**Timescales for Effective Practice**

**June 2023**

Contents

[**INTRODUCTION** 3](#_Toc138863308)

[**TIMESCALES FOR BEST PRACTICE - APPLICABLE TO ALL CHILDRENS SERVICES** 4](#_Toc138863309)

[**INTEGRATED FRONT DOOR** 14](#_Toc138863310)

[**ASSESSMENT/HELP & PROTECTION** 16](#_Toc138863311)

[**PRE-BIRTH ASSESSMENT** 20](#_Toc138863312)

[**EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM** 24](#_Toc138863313)

[**CHILD IN NEED** 26](#_Toc138863314)

**FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING**……………………………………………………………...27

[**CHILD PROTECTION** 30](#_Toc138863315)

[**CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX NEEDS** 35](#_Toc138863316)

[**PRIVATE FOSTERING** 38](#_Toc138863317)

[**LEGAL GATEWAY** 40](#_Toc138863318)

[**PUBLIC LAW OUTLINE – 26 - WEEK PROTOCOL** 42](#_Toc138863319)

[**CARED FOR CHILDREN (across all Childrens Services)** 47](#_Toc138863320)

[**CARED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM 14 YRS (within Help & Protect, Cared For, Social Work Academy, Young Persons Team)** 55](#_Toc138863321)

[**CARE EXPERIENCED TEAM** 57](#_Toc138863322)

[**FOSTERING SERVICE** 64](#_Toc138863323)

[**YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE** 80](#_Toc138863324)

# **INTRODUCTION**

This is a working document which is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure accuracy and to weave in the work of any new or developing services within Sefton Children’s Services.

Some timescales will apply across the service, others will relate specifically to work undertaken in specific service areas or areas of practice; to include:

* Integrated Front Door (MASH)
* Assessment – Help & Protection
* Pre-Birth Assessment
* Emergency Duty Team (EDT)
* Children in Need
* Private Fostering
* Family Group Conferencing Service
* Child Protection
* Children with Complex Needs
* Legal Gateway
* Public Law Outline
* Cared for Children
* Young People’s Team
* Care Experienced Service
* Fostering Service
* Youth Justice Service

**Further information will follow in respect of the following:**

* Residential and Supported Accommodation
* Safer Families Practice Hub
* Child in Need – Independent Reviewing
* Targeted Family Support
* Family Time
* My SPACE (Missing/Child Exploitation (CE), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE))
* Early Help

**AIM (Adoption in Merseyside)** is a regional adoption agency that covers four local authorities – Sefton, Knowsley, Liverpool, and Wirral. There are 2 main stages to becoming an adopter and the full process can take around 12 months. [Adoption in Merseyside (AiM) – Aiming high for our children and families](https://adoptioninmerseyside.co.uk/)

# **TIMESCALES FOR BEST PRACTICE - APPLICABLE TO ALL CHILDRENS SERVICES**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **ALLOCATION** | **Within 1 working day** of allocation, a manager should discuss the child/ young person/family/care experienced young adult/ carers circumstances with the allocated practitioner/ Social Worker and set out tasks and timescales within a case note. | Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager |
| **INITIAL TELEPHONE CONTACT** | Upon allocation, the allocated key worker/ Social Worker is expected to make initial contact with the family/ child/young person/care experienced young adult/foster carer within **2 working days** to introduce themselves. | Allocated Key Worker/ Social Worker |
| **BASIC DETAILS** | Upon allocation, basic details should be updated within a child/ young person/young adult, foster carers record **within 2 working days.** | Allocated Key Worker/ Social Worker |
| **READ FILE** | Children/young people/care experienced young adults tell us that they do not want to repeat their story time and time again. Upon allocation, the allocated key worker should familiarise themselves with their file **within 2 working days**; the summary which tell us about the person and chronology should provide succinct but relevant information and should be a good place to start. | Allocated Key Worker/ Social Worker |
| **INFORMED CONSENT** | Consent form should be reviewed with the family when starting any new assessment **OR** following any change of Social Worker/allocated key worker.  There should be evidence of parent/carers being made aware that their consent can be withdrawn. | Allocated Key Worker/ Social Worker |
| **NOTIFYING OTHERS OF INVOLVEMENT** | The family and any relevant agencies should be advised **within 2 working days** of any change to the allocated key worker/Social Worker. | Business Support  The allocated practitioner should notify Business Support to prompt this action |
| **CHRONOLOGY** | The chronology should be started within a child or young person’s record **within the first 24 hours (Integrated Front Door)**  Upon allocation, the chronology should be updated **within 5 working days.**  The chronology should be recorded within liquid logic; it should evidence the impact of any involvement or intervention upon the child or young person. Outcomes should be clear, and any record of achievements noted.  Chronologies should be updated on a **monthly basis** or **following a significant event.**  Team Managers/Assistant Team Manager should consider the chronology during formal supervision. | Allocated Social Worker /Manager |
| **CASE SUMMARY** (which tells us about the individual) | Upon allocation, the case summary should be updated/created within a child/ young person’s/care experienced young adults/ foster carers record; **within the first 5 working days.**  Their summary should then be **updated at least every 3 months** or **following a significant event; or        change in circumstances**.  This case summary should be **reviewed and updated prior to any transfer or closure and should be considered by Managers in supervision.**  Everyone has a responsibility to update a case summary if they spot a factual inaccuracy**.** | Allocated Key Worker/ Social Worker  Manager/Allocated Key Worker/Social Worker |
| **GENOGRAM** | Upon allocation a genogram should be updated/created for a child or young person **within 5 working days showing the child’s immediate family.**  The genogram sits in Liquid Logic but can also be completed outside of LCS; if more detail is to be added to show relationships, a written copy can be uploaded and stored in documents.  The genogram can be updated with the child, young person, and family as part of any ongoing work.  During any assessment, the genogram should be updated so that it shows  a minimum of **3 generations.** It is important that we understand the whole family and wider support network, significant attachments, and losses.  The genogram should be **reviewed every 3 months** and amended/updated where necessary, or **if there has been a significant change or outcome for the child/young person**.  The genogram should be **reviewed and updated prior to transfer or closure.** | Allocated Key Worker/Social Worker |
| **ECOMAP** | An ecomap can be completed as part of a child, young person, and family assessment; **within 45 days.**  **The ecomap should be updated every 12 months;** sooner if significant change occurs or family/friendships relationships alter. There are a range of direct work tools that help us to gather important family information – the ecomap is one good option.  The ecomap should establish key people in the child/young person’s life and establish what support networks exist to include extended family, regular visitors to the home, adult brothers, sisters, and friends. It may be that a professional is an important part of a person’s support network.  The impact of any absent family members e.g., due to bereavement, hospitalisation, army, prison etc. should be considered.  Relevant information should be taken from any update to an ecomap to update the case summary which should bring the child/ young person alive.  Ecomaps can be used to gain information about a foster carers support network. When completed they should be uploaded to documents. | Allocated Key Worker/ Child Social Care Support Worker/Family Connector/Social Worker |
| **CULTURE MAP** | A culture map can be completed to inform the Child, Young People and Family assessment and planning.  Culture maps gather important information about the child/young person and consider what makes them unique.  Relevant information should be taken from any updated culture map to update the case summary which brings the child/ young person/foster carer alive. The culture map when completed should be uploaded to documents. | Allocated Practitioner/ Child Social Care Support Worker/Family Connector/Social Worker |
| **RECORDING** | It is best practice for all visits/contacts to be recorded on LCS within **2 working days**: maximum 5 working days as per Sefton case recording policy.  Contacts include visits, telephone calls, teams’ calls, text messages, etc.  All sections within case notes should be included; to include analysis and action section.  [Recording Policy and Guidelines (antser.com)](https://seftoncs.proceduresonline.antser.com/chapter/recording-policy-and-guidelines?search=recording%20policy) | Allocated Key Worker/Social Worker |
| **CHILD, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILY ASSESSMENTS** | There should be a check point discussion held between the allocated Social  Worker and Team Manager at **day 10, day 25 and day 35.**  An **assessment planning meeting** involving family and key partners should take place **by day 20** to ensure that any immediate needs are being met whilst further information is being gathered.  The Child, Young People and Family assessment should be **completed by day 35, day 40** at the latest; **allowing 10/5 days** for quality assurance by a Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager allowing for any amendments, further enquiries to be advised.  Any necessary referrals should be made within this assessment period to ensure help is being offered to the child and family.  The child/young person should be seen and spoken to as part of the assessment. Other children of the family should also be considered. The views of partner agencies should be sought. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/Partners |
| **UPDATING CHIILD, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILY ASSESSMENTS** | Child, Young People & Family Assessments should be updated **every 12 months;** or **following a significant event** in a child or young person’s life.  If there has been a Section 47 enquiry this will trigger an earlier Child, Young People & Family Assessment. | Social Worker |
| **FAMILY MEETINGS/FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCES** | A **whole family first approach** should be taken in all aspects of our work with children/young people and families. Meetings with family members can be arranged at any point in the child’s journey. | Family Group Conferencing Service |
| **STRATEGY MEETINGS** | Strategy meetings must be held **within 1 working day** of the concerns being identified. If the strategy meeting is to be held the following day, for example to ensure that a particular professional is available or that those with first-hand knowledge of the child can attend, there should be evidence of safety planning in the interim –.  The **Strategy meeting will be chaired by a Team Manager** with attendance from key agencies to include **police, health, and education**.  Decisions to be approved and shared with attendees and those invited to the meeting **within** **24 hours**.  Minutes from strategy meeting to be checked and distributed **within** **5 working days.** | Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **SECTION 47 INVESTIGATION** | A Section 47 investigation should be concluded **within 10 working days.**  The Social Worker **should see the child within 24 hours.**  The Social Worker should endeavour to complete **most if not all the checks by day 5** when there should be discussion between the Social worker and Team Manager to analyse the information gathered during the investigation and consider what this means for the child, what needs to happen for the child; including whether to proceed to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC).  The discussion with the Team Manager should be arranged at the strategy meeting.  If it is decided that progressing to ICPC is not considered necessary, then the Social Worker should notify the Safeguarding Unit.  For children progressing to ICPC the allocated Child Protection Chair will arrange a **pre ICPC discussion at least 5 days before the date of the ICPC.** The Social Worker should ensure that they prioritise meeting with the CP Chair for this discussion.  **The child should be seen weekly** **during the child protection enquiry,** and **weekly until ICPC if this is the outcome.** | Allocated Social Worker/LADO where applicable/Safeguarding Unit. |
| **COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS** | Upon new allocation, comments, compliments, and complaints leaflet/ information should be provided to children, young people, young adults, families, and carers. | Allocation Key Worker/Social Worker |

