm.

4. Consent for Local Authority Involvement under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and Sharing of Information

Those with parental responsibility must be made aware that by agreeing to a Child and Family Assessment that they are agreeing to Local Authority involvement under Child in Need as per section 17 of the Children Act 1989. In obtaining consent, parents, carers and young people should be provided with an explanation about the concerns the agency has and information about the duties and responsibilities of agencies towards children in need of support and/or protection. Consent is also required from the young person of age and understanding, particularly those aged 16 or 17. Once consent has been explained the parent/carer and/or young person will be asked to sign a consent form, and a case note added to LCS titled, 'Consent' and consent form attached to the case note.

Parents and carers, and the child and young person where age appropriate should be provided with an Assessment Information Booklet which outlines what an assessment involves, and guidance in relation to Data Protection and Information Sharing, and a copy of the Local Authorities Complaints and Compliments Procedure.

In the event that parents and/or the child do not provide consent for an assessment then discussions should take place with the parents and young person regarding their concerns and reasons for not consenting, in order to try and provide reassurance and seek further clarification. If a suitable alternative source of support is proposed by the parent or young person that will adequately meet the identified need, this should be given due consideration.

If there is no suitable alternative support identified and consent to undertake an assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 is not provided the Social Worker and Manager must hold a reflective case discussion. This should include consideration of the impact for the child, both in the short term and the long term. The analysis of this discussion should set out the implications of not undertaking an assessment and consider whether intervention would be of benefit to the child or is required in response to need. If the child would benefit from an assessment but the impact of not receiving this is not significant, then the reasons for not consenting has to be accepted and recorded on file by the Manager. If it is a need and *"their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired without the provision for him/her of such services"* then consideration should be given by the Manager as to whether the threshold is met to convene a Strategy Meeting, to determine whether the threshold is met to undertake an assessment under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Management decisions should be clearly recorded on the child's file including the analysis behind the decision.

5. Timeline for New Referrals and Planning under Child in Need

<u>Working Days</u>	<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Overview</u>
0	Case Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case allocation by Manager. Allocation case note to be added by the manager clearly outlining the reasons for referral and initial plan.
Strategy Meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cases where the threshold is met to initiate a Strategy Meeting, this must take place within 24 hours of the management decision. A management case note must be added to the child's file outlining the decision to convene a Strategy Meeting. When a Strategy Meeting is held and the decision is to progress to a Section 47 Enquiry is made, a Safety Plan must be completed as part of the Strategy Meeting, and recorded on forms on LCS, and built upon with the family and shared with all partners and the family. Strategy Meeting actions must be shared with all professionals immediately following the meeting. Strategy Meeting minutes will be shared with all professionals within 24 hours of the meeting.
Section 47 Enquiries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Section 47 Enquiries must be completed within 5 working days. A decision will have been made at the Strategy Meeting as to whether the Section 47 Enquiry is a Single Agency or a Joint Investigation with the Police. Children will be seen and spoken to alone within 24 hours. Upon the conclusion of a Section 47 Enquiry, Social Workers will consult with partner agencies to gather their views on the proposed outcome and incorporate these into the Section 47 Enquiry.
1-2	Initial Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent to be obtained from parents/ carers with parental responsibility. Genogram to be completed with the family. Safety Planning and Contingency Planning to be undertaken with the family. Family Group Conference Service to be explained and offered to the family. Date and time for a Family Network Meeting (FNM) to be agreed with the family, to be held within 10 working days of case allocation.
3	Recording and Multi Agency Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent to be recorded on a case note titled '<i>Consent</i>' and consent form attached to case note on LCS. All initial visits to be recorded by day 3, chronology and case summary to be updated, genogram to be uploaded to the file, and safety plan form on LCS to be completed. Multi-agency information sharing with partner agencies to be undertaken to inform a single assessment, including but not limited to GP Information, Health Information, Education Information and Police Checks.
5	CIN Checkpoint 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Worker to provide update for management oversight in relation to initial visit, consent, assessment plan, safety plan and Social Worker to record agreed date and time of Family Network Meeting (or Step Down/ Closure Meeting for 10 day assessments). Management Oversight case note to be added to agree the Checkpoint and whether a 10 Day Child and Family Assessment will be completed, or identify a timeframe for the assessment to be completed within 45 days.

