

Service: Children and Young People's Services
Title: Planning for Children/Young People in Need
Manual: Children in Need
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Comments To: Gill.Ward@durham.gov.uk

INTRODUCTION

This procedure details the arrangements for developing, implementing and monitoring all plans for children/young people in need.

The procedure aims to promote:

- Planning processes that allow for the accurate identification of children and young people's needs and how those needs can best be addressed;
- The development of Plans that imaginatively and flexible address the needs identified in the assessment process and that make full use of the services available in both the statutory and voluntary sector and within the wider community;
- The identification of services to achieve specific objectives that are associated with identified needs and clearly linked to desired outcomes within clear timescales;

ABBREVIATIONS

SW	Child/young person's Social Worker
DCSF	Department of Children, Families and Schools
SASS	Safeguarding and Specialist Services
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

All Care Planning rests on Assessment. Children in need who have had an Initial Assessment will have an Initial Plan. Children, who are Looked After, or subject to a Child Protection Plan, must have a core assessment. Other children with particularly complex needs may benefit from a core assessment, carried out with the agreement of the Team Manager, or Senior Practitioner.

- The planning for all children/young people in need, beyond the initial response phase, will be informed by an Assessment undertaken in line with the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DOH, 2000). Children with complex needs will be expected to have a Core Assessment
- An Inter-Agency Planning Meeting will be held during the final stages of all Core Assessments to draw together the conclusions of the assessment and formulate any required plan for the provision of services. *NB in exceptional circumstances this requirement may be waived. The circumstances in which this is permissible are outlined below.*
- All children/young people in need will have a Plan and a Chronology formatted in line with the DCFS Integrated Children's System.
- All children/young people in need who are looked after will have a Care Plan in line with DCFS requirements.
- All Children/young people in need will have an identified Care Team responsible for the implementation and development of the Plan. The Care Team will meet at a minimum frequency of every 8 weeks. The minimum requirement for Children Looked After and for children subject to a Child Protection Plan is every 6 weeks.
- All plans in relation to children/young people in need will be subject to regular review.
- Children/young people in need and their families will be involved at each stage of the planning process and their participation in the process facilitated. They will be provided with information about how to challenge any decision arising from the planning process, the systems available to enable them to do this and other sources of support/help that may be available.

ACTION

In the final stages of the Core Assessment, the SW undertaking the Assessment must:

- Convene an inter-agency planning meeting to consider the findings of the Core Assessment, draw together the conclusions and formulate a plan for the provision of any services that may be required. The meeting must be so scheduled as to allow for the Core Assessment to be finalised within the required timescales.

NB Team Manager or Senior Practitioner has the discretion to decide that an inter-agency planning meeting is unnecessary as follows:

- Where the Core Assessment clearly indicates that the child/young person requires no services beyond those universally provided;
- Where the Core Assessment has been triggered by S47 enquiries **and** these enquiries have resulted in an Initial Child Protection Conference being convened **and** the Core Assessment is finalised prior to the Conference;
- Where the child/young person/family have refused consent to contact being made with other agencies and there are no grounds to override that consent
- Where the child/young person becomes looked after during the undertaking of the Core Assessment and therefore an inter-agency planning meeting to formulate the plan has already taken place. The inter-agency planning meeting should be reconvened if the child/young person ceases to be looked after or if the Core Assessment, as it progresses, indicates that a significant change to the plan is required. Otherwise its conclusions should be considered by the Care Team and utilised in the development/implementation of the plan.

Where the Team Manager or Senior Practitioner has reached a judgement that one or more of the criteria above apply and an inter-agency planning meeting is not required then the Team Manager or Senior Practitioner must:

- Record this decision and the reasoning behind it on the child/young person's case file;
- Notify in writing any agency contributing to the assessment of the decision, the reasoning behind it and the process by which the decision can be challenged.

INTER-AGENCY PLANNING MEETING

Powers

The Planning Meeting does **not** have the power to make the decision that a child/young person becomes looked after or the power to allocate any resources or agree any action beyond the jurisdiction of those attending.

Chair

The planning meeting may be chaired by the Social Worker or if the situation is particularly complex by a Senior Practitioner or Team Manager.

Attendance

The meeting should be attended by:

- The child/young person if of sufficient age and understanding;
- The child/young person's parents/carers and others with parental responsibility or significance to the child/young person's care e.g. extended family members;
- The SW undertaking the Core Assessment and any other SW identified to assume case responsibility;
- A representative of the child/young person's school (if of school age);
- Health Visitor (if the child is aged under 5 years) or other health representative;
- Any other relevant professional (This should include, as appropriate, any professional providing services to any other member of the household/family network).

