

Swindon Children's Services Scheme of Delegation: updated September 2025

Introduction

This internal scheme of delegation has been authorised by the Corporate Director of Children's Services to ensure that statutory responsibility and decision-making is delegated to the appropriately qualified professional.

A scheme of delegation is required to ensure that people with the right level of experience and accountability make the right decisions, at the right time, for the children that we are responsible for. It covers those decisions within Children's Services, which are particularly critical in determining what actions are to be taken by the Council to promote the welfare of individual children and their families. The scheme also covers core issues of financial delegation.

The scheme does not cover all eventualities and where furthermore detailed information is required, staff must consult specific policies and guidance documents or consider the matter further with their manager.

The scheme of delegation is intended to place the decision making as close to the front line as is consistent with national guidance and regulation and consideration of good practice, while maintaining accountability and safe decision making.

Review Schedule

The scheme is to be reviewed at least annually.

Reference Number	Area of Work	Legislation, Regulation or Guidance Reference	Authorised Officer
REFERRAL, ASSESSMENT, CASE CLOSURE			
1	Approve no further action on referral	Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
2	Approve a child's assessment	Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
3	Agree case closure	Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
CHILDREN IN NEED (CIN)			
4	To agree support services to children living with their families (agree a CIN Plan)	Children Act 1989	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
5	To chair a child in need planning meeting or review of a CiN plan	Children Act 1989	Team Manager/Assistant Team Manager; delegated to Social Worker

			by agreement
6	To agree short break care and respite care for children with disability (see point 13 below re financial limits)	Children Act 1989	Director of Corporate Parenting/Care and Resource Panel on recommendation on Short breaks Panel
7	Agree Direct Payment for Children and Families service provision (see point 13 below re financial limits)	Children Act 1989	Director of Corporate Parenting/Care and Resource Panel on recommendation on Short breaks Panel
CHILD PROTECTION			
8	Decision to start enquiries under Section 47 and to end/close/conclude them	Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
9	Decision to convene a Child Protection Conference	Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
10	Decision not to convene a CP Conference (CPC) following S47 enquiries	Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Team Manager in consultation with Senior IRO/QA Team Manager Escalate to SM if no agreement reached
11	Death or serious injury to a Child – senior manager to be notified.	Notifications of Serious Incidents / Need to Know Policy Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Director of Safeguarding Head of Quality Assurance
PRIVATE LAW PROCEEDINGS			
12	To accept a request to report to the court under Section 7 in private law proceedings	S 7 Children Act 1989	Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
PUBLIC LAW			
13	Request for Legal Planning meeting; legal advice.	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	Legal Gateway or Director of Safeguarding in emergency

14	To agree issuing of 'Letter Before Proceedings' and commence pre-proceedings case management in accordance with the Public Law Outline guidance	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	Legal Gateway or Director of Safeguarding in emergency
15	Request for Expert Assessments in CIN;CP;PLO and Court.	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	Service Manager Care and Resource Panel if over 10k for that family or Director of Safeguarding in an emergency
16	To make decisions to instigate proceedings and agree necessary assessments	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	Legal Gateway Panel or Director of Safeguarding in an emergency
17	To agree application for Emergency Protection Order	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	All Service Managers - in consultation with Legal Team but to alert Director of Safeguarding of need to do so
18	To agree application for a Recovery Order	Sec 50 CA 1989	Service Manager – after advice from Legal Team
19	To request Police Protection in an emergency	Sec 46 CA 1989	Team Manager - after advice from Legal Team
20	To agree the initial care plan to court in care proceedings	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989	Team Manager following discussion with Service Manager

		Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	
21	To agree for a child in care to be subject to a DOL	Mental Capacity Act 2005 Deprivation of liberty safeguards: resources - GOV.UK	All Service Managers - in consultation with Legal Team and Director who will chair the LPM
22	To agree the final care plan to court in care proceedings	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	All Service Managers – after advice from Legal Team
23	To agree application to court to vary a care or supervision order, or to discharge a care order	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	Service Manager - after advice from Legal Team
24	To agree application to court for a Placement Order	Swindon Procedures Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline Children Act 1989 Public Law Outline, Ministry of Justice	Service Manager - after advice from Legal Team
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN			
25	Agree accommodation of a child with parental consent	Decision to Look After Sec 20 CA 1989	Service Manager for service via Legal Gateway or through Director of Safeguarding in emergency
26	Agree the decision to cease being looked after for children aged 0 to 15 who have been in care over 20 days.		All Service Managers
27	Agree discharge of a child accommodated under section 20	Ceasing to be a Child in Our Care Sec 20 CA 1989	Service Manager for service via Legal Gateway or through Director of

	For young person who is 16+		Safeguarding in emergency
28	Agree placement of child/young person for whom accommodation has been agreed with in-house foster carers, IFA carers or supported lodgings carers.	Decision to Look After Sec 31 CA 1989	Legal Gateway with Director of Safeguarding /Director for Corporate Parenting
29	Agree to place and fund placement of child with IFA out of borough	As above Swindon Procedures - OOB	Care and Resource Panel or with Director of Safeguarding/Director for Corporate Parenting in an emergency
30	Agree to place a child in residential and/or IFA at a distance	As above Swindon Procedures - OOB	Care and Resource Panel or with Director of Safeguarding/Director for Corporate Parenting in an emergency
31	To agree to place a child in an unregulated unregistered placement.		Director Children's Services
32	Agree the placement of a child subject to a care order to live with his/her parent(s) (Placement with Parents Regs) For children aged 16+	Swindon procedures - place with parents	Director of Safeguarding Director of Corporate Parenting
33	Authorise the placement of a child in care with connected persons under Regulation 24	Swindon Procedures - connected persons	Director of Safeguarding/Director for Corporate Parenting
34	Authorise Special Guardianship as the permanence plan for a looked after child.		Service Managers
35	Authorise level of Special Guardianship support to be provided, including financial support	Sec 14 Children Act 1989 Swindon Procedures - Special Guardianship Adoption and Children Act 2002	Service Manager Fostering

36	Chair Matching meeting for child to be placed for adoption and agree the preferred adoptive family	Swindon procedures - adoption	Function carried out by Adopt Thames Valley and Team Manager
37	Authorise a change of placement affecting a child in care in Key Stage 4		Director of Safeguarding /Director for Corporate Parenting
38	Authorise exemptions from the usual fostering limit and variations to the approval on temporary basis	Fostering Regulations 2011 – amendments Swindon Procedures - foster care finance handbook	ADM Fostering
39	To consent to the marriage of a young person in care	Swindon Procedures - marriage of CIC	Corporate Director of Children's Services
40	To consent to medical treatment for a looked After child to include complex and invasive treatment including surgery and anaesthetic	Legal framework for consent to medical treatment Swindon Procedures - health care Swindon Procedures - delegated authority for foster carers	Delegated Authority Delegated responsibility for foster carers discussed at Placement Planning Meeting Team Manager/ Parent/ Foster Carer Service Manager for surgery & anaesthetic
41	To consent to medical treatment for unaccompanied asylum seekers or orphans who are looked after under Section 20 S3(5)	Swindon Procedures - health care	Service Manager
42	Decisions relating to children in foster care like school trips, sex education, piercing	Children in Foster Care – Delegated Authority Policy	Team Manager to identify any areas of dispute and seek to resolve
43	To sign passport applications for a child in care or in an adoptive placement.	Swindon Procedures - trips abroad	Team Manager for relevant team or Service Manager
44	To agree a holiday abroad for a child in care or in an adoptive placement.	Swindon Procedures - trips abroad	Service Manager
45	To agree for a child in care to live abroad subject to the approval of a court	Swindon Procedures - placements abroad Para 19 Sch 2 CA 1989	Director of Safeguarding /Director for Corporate Parenting