# **INTEGRATED FRONT DOOR**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **DECISION ON A CONTACT** | All contacts must be reviewed **within 1 hour of receipt;** with oversight added by a manager to identify level of need and screening required.  Should a MASH enquiry be required to support decision making, information is requested, and a rag rating is applied.  Contacts are RAG rated as follows:  **Red** – S47 – 4 hours  **Amber** – S17 – 24 hours  **Green** – Early Help – 72 hours  Level of Need Guidance can be found [here](https://seftonscp.org.uk/scp/professionals/level-of-need-guidance-2023) | Team Manager (Integrated Front Door) |
| **INCOMPLETE REFERRALS/MULTI AGENCY REFERRAL FORM (MARF)** | Incomplete contacts will be returned to the referrer for additional information if required; or if level of concern is unclear.  Clarification should be obtained from the referrer in respect of the parents, carers and child/young person’s knowledge of referral and recorded on the MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form). | Integrated Front Door |
| **DECISION ON A REFERRAL** | **1 working day** including screening | Integrated Front Door |
| **CONSISTENCY OF WORKER** | Any contacts which have been open to the Local Authority within the **previous 12 weeks** will be allocated to the previous Social Worker if possible. | Team Manager |
| **NOTIFYING REFERERS OF THE OUTCOME** | The referrer will be notified of the outcome of any contact in writing **within 5 days** of the contact being received. A letter will be sent out. | Integrated Front Door |
| **TRANSFER TO ASSESSMENT TEAM** | Contacts which need to progress for a Child, Young People and Family assessment will be forwarded to the assessment team **within 24 hours.** If there is an immediate concern; a verbal discussion should take place. | Team Manager – Integrated Front Door |

# **ASSESSMENT/HELP & PROTECTION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILY ASSESSMENT** | There should be a check point discussion held between the allocated Social  Worker and Team Manager at **day 10, day 25 and day 35.**  An assessment planning meeting involving family and key partners should take place **by day 20** to ensure that any immediate needs are being met whilst further information is being gathered.  The Child, Young People and Family assessment should be **completed by day 35/ day 40** at the latest; **allowing at least 5 days** for quality assurance by a Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager allowing for any amendments, further enquiries to be advised.  Any necessary referrals should be made within this assessment period.  The child/young person should be seen and spoken to as part of the assessment. Other children of the family should also be considered, and partners views sought. | Allocated Social Worker /Team Manager |
| **VISITS** | Visits should take place within **3 working days** if a child is **5** and under.  Within **5 working days** for children aged **5** and over.  Thereafter, visits should take place at least **every 4 weeks** during any assessment period (as a minimum); unless agreed at a higher frequency following a strategy meeting or if directed by a Team Manager as part of a child protection or child in need plan.  During any Section 47 investigation; **visits should take place** **weekly.** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **ASSESSMENT – QUALITY ASSURANCE** | The Child, Young People and Family assessment should be **completed by day 35, day 40** at the very latest, **allowing at least 5 days** for quality assurance by a Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager and for  any amendments, further enquiries to be advised.  The Team Manager must consider the suggested plan, sign, and provide rationale within the assessment.  If for any reason an assessment is to exceed 45 days (Working Together expectation), clear management oversight and rationale should be recorded on the child’s file; with specific detail relating to any outstanding actions and timescales for completion. | Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager |
| **CHILD IN NEED MEETINGS** | **Within 10 days** of completion of a Child, Young People & Family Assessment and Child in Need planning meeting should be held.  Thereafter, CIN meeting should take place **every 4 weeks**.  Allocated Social worker to record the meetings.  Minutes of meetings to be sent out to all parties **within 5 working** days | Allocated Social Worker |
| **INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE REQUEST (ICPC)** | To be confirmed following **outcome of s47 enquiries** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE (if required)** | **Within 15 working days** of strategy meeting if deemed necessary. | Child Protection Conference Chair |
| **CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE REPORT** | **No later than 3 working days** before the conference for consideration by Team Manager.  Child Protection Conference Reports must be shared with the family in their first language **at least 3 working days prior to conference.** It is important that families can see what is written and express their views. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **SIGN OFF DECISIONS FROM CONFERENCE** | Within **1 working day.**  Fuller minutes to be signed off **within 5 working days** and circulated. | Child Protection Conference Chair  Safeguarding Unit  Business Support |
| **FIRST CORE GROUP MEETING** | **Within 10 working days** of ICPC.  Decisions of core group meeting to be shared **within 1 working day.**  Minutes to be signed off by Team Manager **within 5 working days.**  Minutes to be circulated **within 5 working days** of the meeting. | Social Worker/Team Manager/Business Support |
| **SUBSEQUENT CORE GROUP MEETINGS** | To take place **4 weekly**.  Timescales regarding minutes and distribution as above. | Social Worker |
| **CHILD PROTECTION VISITS** | No less than every **20 working days** | Social Worker |
| **STEP DOWN TO CHILD IN NEED** | If a family is stepped down from Child Protection to Child in Need, convene a **CIN meeting within 20 working days of the Child Protection Conference.** | Social Worker |

# **PRE-BIRTH ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **CHILD & FAMILY ASSESSMENTS** | Child & Family Assessments should commence in the early antenatal period; providing parents and others opportunity to engage, understand and identify support. **Same Timescales as above apply.**  The assessment will seek to gather information from all relevant agencies to include; GP, maternity services, Health Visitor using pre-birth RAG rating tool. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **MEETING OF PROFESSIONALS** | A meeting of key professionals must be convened following the child and family assessment to pull information together.  The outcome of this meeting may be:   * Proceed to Pre-Birth Assessment * Child in Need Support * Early Help * No Further Action | Allocated Social Worker |
| **INTERVENTION/SUPPORT PLAN** | This should begin at **week 16** of the pregnancy and will include **weekly visits.**  If there are concerns in respect of significant harm, the matter can be considered at Legal Gateway. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **PRE-BIRTH ASSESSMENT** | If decision is for a Pre-Birth Assessment; this must be completed **within 12 weeks.** The unborn baby should remain on a CIN plan during the assessment period.  Upon completion of a pre birth assessment a multi agency strategy meeting must be convened **before 28 weeks. The** unborn child must remain on a child in need plan whilst the assessment in underway. | Allocated Social Worker/Partners |
| **MULTI AGENCY STRATEGY MEETING** | On completion of the Pre-Birth Assessment, a multi-agency strategy meeting must be convened **within 15 days** and a decision made whether to progress to Initial Child Protection Conference/Child in Need/Early Help or No Further Action.  If a strategy meeting is required, this should be held before/at **week 28** of the pregnancy. | Allocated Social Worker/Partners |
| **PRE - BIRTH INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE** | This should take place at **30 weeks gestation,** **within 15 days of the strategy discussion.** (Pan Merseyside Protocol)  The unborn baby may become subject to a Child Protection Plan, or a Child in Need Plan may be considered more appropriate. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **FIRST CORE GROUP MEETING** | If the unborn baby is made subject to a Child Protection Plan at the Initial Child Protection Case Conference, the first core group meeting to agree the plan for the birth of the baby and the babies discharge plan from hospital will be held **within 10 working days.** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **SAFEGUARIDNG BIRTH PLAN** | The Maternity Service must be provided with a copy of the safeguarding birth plan.  A copy of the plan should also be made available to Sefton Emergency Duty Team (EDT) and the case summary should reflect the current position and plan for the baby when born/contingency arrangements need to be thought through and recorded explicitly.  If the baby is born unexpectedly and no discharge plan has been agreed in advance, the Allocated Social Worker will organise a multi-agency pre discharge meeting **within 1 working day.**  . | Allocated Social Worker |
| **NOTIFICATION OF BABIES BIRTH** | Maternity staff will notify the Allocated Social worker or EDT (if out of hours) of the baby’s birth **immediately.**  The **Allocated Social Worker will notify core group members.** | Maternity staff/Allocated Social Worker |
| **VISITS** | If the baby is subject to a Child Protection Plan and there is a plan for the baby to remain at home with their parent(s), the Allocated Social Worker must undertake a home visit **within 2 days of the babies discharge from hospital.**  **Visits should be weekly** until the review Child Protection Conference. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **SECTION 47** | A Section 47 investigation should be concluded **within 10 working days.**  The Social Worker **should see the child within 24 hours.**  See previous sections on Section 47 for more detail. |  |
| **CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE** | A Child Protection Conference must be held **within 4 weeks** of the birth of the baby. | Allocated Social Worker/CP Conference Chair |
| **POST BIRTH ASSESSMENT/ UPDATED CHILD & FAMILY ASSESSMENT** | A post birth assessment will be initiated as soon as the baby is born. **This should be completed by day 40 to allow 5 days for the assessment to be quality assured by a Team Manager** and for any amendments to be made. | Allocated Social Worker |