Purpose

The purpose of the Planning Meeting is to:

- Draw together the conclusions of the Core Assessment;
- Consider the overall plan required for the child/young person and the various options for meeting any assessed needs;
- Formulate the Child/Young Person's Plan including any contingency plans;
- Consider whether a Family Group Conference is appropriate;
- Identify the Care Team responsible for implementing the Child/Young Person's Plan;
- Agree the individual roles and responsibilities of the members of the Care Team;
- Agree the method of monitoring/evaluating the Child/Young Person's Plan;
- Agree the dates of Care Team meetings and the date for the first meeting of the Care Team (within 2 weeks of the Planning Meeting);
- Set the date for the first formal review of the Plan (Child in Need Review)
- If the Child/Young Person's Plan identifies that the child/young person's needs can only be met through entry into the looked after system, then to agree:

- The purpose, objectives and timescales of the placement;
- The type of placement resource that would best meet the child/young person's best interests;
- The alternative arrangements if such a placement is not available;
- The alternative support plan if approval is not given to the child/young person becoming looked after;
- If the Child/Young Person's Plan identifies the potential for the child/young person to require entry into the looked after system as part of the contingency planning arrangements, then to agree;
 - The triggers for the implementation of the contingency plan;
 - The purpose, objectives and timescales of any placement;
 - The type of placement resource that would best meet the child/young person's best interests;
 - The alternative arrangements if such a placement is not available.

Recording

A written record of the Planning Meeting should include who attended, the key discussion points and any decisions and recommendations made and the reason for them, in accordance with ICS.

The record should also:

- Note any unresolved disagreement about the services required to meet the identified needs.
- Note as unmet need, any outcomes/needs for which no service provision or other action can be offered.

A copy of the written record is distributed to all participants as quickly as possible and within 10 working days.

ACTION FOLLOWING INTER-AGENCY PLANNING MEETING

The **SW** must:

- Where necessary, ensure that steps are taken for the appropriate authorisation for the Child/Young Person's Plan. Where the Plan includes

the child/young person becoming looked after or identifies as part of the contingency arrangements the potential for the child/young person to become looked after, authorisation by a Service Manager is required. Please see **Admissions Procedure** in the Children Looked After Manual for full details of the action required.

- Finalise the Core Assessment Record and ensure a copy is provided to the child/young person (if appropriate) and their parents/carers (unless contrary to the best interests of the child/young person).
- Complete within 3 working days of the planning meeting, the Child/Young Person's Plan on ICS and ensure copies are provided to:
 - The child/young person (if of sufficient age/level of understanding)
 - The child/young person's parents/carers (unless this is contrary to the best interests of the child/young person).
 - Members of the Care Team
- Convene the first meeting of the Care Team within 2 weeks of the inter-agency planning meeting.

THE CARE TEAM

Convening

The allocated SW is responsible for convening meetings of the Care Team.

Membership

*(NB For children/young people who are looked after, there are additions to the core membership of the Care Team – please see the **Care Planning** procedure in the Children Looked After Manual for details.)*

The membership of the Care Team should be identified at the inter-agency planning meeting and agreed with the child and family.

The ideal core membership of the Care Team is:

- The child/young person (if of sufficient age/ level of understanding)
- The child/young person's parents/ those with parental responsibility/other relevant family members
- The child/young person's SW
- Education representative (if child/young person of school age)
- Health representative (Health Visitor if child aged 5 years or under)

- Representatives of any specialist services being provided.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the individual members of the Care Team should be identified at the inter-agency planning meeting and confirmed/clarified at the first meeting of the Care Team.

Frequency

*(NB For children/young people who are looked after, there are variations to the required frequency of Care Team meetings – please see the **Care Planning** procedure in the Children Looked After Manual for details.)*

The particular circumstances of the case will dictate how frequently the Care Team meets. However in determining the frequency of meetings, the following requirements must be taken into account:

- The first meeting of the Care Team must take place within 2 weeks of the inter-agency planning meeting at which the Child/Young Person's Plan was formulated;
- The Care Team must meet at a minimum frequency of every 8 weeks thereafter;

All members of the Care Team have a responsibility to ensure that the meetings are held.

Venue

The venue for Care Team meetings will be determined by the circumstances of the case. However any venue agreed must be acceptable to, and preferably the first choice of, the child/young person (if attending) and readily accessible to the child/young person's family.

Arrangements for Chairing

The first meeting of the Care Team should be chaired by the child/young person's SW. The first meeting should agree the most appropriate future arrangement for chairing.

NB In some complex circumstances it may be appropriate for Care Team Meetings to be chaired by a Team Manager or Senior Practitioner. Where such arrangements are considered necessary and this has been identified in advance then the matter should be discussed and agreed at the inter-agency planning meeting.

Key Tasks

The key tasks of the Care Team are to:

- Implement the Child/Young Person's Plan
- Monitor the progress of the Plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the agreed interventions;
- Identify the need for any changes to Plan;
- Progress any required changes to the Plan that do not need the approval of a formal review process or other authorisation before they can be undertaken.

Changing the Child/Young Person's Plan

Changes to the Child/Young Person's Plan should be made as necessary following the Care Team meeting, consultation and with the agreement of the Team Manager/Senior Practitioner.

Any changes should be recorded in the Plan, and copies circulated to Care Team members.

If there are any significant changes in circumstances it may be necessary to hold a Care Team meeting.

Recording

The key discussion points of the Care Team Meeting, its outcome including any decisions taken and actions agreed must be recorded by the SW on the Care Team Meeting Record and distributed to all participants.