10	Family Network Meeting (FNM) to be held by Day 10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Who</u> – Children where age appropriate, Parents, Wider Family, Social Worker and Partner Agencies. • <u>Where</u> – at a location agreed with the family and to be held in person. • <u>What</u> – The meeting will consider, Strengths, Concerns, Barriers, Safety Plan, and Contingency Plan. • <u>Why</u> – Multi agency and partnership working with the family to build upon family strengths/resources, manage need and harm, and to strengthen safety and contingency plans. • ** FNM will be Closure/ Step Down Meeting to EHA, if EHA is required following a 10 day assessment. • *** Date and Time of Follow up Multi Agency Meeting to be agreed in readiness for completion of a full assessment to be held as an Initial Child in Need Meeting or Closure/Step Down Meeting.
30	CIN Checkpoint 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checkpoint 2 to be completed to include assessment outcomes and further intervention and plans. • Management oversight and agreement of the checkpoint to be added to a Management Oversight Case note by the manager.
35 - 45	Child and Family Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All assessments to be completed and approved by day 45 at the latest or within the timeframe identified by the manager at Checkpoint 1. • Where threshold is met for Child in Need Planning to be initiated and Initial Child in Need plan will be completed and submitted for approval with the Child and Family Assessment. • Chronology and Case Summary to be updated. • Child and Family Assessment to be shared with family and a case note added to LCS titled '<i>C&F Assessment shared with your family</i>'.
Outcomes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases Close to the Duty and Assessment Service and only short pieces of work will remain allocated to Duty where appropriate. 		
35 - 45	Initial Child in Need Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Child in Need Meeting to be held within 5 working days of assessment • At or following Initial Child in Need Meeting, case to step across into the Family Support and Protection Service. Family Safeguarding Workbook to be initiated by manager upon allocation. • Should the workbook not be initiated the rationale for this will be recorded by the manager. • Review Child In Need Meetings to be held 4 weekly thereafter (or within a timescales agreed by a manager depending upon the child/children's circumstances).
	Closure/ Step Down Meeting following assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and Partner Agency Views on Case Closure to be obtained. <p><u>Step Down to Early Help Assessment (EHA)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to the meeting the Social Worker begins discussions with the appropriate Neighbourhood Lead in relation to the Step Down process (who will identify a staff member to attend the final meeting to provide support for the lead professional or early help professional to take on the role and continue the work in the home) • EHA: A Lead Professional will be identified and the Social Worker attends and Chairs 1st Team around Family (TAF) Meeting as per the RBSCP Step Down Protocol. • Date and Time of 1st TAF Meeting to be recorded on Case Summary and in Closure Record. • Referral to Early Help/E-CAF Form to be completed on LCS.
	Closure/ Step Down Child in Meeting Following Ending of a Child in Need Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHA: A Lead Professional will be identified and the Social Worker attends and Chairs 1st Team around Family (TAF) Meeting as per the RBSCP Step Down Protocol. • Date and Time of 1st TAF Meeting to be recorded on Case Summary and in Closure Record. • Referral to Early Help/E-CAF Form to be completed on LCS.
Case Closes to Early Help Assessment (EHA) or Universal Services.		

6. Child In Need Visits and Safety Planning

Following the allocation of a case for assessment, the allocated Social Worker will visit the child and their family within the timescales set out by the manager upon allocation, not greater than 48 hours. At the initial visit the purpose of and reason for assessment should be explained including how the assessment will be completed. The Social Worker must also seek signed consent for the assessment to be undertaken. The Social Worker will also complete a genogram and complete a safety plan with the parents/carers and child where age appropriate in response to the presenting concerns. The safety plan will be recorded on LCS and a copy of the genogram uploaded to the child's file no later than one working day of the initial visit.