# **EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Lead** | **Timescales** |
| **CALL RESPONSE TIMES** | All calls into the Emergency Duty Team will be responded to **within a 2-hour period.**  1 EDT worker is available save for on Friday evenings between 4pm and 10pm – 2 workers are on shift. | EDT |
| **VISITS** | All visits will be completed depending on risk and availability of partners.  **Visits and case notes will be written up before**  **shift end** and sent to the allocated team or Integrated Front Door if a new referral; **prior to 8.30am** the following normal working day. | EDT/partners |
| **STRATEGY MEETINGS** | It is expected that Strategy meetings are arranged out of hours, and these are fully recorded. | EDT |
| **SERVICE MANAGER** | **Service Managers cover EDT on a rota system from**:   * 5.30pm – 9am; Monday – Thursday   &   * 4.00pm – 9am, Friday – Monday.   It is expected that the SM will be available if contacted by telephone to give direction on decision making to include:   * Financial expenditure agreement   SM would need to contact the AD/DCS if advised of any of the following:   * Death of a child or serious incident * Authorisation for press release if a child has been missing more than 72 hours; in some situations, considered high risk – authorization may be requested earlier. * Decision for child to come into our care via Sec 20. | EDT/SM |
| **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/DIRECTOR** | In the following circumstances an AD/DCS needs to be notified out of hours:   * Death of a child or serious incident * Authorisation for press release if a child has been missing more than 72 hours; in some situations, considered high risk – authorization may be requested earlier. * Decision for child to come into our care. | EDT/SM/AD/DCS |

# **CHILD IN NEED**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **VISITS** | Every child or young person supported by a  Child or Young Person in Need Plan  should be visited by a Social Worker at a minimum of **every 20 working days** (unless support is being offered by CWCN hub)  They should be **seen in their home; seen alone if age appropriate and spoken to.** The child or young person’s parent should also be seen during the visit and any observations recorded. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **CHILD IN NEED MEETINGS - FREQUENCY** | If a child or young person is subject to a CIN Plan  there should be a CIN meeting **within 10 days** of the Child, Young People and Family assessment.  Thereafter, meetings should be held every **4 weeks** with attendance from family and relevant professionals. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **CHILD IN NEED MEETINGS- NOTES AND CIRCULATION** | All CIN meeting notes should be typed up and recorded within the child or young person’s file on Liquid Logic; **within 5 working days** of the meeting.  The notes must be quality assured by Team Manager/ Assistant Team Manager **within 2 working days.**  **By day 10**, notes from the meeting must be distributed to all members of the meeting to include family and professionals. All involved should be clear what the plan involved and take ownership for agreed actions. | Allocated Social Worker/Business Support |

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **REFERRAL PROCEDURE** | Referrals to the service will be reviewed **within 24 hours** by a Team Manager.  A decision will be made:   1. Accept referral. 2. Return for further information. 3. No further action – rationale will be provided to referrer. | FGC Team Manager |
| **ALLOCATION** | The family will be allocated a Family Group Conference Co-Ordinator who will meet with the referrer to clarify details. A meeting will be arranged **within 1 working week.**  Upon allocation, the FGC Co-Ordinator will add themselves as an involvement on the child’s record so that it is clear to all that they have responsibility to progress the FGC. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **CONTACT WITH THE FAMILY/SUPPORT NETWORK** | The FGC Co-Ordinator will then organize to meet with all immediate, extended family and friends if identified as support network.  First meetings will take place with those who hold Parental Responsibility for the child.  Depending on the size of the family and where they live/ work commitments etc – the aim is to have met with all relevant people and organize the conference **within 6 – 8 weeks** from the date of referral. | FGC Co-Ordinator |
| **FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE** | The location will be identified and agreed between the FGC Co-Ordinator and the family.  FGC can take anywhere between 30 minutes and 4 hours; with breaks to support the family. Food and drinks are provided and breakout zones and organized by the FGC Co-Ordinator.  The Child Social Worker should be available at the beginning to share why a FGC was requested.  They also need to be available at end the meeting to consider and review the plan made by the family.  The family write their own plan (notes of what has been agreed at their meeting); all attendees sign this, and this is shared with the FGC – Co- Ordinator who will distribute once in agreed format **within 72 hours.** | Family Group Conference Co-Ordinator |
| **REVIEW** | A review can be requested by the family or the Social Worker following the FGC; the above process would be revisited within same timescales.  If the plan is deemed to be not working by professionals or family members, then a review FGC should be convened to ask the family to review the circumstances and revise the plan. | Social Worker/Family Group Conference Co-Ordinator |
| **RECORDING** | Records of contact with the family/support network will be maintained and stored in FGC pathway on LCS. This information accessible to the FGC team and managers.  If a safeguarding concern is raised; the FGC Co-Ordinator will contact the Social Worker or Team Manager to discuss, and a case note will be added to the child’s record highlighting concern and confirming information has been passed to Social Worker/Team Manager. | Family Group Conference Co-Ordinator |

# **CHILD PROTECTION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **STRATEGY MEETINGS** | Strategy meetings must be held **within 1 working day** of the concerns being identified. If the strategy meeting is to be held the following day, for example to ensure that a particular professional is available or that those with first-hand knowledge of the child can attend, there should be evidence of safety planning in the interim.  Strategy discussions to be approved and shared with attendees and those who were invited to the meeting **within 24 hours.**  Minutes of strategy meeting to be checked and distributed **within 5 working days.** | Team Manager (Chair) |
| **SECTION 47 INVESTIGATION** | A Section 47 investigation should be concluded **within 10 working days.**  The Social Worker **should see the child within 24 hours.**  The Social Worker should endeavour to complete **most if not all the checks by day 5** when there should be discussion between the Social worker and Team Manager to analyse the information gathered during the investigation and consider what this means for the child, what needs to happen for the child; including whether to proceed to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC).  The discussion with the Team Manager should be arranged at the strategy meeting.  If it is decided that progressing to ICPC is not considered necessary, then the Social Worker should notify the Safeguarding Unit.  For children progressing to ICPC the allocated Child Protection Chair will arrange a **pre ICPC discussion at least 5 days before the date of the ICPC.** The Social Worker should ensure that they prioritise meeting with the CP Chair for this discussion.  **The child should be seen weekly** **during the child protection enquiry,** and **weekly until ICPC if this is the outcome.** | Allocated Social worker |
| **INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE REQUEST (ICPC)** | For cases progressing to ICPC the allocated Child Protection Chair will arrange a pre ICPC discussion **at least 5 days before the date of the ICPC.**  Confirmation to be provided at the conclusion of S.47 investigations | Allocated Social Worker |
| **INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE (if required)** | **Within 15 working days** of strategy meeting | Child Protection Conference Chair |
| **INVITES FOR CHILD & YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION CONFERENCE** | Child and Family invite form should be completed and returned to Safeguarding Business Support at least 10 days prior to date of ICPC.  Invites for Initial Child & Young Person Protection Conference should be sent to child/YP/family and professionals **at least 5 working days** prior to the Conference.  Review Child & Young Person Protection Conference invites should be **returned to** the Safeguarding Unit/Business Support **10 working days** prior to the Review Child \* Young People Protection Conference. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager  Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **INITIAL CHILD & YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION REPORTS** | Initial Child & Young Person Protection reports must be with the Social Worker, Team Manager **5 days** before the Conference so that the document can be quality assured.  The completed report should be with the CP Chair **3 days** before the conference.  Initial Child & Young Person Protection reports  to be shared with parent(s)/family/child or young  person (if appropriate) **3 days prior to the conference.** | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager  Allocated Social Worker |
| **SIGN OFF DECISIONS FROM CONFERENCE** | Within **1 working day** | Child Protection Conference Chair  Safeguarding Unit Business Support |
| **ICPC RECOMMENDATIONS** | ICPC recommendations must be endorsed by the Social Workers Team Manager and recorded on the child/young person’s LCS record **within 2 working days.** | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **THE FIRST CORE GROUP MEETING** | To take place **within 10 working days** of the ICPC. Decisions of core group to be shared **within 1 working day**.  Minutes to be signed off by Team Manager **within 5 working days** and circulated. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/Core group |
| **SUBSEQUENT CORE GROUP MEETINGS** | **4 weekly,**  Timescales regarding minutes and distribution as above. | Allocated Social Worker/Core Group/Safeguarding Unit Business Support |
| **CHILD PROTECTION VISITS** | Social work visits at least **Every 20 working days**. CP plan to outline any additional visits from partner agencies; **make explicit if unannounced visits form part of plan and expected frequency.** | Allocated Social Worker/Partners |
| **REVIEW CHILD, YOUNG PEOPLE PROTECTION REPORTS** | Review Child and Young People Protection reports must be with the Social Workers Team Manager **7 days** **before the review Conference** so that the document can be quality assured.  The finalised report should be with the CP Chair **5 days** before the review Conference.  Review Child & Young Person Protection reports must be shared with parent(s)/family/child or young person (if appropriate) **5 days prior to the conference.** | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/CP Chair/Safeguarding Unit Business Support |
| **CHILD/YOUNG PERSON VOICE – DIRECT WORK** | Evidence of the child or young person’s views should be always gathered to inform assessment and plans.  **Direct work** should be completed with the child or young person **prior to any initial or review conference** and the **outcome of any direct work shared with the CP Chair.** All direct work should be uploaded to Liquid Logic – documents and cross referenced within case notes. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **CHILD, YOUNG**  **PERSON & FAMILY ASSESSMENTS** | An assessment should be undertaken **when a child or young person is subject to a Child or Young Person Protection plan;** **following a significant event or change** within the child or young person’s life or circumstances or **following a re-referral.**  There should be an updated child and young person and family assessment completed **every 12 months.** See above sections on C, YP & F assessments. |  |