The record must include details as to the agreed date, time and venue for the next meeting of the Care Team.

Management Oversight

The SW must provide a copy of the meeting record to the Team Manager or Senior Practitioner.

If the Team Manager/Senior Practitioner identifies any issues regarding the Plan or any matters arising, discussed and recorded.

Children/Young People in Need of Protection

The above procedures apply irrespective of the nature of the need of the child/young person concerned. However when a child/young person has been

assessed as being in need of protection and they are subject to a Child Protection Plan then the following variations apply:

- The **Child/Young Person's Plan** will incorporate the **Child Protection Plan**. The format for the recording of the Plan remains the same;
- The **Care Team** is referred to as the **Core Group**. The Core Group is identified at the initial Child Protection Conference.
- The frequency and the recording of meetings of the Core Group and management oversight of such meetings are undertaken in line with Durham LSCB procedures.

REVIEWS

All plans relating to children/young people in need must be reviewed at the frequency specified above. The nature of the review will be determined by the type of plan. Namely:

Child/Young Person's Plan: Child's Plan Review
(see **Review** Procedure of the Children in Need Manual for details)

Child/Young Person's Plan:
Inc. a Child Protection Plan
Procedures for details) Child Protection Conference
(see Durham LSCB **Child Protection**

Care Plan: Looked After Review
(see **Looked After Review** procedure in the Children Looked After Manual for details)

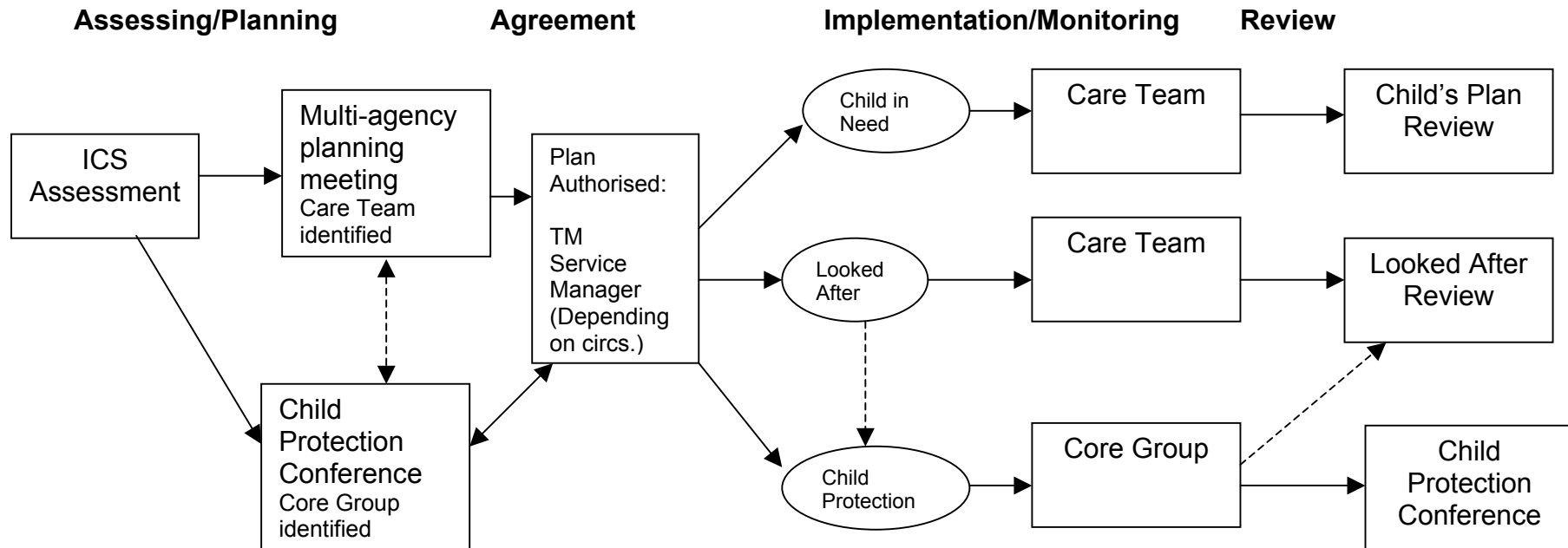
NB In some situations a looked after child/young person may also be subject to a Child Protection Plan. In these circumstances both Reviews will be held.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Review Procedure	Children in Need Manual
Admissions Procedure	Children Looked After Manual
Care Planning Procedure	Children Looked After Manual
Looked After Reviews	Children Looked After Manual
Durham LSCB	Child Protection Procedures

This is a Controlled Document

PLANNING FRAMEWORK



Key Tasks:

- Draw together conclusions of Assessment;
- Formulate Plan;
- Identify Care Team;
- Agree roles & responsibilities of Care Team;
- Consider Family Group Conference
- Agree method of monitoring/evaluating plan;
- Agree frequency of Care Team meetings.

Key Tasks:

- Implement Plan;
- Monitor/evaluate Plan;
- Identify need for any changes to Plan.

Key Tasks:

- Review Plan;
- Reconsider FGC
- Recommend/ Agree changes to Plan