By working day 5 of the assessment, the manager and Social Worker will agree via the CIN Checkpoint 1 and/or a reflective discussion as to whether the family remain in need of further assessment beyond day 10. Where this is not required, the assessment will be completed by the Social Worker and authorised by the manager. All other assessments will be completed within 35 days of commencement (or at a timescale agreed by the manager).

During the course of the assessment, it is anticipated that Child in Need visits to children will take place more frequently to allow purposeful direct work to be undertaken with the child. Visits will be undertaken by the allocated Social Worker in line with the visiting schedule recorded on the child's case summary by the manager, and at least once every 20 working days. Children should be seen more frequently depending upon the child's individual needs and the level of risk.

A visit is not considered as completed until fully written up and finalised on LCS. The Child in Need visit should be recorded on LCS within 2 working days. The visit should be recorded using the Child in Need Visit Template. The recording must indicate if the child was seen alone or not and the voice of the child should be clearly recorded. Children over the age of three years old will be endeavoured to be seen alone. The reason for any child over the age of three not seen or spoken to alone will be recorded. Where it is agreed that a child will not be seen alone a management decision should be recorded on LCS stating the rationale for that decision, this decision should be reviewed through supervision.

7. Family Network Meeting

When a decision is made that an assessment is required, a Family Network Meeting should be held by day 10 to support the assessment and form an initial plan of support. This is an essential part of the assessment process, bringing together the key stakeholders including all family and professionals that are involved with the child alongside statutory and non-statutory agencies. Where a single assessment is agreed to be completed within 10 working days with a recommendation for the case to step down to an Early Help Assessment, the Family Network Meeting will serve as a Closure/Step Down to Early Help.

The purpose of the Family Network Meeting is to empower the family to utilise resources within their network and maximise strengths to enable them to address the concerns which have led to an assessment being initiated. The Social Worker should support the child where age appropriate and their parents/carers to identify potential attendees.

The Family Network Meeting should be attended by the child (depending on age and understanding), parents/carers, family or friends and those agencies who have an active role in the child/ families life.

If English is not the first language spoken by the family, then arrangements for an interpreter should be made and issues of access for people with disabilities should be addressed. Where meetings fall around the time of religious festivals and times of particular religious observances which are undertaken by the family, particular consideration may need to be made to hold meetings at a time and venue suitable for their needs.

The Family Network Meeting will explore:

- What are the strengths?
- What are the concerns?
- What are the barriers?
- Who will do what to support change and by when?
- The voice and daily lived experience of the child and their parent(s)
- Contingency/safety planning

The Family Network Meeting will be recorded on forms on LCS and the minutes distributed by the Social Worker, no later than 5 working days following the meeting being held. A follow up multi-agency meeting will be arranged at the Family Network Meeting to be held between day 35 and 45 of the referral being open to Children's Social Care. This meeting will serve as an Initial Child in Need Meeting where the assessment has

recommended that the threshold is met to initiate Child in Need Planning, or as a meeting to support Closure or Step Down to Early Help.

8. Child in Need Plan

The conclusion of an assessment will determine whether continued social work involvement is required with the consent of the family.

A Child in Need Plan may be initiated in one of the following circumstances:

- The child and family have received early help support, and following the completion of an assessment now require more formal support via a Child in Need plan
- Following assessment, on the decision of the manager that the child is in need and will require ongoing services from one or more partner agencies, coordinated by the local authority (Children Act S.17(10)(a) or (b)); A Child Protection Plan has ceased, and the child protection conference has agreed a step down to a Child in Need plan
- The child was previously cared for and the final statutory review of the child's case sets out an agreed Child in Need plan, or, a Child in Need plan is agreed after the child ceases to be cared for
- The child has become the subject of a Supervision Order or Family Assistance Order; or responsibility for an existing Supervision Order or Family Assistance Order has been newly transferred to Rochdale by the decision of a Court or formal agreement between the authorities;
- The child has moved into Rochdale and was subject to a formal Child in Need plan in the previous Local authority and those needs are ongoing;
- The child and their family are destitute as a result of having no recourse to public funds and are therefore 'in need'
- The child is disabled (Children Act S.17(10)(c)).
- The court has requested a "Welfare Report" from the Local Authority under Section 7 of the Children Act 1989, or a report based on an investigation of the child's circumstances and the need for a care order or supervision order under Section 37 of the Children Act 1989