# **CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX NEEDS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **VISITS/ASSESSMENT** | Visits should take place **every 4 weeks** **during any assessment period as a minimum**; unless agreed at a higher frequency following a strategy meeting or if directed by a Team Manager or as part of a Child Protection Plan or CIN plan. | Allocated Key Worker/Social Worker |
| **SECTION 47** | A Section 47 investigation should be concluded **within 10 working days.**  The Social Worker **should see the child within 24 hours.**  The Social Worker should endeavour to complete **most if not all the checks by day 5** when there should be discussion between the Social worker and Team Manager to analyse the information gathered during the investigation and consider what this means for the child, what needs to happen next. |  |
| **CHILD IN NEED MEETINGS** | Child in Need meetings will take place **every 4 weeks**; save for when care packages are being reviewed and there is ongoing involvement from a Child Social Care Support worker; in which case review meetings can take place **every 6 months.** | Allocated Key Worker/Social Worker |
| **CARE PACKAGE REVIEWS - VISITING** | For children/young people allocated to a Child Social Care Family Support Worker whilst their care package is being reviewed, visits should be **12 weekly.** | Allocated Social Worker/Allocated Key Worker |
| **STATUTORY VISITS FOR CARED FOR CHILDREN** | For children who are cared for, **the first statutory visit** should take place **within 7 days.**  **6 weekly visits to take place after the first cared for review meeting.**  See cared for children section for visiting requirements for different cohorts of cared for children e.g children under 16 in unregulated provision etc. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **SHORT BREAKS** | Where children/young people have short breaks/respite; they should be visited within their respite home at least **every 6 months** (a higher frequency could be determined with the family) in addition to them being seen at home where they live.  If a child/young person benefits from short breaks for more than 72 nights per year and so are Cared for under Regulation 48, they should be visited **within 3 months of this arrangement beginning** and at subsequent intervals of no more than**6 monthly.** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILY ASSESSMENTS** | There should be a check point discussion held between the allocated Social  Worker and Team Manager at **day 10, day 25 and day 35.**  An **assessment planning meeting** involving family and key partners should take place **by day 20** to ensure that any immediate needs are being met whilst further information is being gathered.  The Child, Young People and Family assessment should be **completed by day 35; day 40** at the latest; **allowing at least 5 days** for quality assurance by a Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager allowing for any amendments, further enquiries to be advised.  Any necessary referrals should be made within this assessment period.  The child/young person should be seen and spoken to as part of the assessment. Other children of the family should also be considered, and partners consulted.  Child, Young People and Family Assessments should be updated **every 12 months** or **following a significant event in a child or young person’s life**.  If there has been a Section 47 enquiry this will trigger an earlier Child, Young People and Family assessment. | Social Worker/Team Manager |

# **PRIVATE FOSTERING**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **VISITS** | If a child or young person is deemed to be living within a private fostered arrangement the Social Worker will undertake an initial visit **within 7 days** to the home where the child or young person lives.  This will be recorded as a Regulation 8 visit. The Social Worker will  then undertake a Regulation 8 visit to the  child or young person **every 6 weeks** in the first year and then **every 12 weeks** after that. The requirement to undertake  Regulation 8 visits commences from the date of notification.  There is mandatory training to complete in respect of private fostering; to be updated **every 3 years.** | Allocated Social Worker  All |
| **ASSESSMENT** | Checks to be completed on the private foster carer, all members of the household; over 18 years and frequent visitors over 16.  The private foster carer and each member of the household should be asked to provide written consent for such  checks to be carried out.  **Follow guidance for Child, Young People and Family Assessments.**  The child/young person should be seen and spoken to as part of the assessment. Other children of the family should also be considered, and partners consulted.  Any necessary referrals should also be made within this assessment period. The assessment must be completed **within 45 days.** | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager |

# **LEGAL GATEWAY**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **PAPERWORK** | Legal Gateway paperwork must be completed by the allocated Social Worker and approved by the relevant manager in preparation for panel consideration.  Paperwork should be provided **3 days in advance** of Legal Gateway meeting. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **REVIEW AT PANEL** | Legal Gateway paperwork for review  must be completed and signed off by Senior Manager **3 days in advance** of the panel date.  If the paperwork is not received by this day/ time (Friday for a Wednesday), then there will be no review at panel. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/Service Manager |
| **URGENT CARE AND PLANNING MEETING** | If there is an **immediate risk to a child or young person and the matter cannot wait to be considered at Legal Gateway panel. An urgent meeting must be**  **convened**, this will include Assistant Director (who will chair the meeting), Service Manager, Team Manager (or Assistant Team in their absence), Social Worker, Connected  Carers Team Manager/ Assistant Team Manager, Fostering Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager, a representative from legal services and a minute taker.  Relevant paperwork must be completed urgently for this meeting. **This meeting will take place on**  **the same day**.  If it is agreed that the threshold is met to  issue Care Proceedings, then the **documents must be completed the same day or within 24 hours if agreed within the meeting.** | Assistant Director/Service Manager/Team Manager/Social Worker/Fostering SW and Manager/Legal/Minute Taker |
| **SUPERVISION ORDERS** | If a child or young person is subject to a Supervision Order, then **4 months prior** to the end of the Supervision Order **there must be Child, Young Person & Family Assessment completed to inform planning**.  Upon completion, the matter will be presented at **Legal Gateway 2 months prior to the date the Supervision Order expires** for oversight. The IRO should have sight of this document and provide their view. | Allocated Social Worker/IRO/Team Manager/Service Manager |

# **PUBLIC LAW OUTLINE – 26-WEEK PROTOCOL**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **LEGAL PLANNING MEETING** | Following agreement being given to proceed into Public Law Outline (PLO) a Legal Planning meeting must be held between the Allocated Social Worker, Team Manager/ Assistant Team Manager, and allocated solicitor. This will be held **within 7 working days of the Legal Gateway panel** and **recorded on Liquid Logic by Team Manager within 24 hours.**  It may be appropriate for the Case Progression Officer to attend. | Allocated Social Worker/ Team Manager/Solicitor |
| **PUBLIC LAW OUTLINE LETTERS** | Draft PLO letter should be prepared **2 working days prior to any legal planning**  meeting so this can be quality assured.  Sefton Legal Department should **distribute to parent(s)/carer(s) within 1 working day of the meeting (hand delivery)** | Legal Services |
| **PLO MEETING** | The PLO meeting should take place **within 7 working days** of the letter being  distributed to parent(s)/carer(s) to allow them time to obtain legal advice. | Relevant parties |
| **VIABILITY ASSESSMENT** | At the PLO meeting discussions must take place around potential alternative carers/  viability assessments.  Viability assessments should be completed by Fostering Team 2, Kinship Assessment team with input from Child Social Worker - to be completed **within 2 weeks** of details being provided (referral) following this meeting. This timescale includes allowing **3 working**  **days** for the assessment to be quality assured by Team Manager.  If the matter is being considered on an **urgent basis,** then the assessment must be completed **within the same day** and quality assured by Team Manager and if positive signed off a Service Manager. | Allocated Social Worker/Fostering Kinship Assessment Team 2/ Service Manager |
| **PARENTING ASSESSMENT** | Parenting assessments should be completed and sent to Team Manager to be quality assured **5 working days** prior to any filing date. The Team Manager will quality assure and  return to Allocated Social Worker for amendments **within 1 working day** and then send to the named solicitor **2 working days prior to the filing date.** | Allocated Key Worker/Social Worker |
| **COURT BUNDLE (INCLUDING ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,**  **INITIAL SWET STATEMENT AND CARE PLAN)** | Initial evidence should be sent to Team Manager to be **quality assured 5 working**  **days prior** to the filing date.  The Team Manager will then have **2 days to quality**  **assure** and return to Social Worker for  amendments **within 1 working day**.  Paperwork will then be sent to the named solicitor **2 working days prior to the filing date.**  If a matter is listed on an urgent basis paperwork needs to be completed **within the same day or 24 hours at the latest.**  AIM (Adoption in Merseyside) should  also be sent early notification of timetables for relevant children and young people. Monthly updates should then be  provided to AIM either by the Team  Manager or Allocated Social Worker. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/Legal Services |
| **INITIAL CASE MANAGEMENT HEARING** | Following attendance at an Initial Case  Management Hearing and once the timetable for the child or young person has been agreed; the allocated Social Worker must, **within 1 week,** request a slot with **Agency Decision Maker** **or Permanence panel** depending on the plan for the individual child or young person. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **FINAL CARE PLANNING MEETING** | This meeting should be arranged between the allocated Social Worker, Team Manager, Service Manager, IRO, Legal &  Either:  AIM  Cared for Children team  Fostering Team 4, Kinship Support team  depending on the plan for the child/ young person.  This final care planning meeting should be **held 1 week prior** to the filing date of the assessment and must be **recorded on Liquid Logic by the Service Manager within 24 hours.**  IRO ratification should be sought and recorded prior to this. This would constitute a **significant event to be updated within the chronology.**  If the plan is for the child or young person to be returned to their parents  care or cared for by family members then a  family group conference should be considered well in advance to identify support to be factored into any final care plan. | Relevant parties  Family Group Conferencing Team |
| **PARENTING ASSESSMENTS/ PAMS/TOGETHER OR A**  **PART ASSESSMENTS** | Assessments should be sent to Team Manager to quality **assure 5 working days prior** to the filing date.  The Team Manager will then have **2 days too quality assure** and return to the Allocated Key Worker for amendments **within 1 working day.**  The final assessment should besent to the named solicitor 2 **working days prior to the filing date.** | Allocated Key Worker/Social  Worker/Team Manager |
| **CHILD & YOUNG**  **PERSON**  **PERMANANCE REPORTS (CPR)** | CPR permanence reports should be sent to Team Manager/named supervisor who is  qualified under Adoption Regulations to quality assure the CPR **5 working days prior to the filing date.** | Qualified and experienced Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **AGENCY DECISION MAKER (ADM)** | The CPR report and all assessments  must be sent to Agency Decision maker for consideration and approval; **7 days prior** ADM date. | Allocated Social Worker/ADM |
| **FINAL EVIDENCE** | Final evidence should be sent to Team Manager to be quality assure **5 working**  **days prior to the filing date.**  The Team Manager will then have **2 days to quality assurance** and return to the Social Worker for  amendments within **1 working day.** Final evidence will then be sent to the named solicitor **2 working days** prior to the filing date.  Legal Services should be notified well in advance if there is good reason for late filing of evidence so that the court can be notified. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/Legal Services |

