

Barnsley

Children's Services

Practice Standards

Date Issued:	November 2022
Next Review Due:	November 2023
Authored by	Louise Danks; SM Practice Development Hub
Owned by;	Keeley Boud
Designation:	HoS Safeguarding and Quality Assurance/Principal Social Worker
Reviewed	



**Barnsley – the place
of possibilities.**



BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

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1. Our commitment to children and their families

- The well-being of the children and families with whom we work is at the fore front of all decision making.
- The voice of all children and young people is captured and heard, is clearly recorded and linked to decision making.
- The safeguarding and welfare of the child/young person is the focus of any actions or decisions taken
- We work with families, recognising and drawing on their strengths and understanding their vulnerabilities.
- We ensure that carers and families are fully informed and understand the reasons for our involvement.
- We work with families to meet identified need; with clear plans and actions that link directly to improving children's outcomes. We will review these plans regularly
- We are aspirational for our children, young people and their families
- We will support children and young people to be cared for within their families as long as this is safe. We will make every effort to work with families, including the extended family, to maintain children in the family network.

2. Our Commitment to our workforce

At Barnsley we recognise that our staff are our most valuable resource and we have a responsibility to maintain the health and well being of our staff to enable them to undertake their role safeguarding children to the best of their ability. We recognise that we want the best for our children and as such have high expectations of our workforce. We balance this with high support and nurture.

To support and develop the workforce, as an authority we will:

- Offer all our staff a clear induction
- Communicate clearly what we expect from all staff
- Listen to what staff need from us to do their job
- Offer regular quality supervision in line with the Supervision Policy
- Undertake Personal Development Reviews (PDR)
- Support attendance at regular Team and Service Meetings
- Offer high quality training, learning and development opportunities

We know that to improve outcomes for our children and families, we need to ensure that our workforce remains confident with access to training and development.

Training and development should be discussed at every Supervision to ensure that any identified learning needs can be fully met.

We ask that staff -

- Keep a record of your CPD
- Make sure your CPD is a mixture of different kinds of activities
- Aim for your CPD to improve the quality of your work
- Aim for your CPD to benefit our children and families

Registered Social Workers

Social Work professionals need to be registered with Social Work England in order to practice. The principles of Social Work England standards are found at [Social Work England](#)

Why do we have Practice Standards?

We have Practice Standards to ensure:

- Our Children and Families benefit from a consistent approach to our work
- Our staff know what is expected of them
- Helps new social workers during their induction
- We offer a one service, consistent approach

We must always think...

- How does the child feel?
- How does the family/carers feel?
- Is the child safe? Do they feel safe?
- How are we making a difference?
- How do we know this?

Key Messages from our Standards

- That we make sure we really understand what life is like for a child or young person
- That children are listened to; their views are recorded and influence decisions
- Safeguarding and wellbeing of children is the focus for all that we do
- That we will work with families to support children in their family network wherever it is safe to do so
- The families we work with are treated with respect, honesty and informed throughout all involvement
- Families are experts of their own situations, and we will work with families based on their qualities, skills and tools
- We will focus on what is going well as well as the things we are worried about
- We want children to see and feel an improvement in their lives and to feel safe

These standards should be read in conjunction with the Barnsley Children's Services Procedures, which are available online [Barnsley Children's Services Procedures Manual on triX](#); and the Visiting Timescales [Visiting Timescales 21 Nov 2022.docx](#)

The overarching themes of all of our interventions

- All of our interaction with families will be respectful and sensitive, taking into account any specific needs and circumstances of the children, young people, parents and carers.
- We should prepare for all visits and interactions, and have a clear purpose and understanding of what we seek to achieve from these.
- We will undertake announced and unannounced visits in line with a child's plan.
- We will see children in a variety of settings in line with their needs. We will make observations of children, carers and the home environment.
- We are aspirational for our children and will challenge barriers to achievement.
- We will always ask if we are unsure; for example, if there is an unknown person in the home during a visit.
- All communication will be clearly recorded on the child's file, setting out the purpose, interaction, observations, outcomes, analysis and next steps in a timely way.
- We will ensure that all verbal and written communication is in a format that is understood and agreed with children, young people and their families.
- Where English is not the first language of a child or their carers, we will ensure that interpreters are available for visits and meetings. We will make arrangements for reports and relevant documents to be translated and shared in a timely manner.
- When a case is transferring then a joint visit should take place and transfer arrangements should be made in a manner and at a time that is right for the child.
- Forward and contingency planning is ongoing throughout all levels of our intervention and is clearly linked to outcomes for children.
- We work in partnership with families and professionals.
- We are accountable and hold others to account.
- We welcome feedback and will learn from feedback; we ensure that families know how they can give feedback.
- We will seek advice, guidance and support as needed and know who we can speak to.