If the child is identified as a continued Child in Need, then an initial Child in Need Plan will be added to LCS by the Social Worker which will be sent for approval at the time of submitting the Child and Family Assessment. The initial plan will be informed by needs identified through the initial Family Network Meeting and the assessment.

The Child in Need Plan must identify any family, resources or services that will be needed to achieve the desired outcomes. In particular, the Child in Need Plan should use SMART principles (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely), all actions will have timescales and identified people responsible for implementation.

The child will be the centre of the Child in Need Plan, their lived experience being central to the formulation of the plan. The Child in Need Plan will, where applicable, include actions to promote the educational outcomes of the child i.e. children who have poor attendance or are at risk of exclusion, or children who are subject to Education Health Care Plans (EHCP).

The Child in Need Plan will be co-produced with the child and their family and will consider:

- What is the family worried about?
- What actions does the family want to work on first or what actions do the family think are required to bring about change?
- Who will do what?
- By when?
- What should the desired outcome be?
- What is the contingency plan?
- What is the exit plan?

It is an expectation and a requirement that Child in Need plans are reviewed actively and the required response for the child is provided at the right time. This relies on review meetings taking place within timescales and the child being visited, seen alone and their views being heard and recorded throughout the lifetime of the plan.

9. Child in Need Meetings

An Initial Child in Need Meeting will take place within 5 working days following the completion of an assessment. A Child in Need Meeting would also need to be held within four weeks of a case being “stepped down” to a Child in Need Plan. Examples of this include where a Child Protection Plan has ended, a child or young person ceases to become cared for, or in the case of a Supervision Order being granted etc.

The Child in Need Meeting provides an opportunity for a child and his or her parents/carers, together with key agencies, to identify and agree the package of services required. The purpose of the meeting is also to review the Child in Need Plan so that parents and carers are clear about what is expected of them and as to what they can expect from professionals supporting them. The Child in Need plan will be reviewed through 4 weekly Child in Need Meetings. If there are significant changes in the families' circumstances, an earlier review should take place.

Underpinned by the principles of the Family Safeguarding Model, Child in Need Meetings will consider:

- What are the strengths?
- What are the concerns?
- What are the barriers?
- Who will do what to support change and by when?
- Contingency/safety planning
- The voice and daily lived experience of the child and their parent(s) will also be central to the meeting and plan.

All actions must have identified individuals responsible for them. Planning and intervention through the Child in Need Meeting must be underpinned by a thorough assessment and continuing evaluation. An up to date assessment must be completed at a minimum of every 12 months or where there has been a significant change of circumstances or significant change to the plan.

If a professional cannot attend a Child in Need meeting they should provide an update to the Social Worker in a written report to be shared at the meeting.

The Child in Need Meeting should always consider whether a Family Group Conference would be helpful or whether a referral is required to the No Wrong Door Service, and always develop a contingency plan with the family that is sustainable for when any intervention has ended.

The chair of the Child in Need Meeting is responsible for the distribution of the minutes and updated plan. A copy of the Child in Need Plan should be provided to the parents, child (where age appropriate) and the agencies involved in the provision of services under the plan. This should be completed within 5 working days of the meeting being held.



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The purpose of subsequent Child in Need Meetings is to review and monitor the progress of the desired outcomes set out in the plan. In addition, the plan must be amended and updated as required and action taken if there are concerns about significant impairment or a risk of significant harm. There should be discussion and challenge on the progress of agreed actions. Any updates to the plan and any issues identified that cannot be resolved must be noted. If the Child in Need plan is to continue following the review, a date and time should be agreed for the next Child in Need Meeting.