# **CARED FOR CHILDREN (across all Childrens Services)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **WHEN A CHILD OR YOUNG**  **PERSON INITIALLY BECOMES CARED FOR** | Upon it being agreed by a Senior Manager either via Section 20 or a Court Order, a **Becoming Looked After** Form needs to be completed within Liquid Logic.  This should be completed the same day or **within 24 hours** of the child coming into our care and must be signed by a Team Manager.  This form must include details of the carer(s) who will be responsible for caring for the child/young person. | Social Worker/Team Manager/Service Manager |
| **NOTIFYING OTHERS THAT A CHILD HAS BECOME CARED FOR** | Other professionals involved with the child/family should be updated and notified of any change to care arrangements **within 24 hours; no more than 2 working days.**  If the young person is being cared for out of borough, the host authority must be notified that a Sefton cared for child is residing within their area. This should be done **within one working day using the proper notification form.**  Placed at distance paperwork should also be completed and uploaded into documents **(ideally prior to the move but no later than 2 working days).** | Allocated Social Worker /Business Support |
| **FIRST CONTACT WITH THE CHILD/FAMILY** | The Allocated Social Worker will be expected to make contact via telephone within **48 hours and complete a statutory visit within 7 days of the child becoming cared for.** The child’s record file should be considered prior to the visit. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **STATUTORY VISITS** | For children who are cared for, the first statutory visit should take place **within 7 days.**  Thereafter, statutory visits should take place at a minimum of **every 6 weeks** unless specified otherwise; after the first cared for review meeting. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **VISITS - CHILDREN PLACED WITH PARENTS** | Visits **weekly** until first Cared for review then **4 weekly** thereafter. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **VISITS - CHILDREN with PLANS (PLACED) FOR ADOPTION** | Visits **weekly** until first Cared for review then **4 weekly** thereafter. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **VISITS - CHILDREN PLACED UNDER REGULATION 24** | Visits **weekly** until first Cared for review then **4 weekly** thereafter. | Allocated Social worker |
| **VISITS - CHILDREN IN UNREGULATED SETTINGS** | All children **under 16 to be visited weekly.** Unless stated otherwise in the unregulated risk assessment.  **Any child over 16 who is living in an unregulated home, but we deem them to require care rather than support should be visited weekly.**  **Any child over 16** who is in an unregulated home who we deem to require **support** as opposed to care should be visited 4 weekly unless stipulated differently in their unregulated risk assessment. | Allocated Social worker |
| **VISITS - CHILDREN IN LONG TERM STABLE HOMES** | For children living in stable homes, after 12 months and once ratified at a Cared for Children’s Review and Permanence Panel, visits can reduce to **every 12 weeks.**  For children who are living in their long-term home until they reach 18 years following consent from the child/young person and ratified at a Cared for Children’s review and Permanence Panel, visits can reduce to **every 26 weeks**.  Following any change in circumstance, concern, or instability any reduced visiting frequency should be **reviewed and** **consideration** given to increased frequency; any decision in respect of this must be recorded as management oversight or within supervision and detail included within the case summary. |  |
| **MISSING** | When there is a concern that a child or young person is missing; their carer should report them missing to the police.  Following a missing episode, all children/young people should be offered a **return interview within 72 hours.** This should be recorded on agreed template with their views included. New My Space team will take lead on missing interviews. | My Space Team |
| **INITIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND CONSENT** | The completed Becoming Looked After Form will trigger an alert to the **Initial Health Assessment** team. To be requested **within 5 working days of** the child becoming cared for.  The Initial Health Assessment (IHA) must be completed **within 20 days.**  To be recorded and available for the first review.  **Reviewed every 6 months for children under 5.**  **Reviewed annually for children over 5.**  If a young person is refusing to give consent for a medical, this is to be **recorded on their record within 24 hours.** | Allocated Social Worker/Business Support/  Designated Nurse |
| **INFORMATION FOR FOSTER CARER/PROVIDER** | Upon a child/young person moving to a foster carer/residential or other provider, the **Placement Information form** must be completed and provided to the carer along with:   * Guidance around the IHA * Care plan for child/young person * Signed medical consent.   This information must be provided **before or at the time of placing the child/young person.**  **If a child/young person care arrangements change out of hours, EDT must undertake the above.** | Allocated Social Worker  EDT |
| **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** | Should be completed with parents when children come into our care.  If this is not possible/appropriate, then **within 3 days/ at the time of the Placement Planning meeting which should occur within 72 hours.**  A copy needs to be provided to the foster carer(s) and saved  within the child or young person’s file. | Parent/ Allocated Social Worker |
| **PLACEMENT MEETING** | **Within 72 hours** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **PHOTOGRAPH OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON** | A photograph should be obtained and added to Liquid Logic **within 1 week** of a child/young person coming into our care. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **LIFE JOURNEY WORK** | When a child/young person becomes cared for, they should be provided with a memory box to keep any special or personal belongings safe. This will most likely be provided to their carer depending on their age.  **An “About Me” booklet should be completed with every cared for child** to give opportunity to talk about themselves and provide a basic understanding of their life so far and opportunity to ask questions. This direct work tool should be **revisited with the child/young person at least every 6 months.**  The “About Me” book can be used to get to know children and young people; record memories from of a point in time; gain feedback from others to form part of more detailed life journey work and support transitions.  Practitioners should ask to see the child’s memory box **periodically during their involvement** to ensure information is being safely stored, collected and so they can contribute to it. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **INFORMATiON FOR FOSTER CARERS/PROVIDERS AROUND LIFE JOURNEY WORK** | Carers should be provided with guidance around life journey work as part of their ongoing training and development and be encouraged by their Supervising Social Worker to safely gather and retain information. | Allocated Social Worker/Supervising Social Worker/Training Officer |
| **CARE PLANNING MEETINGS** | If a child or young person is cared for, there should be a care planning **held in between their first and second review** meeting and thereafter at a minimum of **every 8 weeks.**  Once a child or young person’s permanence plan has been ratified at their review and via Permanence Panel  then care planning meetings can take **every 12 weeks.**  All meeting minutes should be typed up and recorded within the child or young person’s file on Liquid Logic within **7 working days** of the meeting.  The minutes must then be quality assured by the Team Manager/Assistant Team manager within **2 working days** and by **day 10** be distributed to all members of the meeting including professionals and family. | Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager/Business Support/IRO |
| **CARED FOR CHILDREN REVIEW REPORTS** | Cared for children review reports must be with the Independent Review Officer (IRO) **3 days** before the planned review meeting. The Team Manager  should be given the report **7 days** before the meeting to allow **2 days** for it to be quality assured.  Cared for Children review reports must be shared with parent(s) family/child/ young person (if appropriate) **5 days** prior to the review meeting. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS** | Request within **5 working days** of the child.  /Young person coming into our care.  **To be completed within 20 days.**  Use electronic PEP on Welfare Call for updating. All Social Workers and Managers have access to this. | Allocated Social Worker/Virtual School Support |
| **PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN MEETINGS (PEP)** | Carry out **termly PEP meeting** and ensure that the targets for education meet the child’s needs. PEP meeting to be set up with designated teacher, pupil (if possible), parents or carers, Virtual School rep. **PEP meetings should take place in the Autumn, Spring and Summer term – they are an important part of care planning.** The child’s voice should be front and central**.** | Allocated Social Worker/Virtual School Support/Relevant Parties |
| **MEETING DEADLINES FOR SCHOOL APPLICATIONS** | As Corporate Parents, be aware of council deadlines for school applications when children are entering school at age 4/5 years and when transitioning between years 6 – 7. Consider Ofsted feedback and consult with Virtual School. **Always aim high for good or outstanding** schools for our children. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **STRENGTHS AND DIFFICULTIES QUESTIONNAIRE (SDQ)** | Ensure a SDQ is carried out **by 2nd Cared for review meeting then annually thereafter** and recorded on the PEP.  Any professional associated with the child/young person can complete this. For example, the Designated Nurse for Cared for Children may complete this alongside the IHA (Individual Health assessment). | Appropriate person |
| **DENTAL CHECKS** | All Cared for Children should attend for a dental check **at least annually.** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **SUPERVISION** | All Cared for Children should be discussed within **formal supervision each month**; save for children being cared for in long term stable home with **agreed visiting frequencies of 12 or 26 weeks – Supervision can then be bimonthly.** | Allocated Social Worker |
| **PLACED WITH PARENTS (PWP)** | If a court orders PWP following a Sec 38 (6), and this was not in line with the LA care plan, there must be a full parenting assessment completed outlining how the LA will mitigate against the risks identified.  The LA must **within 28 days** of the hearing that imposed the 38 (6) prepare **Case Management Decision Document** (CMD) which must in **all** circumstances be consider and **signed off by an Assistant Director**.  The CMD document should be detailed, include thorough risk assessment, assessment of the child and parent’s needs. Family history, a parental capacity, employment, health, household composition, family environment and neighbourhood and community support/resources must also be considered.  **The child, their parents, significant family, and multi-agency professionals must also be consulted** as part of the assessment process and their views included in the CMD document.  The CMD must outline how the placement will meet the childs need given it has been proven that the threshold for significant harm has been met - as set out in the Placement of a Child in Care with a Parent Regulations (2010) (Regulation 17).  Partner agencies must be made aware that the child has been placed with their parents against the advice of the LA; that risk oversight will continue to be imperative.  When children are formally “placed with their parents”, they **must be visited within the first week**; then **weekly until their first cared for review meeting**.  Thereafter, a minimum of **monthly visiting bearing in mind significant harm has been established.**  Visiting frequency should always be reviewed following concern or allegations. |  |