46	Manager to be notified when a looked after child from another Local Authority has been placed in the area.		Team Manager Quality Assurance and Review Service
47	To approve the applications of children in care who wish to join HM Forces		Director of Safeguarding/Director of Corporate Parenting
48	To agree change of name for children in care	Change of Name for a Child We Care for (Child in Care) Sec 33 CA 1989	Director of Safeguarding All Service Managers
49	Approve the refusal or suspension of contact with parents	Contact with Parents/Adults and Siblings Sec 34 CA 1989	Service Manager for maximum of 7days- Court
50	Make decisions to approve a person as a foster carer and the terms of approval taking in to account the recommendations of the Fostering Panel	Assessment and Approvals of Foster Carers Fostering Regulations 2011	Fostering ADM
LEAVING CARE			
51	Approval of a Pathway Plan		Assistant Team Manager/ Team Manager or Service Manager
EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS			
52	Admissions to care		Duty Service Manager
53	Emergency decisions in respect of placement provision that is an unregulated arrangement		Director Children's Services
SECURE ACOMMODATION			
54	Authorise a placement of a looked after child in secure accommodation for up to 72 hours without a Secure Accommodation order.	Placements in Secure Accommodation Sec 25 CA 1989	Director of Children's Services
55	Authority to apply for a secure order and seek a secure placement	Placements in Secure Accommodation Sec 25 CA 1989	Director of Children's Services
56	Agree composition of secure accommodation	Secure Accommodation (Criteria) Reviews	Service Manager for Service in conjunction with Head of Quality

	review panel		Assurance
ADOPTION			
57	Adoption Best Interest and links	The Agency Decision Maker who makes decisions on all adoption matters (some of which will be made on the basis of a recommendation of the Adoption Panel	Director for Corporate Parenting
58	To agree the assessment of prospective adopters	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Adopt Thames Valley
59	To agree the payment of legal expenses for prospective adoptive parents for children who are being placed for adoption by SBC	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Care and Resource Panel
60	To approve the payment of an adoption allowance	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Care and Resource Panel
61	To approve the Annex A report to court	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Team Manager
62	To agree the placement of a Swindon child with adopters	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Swindon Borough Council ADM following Adoption matching panel
63	Chair Introductions Planning Meeting for child being placed for adoption	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Adopt Thames Valley
64	Completion of Interagency Agreements for children placed with another agency	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Adopt Thames Valley
65	To sign the Adoption Placement Plan following Introductions Planning Meeting	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Adopt Thames Valley
66	Authorise the level of adoption support to be provided to children, adopters (including financial support) and their family or birth family members	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Relevant Service Manager after in consultation with Adopt Thames Valley. Care and Resource Panel
67	Make decisions about approval of a person as a prospective adopter following	<u>Adoption and Children Act 2002</u>	Adopt Thames Valley

	recommendations from Adoption Panel		
68	Authorise appointments to the Central List for the Adoption and Fostering Panels	Adoption Agency Regulations	Adopt Thames Valley
FAMILY PLACEMENTS			
69	To agree the assessment of prospective carers	Assessment and Approvals of Foster Carers Fostering Regulations 2011	ATM/TM Fostering
70	To sanction payment of the fostering allowance	foster_carer_finances.pdf	ATM/TM Fostering
71	To vary allowances to foster carers / contributions by young people in placement in exceptional circumstances	foster_carer_finances.pdf	ATM in consultation with Team Manager. Care and Resource Panel
72	To temporarily vary the approval status of foster carers	Exemptions and Extensions/Variations to Foster Carer Approval	ADM Fostering
73	To agree exemption for foster carers from the usual fostering limit of a maximum of three children in any one placement	Exemptions and Extensions/Variations to Foster Carer Approval	ADM Fostering To be presented at Foster Care Panel next available meeting
74	To give temporary approval to potential adopters as foster carers for a named child		ADM Adoption in consultation with Adopt Thames Valley
PRIVATE FOSTERING			
75	Approve assessments of private foster carers,	p_private_fost.pdf	Team Manager Fostering Services
76	Prohibit particular private fostering arrangements	p_private_fost.pdf	Service Manager Fostering
77	Impose requirements on private foster carers	p_private_fost.pdf	Service Manager Fostering
RECORDS			
78	Full disclosure of child records to the Police	2013 PROTOCOL AND GOOD PRACTICE MODEL	Team Manager following legal advice from Legal Team