The 4th Child in Meeting should be chaired by a Manager or Advanced Practitioner to ensure that the plan remains purposeful and to ensure there is no drift or delay in planning for the child. For children who have been subject to a Child in Need Plan for 6 months and beyond, a discussion regarding the plan will take place at quarterly clinics chaired by the Head of Service and/ or Service Manager for that area. This is to ensure that there is no drift in planning and that the plan remains appropriate for the child.

10. Family Safeguarding Model

Following the completion of a Child and Family Assessment by the Duty and Assessment Service, the case will step across into the Family Support and Protection Service. Children who are in need of help or protection will be provided this through the principles of the Family Safeguarding Model.

Through the Family Safeguarding Model we will listen to parents to identify, support and meet the needs of both children and parents in order to make a difference to the child so that families can stay together safely.

We will do this through:

Motivational Interviewing – Using language that is inclusive, conveys empathy with a focus on highlighting the strengths within families. It is only through active listening that we can hear families' own motivation to change, in order to work alongside them for real change to occur. Through strengths-based conversations, we will provide encouragement and instil confidence so that families choose change for themselves and their children.

Multi-Disciplinary Teams - We will have teams led by a social care manager with a range of specialists to support families and parents with mental health needs, and those experiencing difficulties with drug and alcohol use, and domestic abuse. They are based together and share information to address needs quickly and avoid duplication of work.

Family Safeguarding Workbook – This way of recording will mean that we can spend more time getting to know families and their needs and less time recording. Everyone in the team who work with the family will record information on the same system, providing a single record providing shared, multi-agency recording, analysis and decision making.

Group Supervision – Multi-professional group discussions will take place monthly to review the progress of the plan, and to understand what difference this is making to the daily lived experience of the children and families we work with.

Upon the case stepping across to the Family Support and Protection Service, the manager allocating the case will trigger the Family Safeguarding Workbook. Should a decision be made not to initiate the Family Safeguarding Workbook, the manager will record the rationale for this upon allocation. It may not be appropriate for the workbook and group supervision to be completed in relation to children with special circumstances, such as:

- Children who are privately fostered
- Children who are subject to Child in Need Plans in response to Youth Justice Involvement where AIM assessments are being completed
- No Wrong Door involvement for children on the edge of care
- Children who are subject to private law proceedings
- Children who are open to the Children with Disability Team

11. Children with Special Circumstances

Private Fostering

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, step-parent (including civil partnerships), sister or brother where the child is to be cared for by that person for 28 days or more.

Upon notification of a private fostering arrangement a Social Worker will be allocated and a visit to the child and foster carers must be undertaken within 2 working days. Subsequent visits should be weekly during the assessment then at intervals of not more than six weeks during the first twelve months, and intervals of not more than once every 12 weeks in any 2nd or subsequent year.

As per the Local Authorities policy, if at any stage of the assessment of the private foster carers, information is obtained which suggests that a child already placed with the private foster carer may be a Child in Need, the manager may agree services under a Child in Need Plan.

Children with a Disability

The Child in Need Plan will be reviewed through 4 weekly Child in Need meetings unless a longer timescale has been agreed by the manager in cases involving children who have a disability and are being provided a provision of services by the Children with Disability Team.

Children subject to Private Law Proceedings

Children who are subject to private proceedings where a court has requested a “Welfare Report” from the Local Authority under Section 7 of the Children Act 1989, or a report based on an investigation of the child’s circumstances and the need for a care order or supervision order under Section 37 of the Children Act 1989, it is likely that the child will be deemed a child in need of help and support following the completion of a Child and Family Assessment. Should the threshold not be met to create a Child in Need Plan but the case needs to remain open to Children’s Social Care for the sole purpose of the private proceedings, the manager should record the rationale for this upon approval of the assessment.