# **CARED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM 14 YRS (within Help & Protect, Cared For, Social Work Academy, Young Persons Team)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **VISITS** | Where relevant, as part of the transfer process a joint visit between the Childs Social Worker and new Young Persons Social Worker will be agreed to support the young person.  Visits will take place in accordance with statutory requirements and be undertaken by the child’s social worker. See cared for children section for varying cohorts of cared for children. | Allocated Social Workers |
| **CARE PLANNING MEETINGS** | Should take place in **between the first review and the second review** and **thereafter 8 weekly as per cared for children.**  Additional care planning meetings can be arranged if required. | Allocated Social Worker/IRO |
| **PATHWAY ASSESSMENTS /PLANS** | An **initial Pathway Plan Part** One (Assessment of Need) should commence when a child or young person  reaches the age of **15 years**  **and 9 months.** The assessment should be completed **no later than three months after the young person’s 16th birthday.**  The **Pathway Plan (Part 2)** should be **developed immediately following completion of Part One** and should be developed with regular input from the young person; to be **reviewed** **at least every 6 months.**  The Pathway Plan should be sent to the Team Manager **2 working days before** the date the assessment is due for consideration, comment, and quality assurance.  **Pathway Plan Part One should be updated on an annual basis** thereafter at **16 yrs and 9 months** and again at **17 yrs and 9 months** to ensure the final Pathway Plan Part 2 is based on an accurate assessment of need.  The **annual completion of Pathway Plan** Part One’s **will now negate the necessity for an annual C&F assessment** to be undertaken – unless good reason for this e.g reunification plan. | Allocated Social Worker |

# **CARE EXPERIENCED TEAM**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **ALLOCATION** | **Personal Advisers** will be co-allocated to young people supported by the cared for children’s teams **when the young person reaches the age of 16 yrs.**  The PA is allocated. Social Worker, Team Manager and IRO notified. Young Person’s record is updated to show involvements.  A Planning meeting is held with the Social Worker, Personal Adviser, and respective Team Managers w**ithin 2 weeks**, to discuss roles, responsibilities, and tasks.  Joint introductory visit by SW and PA arranged **within 4 weeks.** Date should be recorded.  Personal Advisers will visit young people **8 weekly.** Their role is to build a relationship with the young person and to coordinate the completion of the Resettlement Passport. Personal Advisers should ensure evidence of the **development of independent living skills are regularly uploaded** on to the young person’s file at a **minimum of 8 weekly intervals.** | Allocated Personal Adviser/Allocated Social Worker/Team Manager |
| **ASSESSMENTS** | At age **15 and 9 months** a Pathway Plan Part One (Assessment of Need) is initiated and undertaken by the Social Worker.  The young person should also be supported to apply for their National Insurance number at this time. The Social Worker also needs to ensure that all key identification documents are in place including Passport, Birth Certificate and that the young person has a bank account. The young person should also be supported to register for Property Pool Plus.  It is essential that the Pathway Plan Part One (Assessment of Need) is undertaken in partnership and involves consultation with all parties (parents, carers, teachers, health professionals, Personal Adviser, and advocate) and **most importantly in partnership with the young person.**  The Pathway Plan (Assessment of Need) along with any additional information is then used to develop the initial Pathway Plan.  At age **15yrs and 9 months,** the Allocated Social Worker completes the assessment of need and Pathway Plan (part 1/part 2) are completed. This remains a fluid document subject to the care planning and review process.  **From age 18yrs, full case responsibility transfers to the Care Experienced Team and the Personal Adviser.**  At age **15yrs and 9 months** the Allocated Social Worker completes the assessment of need and Pathway Plan (part 1/part 2) are completed. This remains a fluid document subject to care planning and review process.  **From age 18yrs, responsibility transfers to the Care Experienced Team and Personal Adviser.** | Allocated Social Worker  /Personal Adviser |
| **NEXT STEPS PANEL** | All young people should be heard at Next Steps Panel at **no later than 3 months following their 16th birthday.**  Minutes and recommendations are recorded by the Panel administrator and will be recorded within ‘Episodes’ within Liquid Logic.  The Social Worker with oversight from the Team Manager will ensure the actions are progressed and updates provided to Panel. Progress from actions made at panel should be reviewed in supervision and at subsequent Cared for Reviews.  The PA will attend Next Steps Panel to provide updates on progress with preparation for independence activities and the completion of the Resettlement Passport. | Allocated Social Worker |
| **PATHWAY PLANS** | For young people aged 16 and 17 years the Pathway Plan is the responsibility of the young person’s Social Worker.  It is written, updated, and reviewed as per the Cared for Review cycle and **as a minimum, 6 monthly**. The Pathway Plan should be started at **15 years 9 months.**  For 16 and 17-year-olds, as part of the pathway planning process, the PA will support the YP and their carers in developing skills for independent living and adulthood.  This will be undertaken using the resettlement passport tool and progress is monitored via the assessment of need and Pathway Plan.  A **Pathway Plan Part One** (Assessment of Need) should initially be completed **no later than 3 months** **after a young person’s 16th birthday**, however it is best practice to start this at **15 years and 9 months**.  Swift completion of the tasks to complete Pathway Plans 1 and 2 is strongly required to prevent future issues within the Cared for Review process.  Pathway Plans Part One (Assessment of Need) **should now routinely be completed annually,** just prior to a young person’s respective 16th, 17th, and 18th birthdays (at approx. 15 yrs 9 months, 16 yrs 9 months and 17 yrs 9 months).  This ensures that Pathway Plan Part Two remains relevant, up to date and is reflective of current need and circumstance. This is particularly important at 17yrs 9 months to ensure a smooth transition to leaving care.  As Pathway Plan Part One will now be completed annually, **there is no longer a practice standard to undertake an annual C&F assessment for young people aged 16 and above.** A Pathway Plan Part One should also be manually started should a young person experience a significant event or change in circumstances.  C&F assessments will only remain relevant for 16 and 17 year olds who are Placed with their Parents or are seeking a plan of reunification or perhaps may be young parents themselves.  The PA will take over responsibility for the Pathway Plan and pathway planning tasks once the young person turns 18. The plan is **reviewed 6 monthly** by the PA and Team Manager. PA’s will ensure liaison with all parties involved in the young person’s support/network **with their consent.**  Additional reviews will be convened to ensure plans address changes in circumstances or needs.  For young people in custody, it is good practice to carry out a review of the Pathway Plan **at least one month before release** to give enough time for pre- release planning. | Allocated Social Worker  Personal Adviser  Allocated Personal Adviser  Allocated Personal Adviser  Allocated Personal Adviser |
| **VISITING** | For young people 16/17 years, Visits will take place in accordance with statutory requirements and be undertaken by the child’s social worker. See cared for children section.  Between the age of 16 and 17yrs, PA’s will visit a **minimum of 8 weekly.**  For young people 18 plus, visits will take place **as a minimum every 2 months** or when requested by the young person.  PA’s will consider the level of vulnerability of care experienced young people when determining the nature and frequency for maintaining contact.  This means making a link between  *Vulnerability, Visits, and the Plan’*.  PA’s will also take a professionally curious approach to their duties to maintain contact with care experienced young people.  When a young person moves to new accommodation, the PA must see them at that accommodation **within 5 working days of the move.**  Where a young person aged 18 -21 refuses to engage with their PA and says they do not want to receive a service, this can be for a variety of reasons, and these should be considered to explore the best approach. It may be that that the young person is very settled and independent and feels they need very minimal support, or it could be they have difficulty building trust. Whatever the reason we have a **statutory duty to keep in touch with young people until they are 21** **and attempt to visit every 8 weeks.** Whilst we cannot force a young person to see their PA, every attempt should be made to engage with that young person, build a relationship and keep in touch.  PA’s will discuss young people’s circumstances with their line manager to explore different approaches and ensure management oversight. | Allocated Personal Adviser |
| **SUPERVISION** | Personal Advisers will receive supervision as a minimum - bi monthly. There is an expectation that all young adults supported by the PA will be considered as part of this supervision at least every 2 months. |  |

