# Children’s Social Care Procedure – Section 20 of the Children Act 1989

**SECTION 20 PROCESS**

Social worker assesses need for a placement under section 20 and discusses with team manager.

Social worker completes single referral actioning placement planning, resource panel and legal panel. Team Manager signs this off.



Section 20 must be agreed by a member of Children’s Social Care Senior Leadership team or at Legal Gateway Meeting (LGM). Legal advice should be sought where possible.



Social worker obtains consent from all people with parental responsibility for the child, in writing, using the designated Voluntary Agreement form. A copy of this must be placed on the child’s file, a copy given to the people who sign and the carers. The original should be retained by Children’s Social Care.

Where possible the social worker also completes the placement plan and delegated authority with the child and parents and carers. If this is not possible, a case note is made noting why and when this will be done. In all cases the actions from the placement plan for the Cared for Children visit, care review, care plan, health assessment and PEP must be actioned within the statutory timeframe.

When a child becomes ‘cared for’ copies of all documents on file must be shared with carers and people with parental responsibility. This includes the completion of change of legal status and the cared for episodes on LCS and any appointments and visits arranged. Care plan and review as well as other actions including obtaining consent for health assessment to be completed within these guidelines.

People with parental responsibility must be notified in writing that this is a voluntary agreement and that they can remove their consent at any time with or without notice.



Legal Gateway Meeting attended at the next available opportunity.