12. Children in Need Moving to Another Local Authority

When a Child in Need moves from one local authority area to another, the Children Act 1989 is clear that the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child lies with the local authority where the child is to be found. The principles apply to local authorities in the circumstances of both transferring out and receiving in Children in Need. An earlier Child in Need meeting should be convened if the child and their family are planning to move to another local authority area. In this situation the Social Worker should always follow the ‘*North West Children in Need Moving Across Local Authority Boundaries Procedure*’ (Appendix 2)

13. Professional Challenge within the Child in Need Planning and Review Process

Strong multi-agency working to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded sometimes requires professional disagreement and challenge. All practitioners are expected to respectfully challenge other practitioners when necessary. It is important to remember that no one professional from any one service has more power than another regardless of position or experience.

There are Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures for dealing with disagreement within the Child Protection process. The same procedures should be applied to the Child in Need process.

<https://greatermanchesterscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/resolving-professional-differences-escalation-policy>

14. Ceasing a Child in Need Plan

A Child in Need Plan can cease in one of the following circumstances:

- On the decision from a Child in Need Review Meeting to cease the plan because the child is no longer a child who is in need of services
- On the decision of a child protection conference that the child is subject to a child protection plan
- The child has become cared for by the Local Authority
- On the expiry or revocation (or transfer on the decision of the Court to another local authority) of the Supervision Order or Family Assistance by virtue of which the child was subject to a plan (but where there are unmet needs a decision can be made to continue the Child in Need Plan beyond the expiry of the statutory order)
- The child has ceased to live in Rochdale and the Local Authority and the case has transferred to the Local Authority in which the child is now living
- The child has moved permanently outside England and Wales
- The child's 18th birthday
- The child has died

15. De-escalating a Case from Child in Need to Early Help Assessment

The transfer of a case from Child in Need to Early Help Support should happen when the Social Worker, after consultation with agencies working with the child and family, is certain that the case no longer meets the threshold for Child in Need but does meet the threshold for Early Help Assessment and Early Help support.

After discussion and agreement with the manager the Social Worker must meet with the child/ young person and family to explain the Early Help process and seek their consent before the transfer can take place.

If the case is assessed as reaching the threshold for Early Help, and informed consent has been obtained, a Closure/Step Down Child in Need Meeting will be held, attended by the parents, child/ren (where age appropriate) and all professionals included in the Child in Need Plan. A representative from Neighbourhoods from the Early Help Directorate should be invited to attend the meeting when stepping down to Early Help, to support the transition from Children's Social Care involvement to Early Help.

Prior to the meeting a new Lead Professional should be appointed. The Lead Professional must be identified with the input and approval of the family. The Lead Professional will usually represent the agency where the child's needs are greatest. At this meeting the Early Help plan should be formulated and a date and time for the next Team Around the Family Meeting agreed.

Neighbourhood Teams can support the identification of a Lead Professional and offer ongoing support to the Lead Professional in relation to the Early Help Assessment and TAF meeting process. Discussion with the appropriate Neighbourhood Lead at the point of considering step down is beneficial in order to identify the Early Help package of support needed.

Once this is completed the step down process needs to be followed on LCS by completing the '*Referral to E-CAF/ Early Help Form*'. The case will then close to Children's Social Care, and the Social Worker will chair the first TAF meeting as per the RBSCP Step Down Protocol. However the responsibility for recording and distributing the minutes on EHM remains with the Lead Professional.

For a period of 12 weeks following case closure, the family and professionals can contact the Social Worker for any support or advice if required, this support can include attendance at a TAF meeting if it is felt this will strengthen the support in place for the family.

Appendices

Appendix 1: **Practice Standards**



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Appendix 2 **NW Transfer CIN Protocol**



nw_proto_moving_la_boundaries.pdf

Appendix 3 **RBSCP Step Up/Down Protocol**



RBSCP Step Up Step Down Protocol.pdf

Rochdale Borough Council
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale OL16 1YH

 www.rochdale.gov.uk

 01706 647474

 council@rochdale.gov.uk