# **FOSTERING SERVICE**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **INITIAL ENQUIRY** | Fostering enquiries are received via expression of interest, via email and telephone. Enquiries are responded to **within 24 hours** via a telephone call from the Fostering Service. | Marketing and Publicity Officers/Placement Support Workers – 0verseen by Team Manager – Recruitment & Assessment |
| **INITIAL VISIT** | An initial visit will be undertaken **within 5 working days** of the initial telephone contact.  The initial visit will be  written up and provided to the Team Manager **within 2 working days** so the document can quality assured and approved for a decision to be made to move to the next stage. | Marketing and Publicity Officers/Placement Support Workers – 0verseen by Team Manager – Recruitment & Assessment |
| **ALLOCATION FOR ASSESSMENT** | Following a successful enquiry, the applicant(s) will be allocated an Assessing  Social Worker **within 3 working days,** written to and invited to sign a Stage 1 agreement. | Team Manager- Recruitment and Assessment |
| **ALLOCATION NOTE** | Team Manager will add an allocation note **within 1 working day;** with clear timescales for completion of assessment to include any proposed panel dates. | Team Manager- Recruitment and Assessment |
| **LETTER TO APPLICANTS** | Allocated Assessing Social Worker will set out in a letter to the applicants proposed visit dates and timescales to complete the assessment.  A case note should be added and copied to the Panel Administrator who will add the completion date to forecast Fostering Panel attendance. | Allocated Assessing Social Worker/Panel Administrator |
| **FIRST ASSESSMENT VIIST** | A visit will be undertaken to the applicants by the Allocated Assessing Social Worker **within 1 week of allocation.**  Case notes should be updated **within 2 working days. Every assessment visit should be recorded in full within case notes;** not to be saved in a word document to create an assessment at the end. | Allocated Assessing Social Worker |
| **STAGE 1 ASSESSMENT** | The assessment of prospective foster carers will be a 2 Stage process with **Stage 1 timescale being up to 3 months** **and Stage 2 being up to 3 months**. (6 months in total).  Stage 1 focuses on basic information gathering, collection of checks and references which should be frontloaded to ensure timely completion to inform the assessment.  At the end of Stage 1, all information collected will be considered by the Team Manager together with the Assessing Social Worker and a decision will be made as to whether the assessment can progress to Stage 2.  A case note will be added with clear rationale within **2 working days;** tagged to the Panel Administrator for information.  If applicants are not considered suitable following Stage 1 enquiries; a letter confirming the outcome will be sent to the applicant no more than **10 working days** after all stage 1 information has been received.  The applicants can access Sefton Complaints process if they feel they have been treated unfairly. | Placement Support Workers will assist with checks.  Supervising Social Worker |
| **SKILLS TO FOSTER TRAINING** | Applicants can begin to access skills to foster training at the latter stage of Stage 2. | Fostering Training & Development Officer |
| **STAGE 2 ASSESSMENT** | At the end of Stage 1, all information collected will be considered by the Team Manager together with the Assessing Social Worker and if a decision is made to progress to Stage 2; this will be recorded within case notes **within 2 working days** of the decision.  The above case note will include clear rationale, clarifying likely timescales for presentation to Fostering Panel. The Panel Administrator will be tagged into the case note to assist with panel planning.  Completion of skills to foster training and any associated home tasks will be progressed during Stage 2.  All assessment sessions should be written up in full **within 2 working days; maximum 5 working days** of the visit and recorded within LCS; not on a word document.  A **midway review meeting (reflective supervisory session)** is held halfway through the Stage 2 process between the Assessing  Social Worker and their Team Manager to consider how the assessment is progressing and any additional work that required.  The full fostering assessment should be completed **within 6 months** (maximum) and presented to Fostering Panel with ADM decision **within 8 months.**  The completed report and appendices must be with the Assessing Social Workers line manager **4 weeks before the panel** date  to allow for quality assurance and authorization by their line Manager.  The authorised report and appendices must be with the **Panel Advisor 10 working days before the panel date** for further pre- panel quality assurance.  The completed panel pack should be uploaded via SharePoint **5 days** before panel. | Allocated Assessing Social Worker/Team Manager/Fostering Panel Advisor |
| **FOSTERING ASSESSMENT** | The completed report and appendices must be with the Assessing Social Workers line Manager **4 weeks before the panel** date  for quality assurance and authorisation. The applicants should have had opportunity to discuss the assessment in detail and make comments.  The full assessment should be shared with the Panel Advisor **10 working days** before the panel for further quality assurance.  The Panel Advisor will share the authorized assessment with the Panel Administrator who is required to circulate the completed, authorized assessment to Fostering Panel members **at least 5 working days** before panel meets.  After the assessment has been quality assured and approved by the Team Manager and Panel Advisor; the assessment must be shared with the applicants **at least 3 working days** before the Fostering Panel date. | Assessing Social Worker/Team Manager/Fostering Panel Advisor/Panel Administrator |
| **CONCERNS AROUND SUITABILITY TO FOSTER AT STAGE 2** | If at any time during Stage 2; there are concerns about the applicant’s suitability to foster, then a brief report will be written by the Assessing Social worker and presented to Fostering Panel.  The applicants will be provided with a copy and invited to attend panel.  If the Fostering Panel and Agency Decision Maker (ADM) decide that the applicants are unsuitable; the applicants have the right to make representations to the panel or to use the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) if they feel they have been treated unfairly.  Any approach to the IRM should be **within 28 days** of the ADM decision which should be in writing; **within 5 working days** of the panel. | Assessing Social Worker  Fostering Panel/Agency Decision Maker |
| **APPROVAL OF FOSTER CARER** | The Fostering Panel is responsible for considering fostering assessments and making recommendations to the local authority in respect of approval. The Agency Decision Maker will make the final decision.  Following a positive recommendation from panel; the ADM is expected to decide **within 7 days working** days of receipt of the approved panel minutes. A letter must be sent to the applicants **within 7 working days.**  A verbal confirmation via telephone can be shared in advance of the letter if appropriate.  If the ADM decision is not to approve; and the applicants disagree with the decision the applicants must put this in writing **within 28 days.** They can put their views in writing to the Fostering Service for reconsideration or make a representation directly to the IRM.  IRM procedures will provide more information.  The Panel Administrator should record on the relevant child’s file **following ADM decision if a connected carer has been approved; date and approval terms.** | Fostering Panel  Agency Decision Maker |
| **SET UP OF FOSTER CARER** | On initial approval, new foster carers should be mailed a guide on how to set themselves up as supplier to the Council.  The foster carer completes an online account form and they receive a reference number which they then send to the Team Manager.  The Team Manager completes a controcc form on the carers LCS record which instructs finance to set them up on the system to receive payments.  At the same time, the Team Manager will also send the carer a link to register for the provider portal to claim mileage, view payment remittances etc.  Foster Carers will be supported in doing this by the Assessing Social Worker. | Team Manager- Recruitment & Assessment/ Mainstream Foster Carer/Business Support  Team Manager- Kinship Assessment/Kinship foster carer/Business Support |
| **TRANSFER TO A SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKER** | Post approval, the foster carers file should be updated, to include case summary to support smooth transfer to the relevant support team.  A copy of the fostering assessment must be uploaded to the documents before transfer to the relevant team:  Fostering Team 3 Mainstream Support, Supervision & Review  Or  Fostering Team 4 – Kinship, Special Guardianship Support, Supervision & Review & Post Adoption Support  A date for a transfer meeting should be agreed within **14 working days of the ADM decision.**  The transfer checklist should be considered and completed on the foster carers record. | Assessing Social Worker/Team Manager Recruitment or Team Manager Kinship Assessment |
| **ALLOCATION TO A SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKER (MAINSTREAM OR KINSHIP)** | Allocation to a Supervising Social Worker must take place **within 14 working days** of the new team receiving transfer.  A letter will be sent to all newly approved foster carers advising them of their allocated Supervisory Social Worker; to welcome them on board and set out dates and time of planned supervisory visits over the next 12 months.  A welcome pack will also be sent. Beautiful welcome cards are available to greet carers; made by children who Sefton care for. | Allocated Supervisory Social Worker |
| **FIRST SUPERVISORY VISIT POST APPROVAL** | This **introductory visit should take place within 14 days of transfer.**  During this visit, suggested supervisory visit dates should be confirmed or altered to suit carer.  Foster Carers should be provided with the following:   * Link to Trix for policies and procedures * Foster Carer Agreement * Secure pen drive (if they have a compatible device) * Secure black box   Before any child or young person joins the fostering household; the Supervising Social Worker must ensure the following is in place:   * Pet assessment * Safe caring policy for their household * Health and Safety Checklist * Smoking policy * Child’s Placement Plan | Allocated Supervisory Social Worker |
| **SUPERVISORY VISITS** | A letter will be sent to all newly approved foster carers advising them of their allocated supervisory social worker to welcome them on board and set out dates and times of planned supervisory visits over the first 12 months.  These should take place at intervals throughout the year; there should be a **minimum of 6 supervisory visits.** All visits should be recorded using the supervisory visit recording template held within liquid logic; recorded **within 2 working days.**  Support visits will be held in between; as and when required and be recorded in a case note.  A copy of the recorded supervisory visit should be provided to the carer(s) **within 5 working days** of the visit taking place for oversight and signature.  Approved carers should be present for supervisory visits which should be face to face at the foster carers home.  If during a visit, the Supervising Social Worker engages with the child(ren) or notes any observations, these should be recorded on the child’s file and the Child’s Social Worker copied in. | Allocated Supervisory Social Worker |
| **FOSTER CARER ANNUAL REVIEWS** | All foster carers will have a foster carer review **within 12 months** of the last foster  care review; or for newly approved foster carers  **within 12 months of their approval; earlier if Panel/ADM advise.**  Annual reviews will be chaired by the Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (FIRO) or where there is no FIRO, the Team Manager.  Paperwork for this review includes a report from the Allocated Supervising Social Worker, feedback from foster carers, feedback from any cared for children and young people who are living with the carers or those who have lived with the carers over the review period, reports from children, young people’s social workers and any other professionals involved e.g., IRO, school.  Additional paperwork may include updated family and individual safe caring policies, home safety checklists, pet assessments, fire safety plans, caravan safety plans, smoking agreements, and Personal Development Plans.  Feedback forms should be sent to relevant people **8 weeks before** the planned review date to gain as much rich feedback as possible.  All completed review reports should be provided to the carers at least **3 days before** the review meeting.  The Supervising Social Worker will need to complete the foster carers review documentation well in advance to provide to their Team Manager for quality assurance and oversight **3 weeks** before the review date.  Finalised review documentation should be provided to the Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (FIRO) **2 weeks** before the planned review date to allow for quality assurance, oversight, and review planning.  Copies of review documentation should be made available to the Panel Advisor at the same time if a first review or if a review has been convened following an allegation or change of circumstances which will require oversight from Fostering Panel.  **For reviews that are not required to be presented to Fostering Panel, following the review taking place, the FIRO, or if there is no FIRO, the Team Manager, should alert the ADM that the review has been completed for the ADM to make a final decision** on suitability.  The ADM will record his/her decision on the foster carer record and alert the Team Manager and Supervising Social Worker. | Allocated Supervisory Social Worker, with Team Manager oversight |
| **FOSTERING PANEL - REVIEWS** | Foster carers will have their **first annual review presented to fostering panel** to consider how their first year of fostering has progressed and consider their continued registration.  Foster carers will attend panel following an allegation. Concerns relating to standards of care may result in presentation to fostering panel.  This will be considered on an individual basis.  All foster carer reviews presented to Fostering Panel are shared with the ADM for oversight and final decision.  Panel recommendations and minutes are provided to the ADM for their decision which should be made **within 7 working days following receipt of final approved minutes.**  Social workers will orally inform foster carers of the agency decision **within 2 working days** of the decision being made. The Agency Decision Maker will write to the carers confirming his decision **within 7 working days**.  Fostering Panel Administrator will record on the foster carer case note and the ADM tab on LCS, the outcome of any Fostering Panel; **cross referencing on the child/young person case file so relevant parties are advised.**  **Records should be updated within 2 working days** of the panel taking place. | Allocated Supervisory Social Worker |
| **UNANNOUNCED VISITS** | Unannounced visits are completed at a **minimum of twice yearly.** These should be written up on Liquid Logic within **2 working days,** using the appropriate supervisory visit template.  Unannounced visit reports should be recorded and provided to foster carers  **within 4 weeks** for oversight and signatures. Copies of any unannounced reports should be held within the foster carers record. **Childrens bedrooms should be seen during the visit and children spoken to/observations recorded.** | Allocated Supervisory Social Worker with Team Manager Oversight |
| **DBS AND MEDICAL CHECKS** | All foster carers and adults in the household are required to have up to date DBS checks, which should be reviewed/ **updated within 3 years of**  **check**.  **DBS checks** on foster carers and adult household members **must not be allowed to lapse but where this occurs, a risk assessment will need to be undertaken** by the Supervising Social Worker and authorised by the Team Manager.  This will include the arrangements to oversee the placement(s) while awaiting the DBS check.  No new children should be placed while a foster carer’s DBS remains outstanding.  All foster carers (not other adults in the household) are required to have medical checks as part of their initial assessment to inform their approval. As a minimum, these **medical checks are reviewed and** **updated every 5 years** of the initial check but will take place earlier if a significant health issue arises.  **Adult household members aged 18 and over will require a DBS check.**  **Members of the foster carers support network should also have a DBS check.** |  |
| **VISITS WHEN NEW CHILDREN JOIN THE FOSTERING HOUSEHOLD** | **Within 1 working day** of a child being placed, the Supervising Social Worker will visit. The Supervising Social Worker has a responsibility to ensure the foster carer has all relevant information about the children to include Placement Plan, consent to medical treatment and delegated responsibility.  **Where this information is missing, the Supervising Social Worker should escalate this to the child’s Social Worker. his/her Team Manager and the IRO.**  **A 28-day visit** is also expected. | Allocated Supervising Social worker |
| **NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** | Foster carers should make their Supervising Social Worker and the child’s social worker aware of the concern/incident at the earliest opportunity via a telephone call and as a minimum **within 1 working day**. Foster carers must also e-mail a completed significant incident/event form to the child’s social worker, supervising social worker and fostering duty ([FC.Support@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:FC.Support@sefton.gov.uk)).  If the Supervising Social Worker is not available, they must phone fostering duty and make them aware of the incident.  The Supervising Social Worker (if available) or fostering duty will bring the incident to the attention of the Supervising Social Worker and Team Manager and ensure the incident is recorded on the foster carer record on LCS and added to the Schedule 6 notifications spreadsheet held by the Fostering Service.  The Team Manager will decide on the course of action to be taken and record a management decision/direction on the foster carer record and the Schedule 6 notifications spreadsheet held by the fostering service, highlighting the action to be taken.  The Team Manager will make a judgement on whether the fostering service manager needs to be immediately notified. | Supervising Social Worker/Foster Carers/Team Managers/Fostering duty |

# **YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** | **Lead** |
| **INTERVENTIONS ARE TIME BOUND** | **Community Resolution** (approx. 3 months, non-statutory and out of court disposal.  **Youth Caution** –single session  **Youth Conditional Caution** – 3-month intervention  **Referral Order** – between 3mnths and 12mths determined by the courts.  **Youth Rehabilitation Order** – up to 3 years with various time set elements to it.  **Youth Rehabilitation Order with Intensive Surveillance and Supervision** – YRO contains up to a 180-day intensive element e.g., curfew, electronic monitoring. Minimum 25hrs per week has been removed however YJS’s can determine up to 25hrs contact per week if necessary. | Allocated Delivery Worker or Case Manager  Case Manager  Case Manager  Case Manager  Case Manager  Case Manager (in consultation with Operations Manager) |
| **SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS** | **When** |  |
| **ASSESSMENTS** | **Out of Court** – initial contact **within 5 days** of allocation, assessment, submission, and QA with countersignature - **15 days**  **Statutory Court** – initial contact **within 5 days** of allocation, assessment submission with QA and countersignature – **15 days**  **20 working days** from assessment for child to attend Referral Order Pane  l  **Statutory re-assessment every 3 months** – or sooner with a change of circumstances including further arrest. | Delivery Worker or Case Manager  Case Manager  Case Manager  Case Manager |
| **SEEING CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE** | Standards for Children in Youth Justice System - set frequency for seeing children and young people is variable depending on order but can be numerous times per week, weekly, fortnightly etc and can change. **Always consider detail within order.** | Case Manager (in consultation with Operations Manager) |
| **CUSTODY – NOTIFYING PARENTS/CARERS** | Notify parents/carers that child is in the secure estate and specify where **within 24hrs** – likewise for a change in home setting. | Allocated Youth Justice Service Case Manager |
| **CUSTODY WHERE THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON IS ALREADY CARED FOR** | An allocated social worker to visit child/young person **within 5 days** (**usually joint visit with** YJS Case Manager as same 5 day rule applies)  Social Worker to remain in contact and provide support during the custodial sentence and support resettlement arrangement for release.  **Release arrangements made at least 6 months in advance** of release date. If shorter sentence release planning commences at the beginning of custodial arrangements. | Allocated Social Worker/ Youth Justice Service Case Manager |
| **SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS** | Victims are contacted and offered the opportunity to engage directly or indirectly with Restorative Justice Process and are kept informed about the progress of the case and are notified when the intervention has concluded.  A timescale is not specified but the service contacts victims promptly once the case is allocated. | Victims and Restorative Justice Officer |