Direct Work with Children

As a social worker I will:

- Take the time to get to know the children I am working with and know the importance of developing meaningful relationships with children and young people.
- Be creative in engaging children, using direct work tools that are interesting and appealing to children, their age, need, interests and level of understanding
- Ensure that my engagement with children is informed by the needs, age and circumstances of the child or young person. As the social worker, I observe babies and toddlers when they are awake and plan my visits around their routine.
- Make sure that the children we work with understand the reason for our involvement.
- Listen to children. We understand that each child's lived experience is unique.
- Understand each child's journey, circumstances and family background from reading their file and knowing the family.
- Capture the voice of children who are pre verbal or non verbal.
- Clearly record the child's voice including their wishes, feelings and aspirations.
- Make sure that any worksheets or documents are uploaded to the child's file

When completing direct work with children who have additional needs, I will:

- Consult with school, OT, SALT and PT to understand any barriers to the child's communication or processing needs.
- Use the EHCP as a guide to approaching direct work.
- Use the most appropriate form of communication or engage an appropriate professional to aid this e.g. interpreter, BSL sign, MAKATON or an advocate.
- Consider the child routine when planning direct work and establish the best time period to maximise communication.
- Give consideration to the environment in which the direct work takes place in particular any sensory processing problems that may affect the child.
- Consider the use of additional resources such as timers, fidget toys, fidget cushions etc.
- Consider whether the child/young person needs a plan of what is to be discussion prior to the work commencing.

Case Recording

- I understand the importance of having accurate and up to date recording of my case work and that the case record is the child's record and that the child may access their record in the future
- I record that I have seen the child alone if they are aged 4 or over, unless they have refused to see me, or it is an agreed decision with my manager. When I have not seen the child alone, I record the reason
- For statutory visits, I will record the child has been seen at home and seen alone on MOSAIC
- I record my visits **within 72 hours** of seeing the child, when I am unable to do this, I will inform my manager
- I will record what the child tells me in their own words or expressions about their wishes and feelings.
- My case recording will capture the child's lived experience
- I distinguish between fact, opinion and third-party information when recording
- All records are respectful of the child and their family, including their identity, educational, neuro diversity, communication, language, cultural, gender, sexuality and disability needs
- All key decisions impacting on the child's life including, team manager decisions, case decisions and closure are recorded on the child's file
- Every case file has an up-to-date genogram (at least three generational) and chronology which gives an overview of the history and family network
- I will ensure that there is case summary on the case file, which is updated with any significant events and at a minimum every three months. This will give an overview of the child's plan, risks and vulnerabilities and contingencies.
- I ensure that the plan, including contingency planning for the child is clearly recorded on their file and, in the event that I am not in work, a duty worker/EDT can offer an informed response
- I ensure that all written information shared with parents, carers and young people is clear and in a format that can be easily understood
- I ensure that copies of all written assessments, minutes and plans are shared with parents and carers, and young people where appropriate, in a format that is agreed with them and I record on Mosaic how and when this was done.
- I will record all attempts to visit or make contact with families and professionals during the course of my involvement
- All records that are held will be considered with due respect. As outlined in data protection, I will only access records where we have a professional reason to do so.

Social work supervision

- I have read our policy and procedures on supervision and understand both my own and my supervisor's responsibilities regarding supervision. [Supervision Policy November 2022.docx](#)
- My supervisor and I have discussed, agreed and signed my supervision agreement which outlines the terms of the supervision policy and any individual requirements.
- I prioritise supervision. If I need to rearrange supervision, I will do so promptly.
- I take professional responsibility for my practice and come prepared for supervision, including preparing an agenda.
- My supervision includes reflective casework and personal and professional supervision.
- I use supervision to review my progress with my supervisor, using the objectives contained in my PDR.
- I use supervision to discuss any matters regarding my wellbeing and how this may impact my work.
- I use supervision to critically reflect upon my work, receive advice and guidance and track completion of actions previously agreed and recorded.
- Supervision enables me to discuss my Social Work England CPD requirements and opportunities to meet them.
- I use supervision to explore the impact of any training I have done and the difference it has or has not made to my work with children.
- I use supervision to ensure that I am considering equality, inclusion and diversity into all areas of my practice.
- I am open to professional challenge and discussion and use this to develop my practice.
- I will undertake actions agreed in supervision within the timescales agreed. If I cannot do this, I will inform my manager.

Managers Supervision

- I have/will undertake any training relevant to my role that has been provided to me as a supervisor.
- I ensure that I have an agreed and up-to-date supervision agreement for everyone in line with our supervision policy. [Supervision Policy November 2022.docx](#)
- I prioritise supervision and ensure that social workers receive supervision once every calendar month for a minimum of 1.5 hours. If I need to rearrange supervision, I will do so promptly.
- I use supervision to drive planning and improve outcomes for children.
- Where relevant for children, I will explore the use of Family Group Conferencing as part of planning.
- I use supervision to provide reflection, advice and guidance and track completion of actions previously agreed and recorded.
- I will offer supervision that encourages open and reflective discussion and professional challenge.
- I ensure that all case related supervision is recorded on the child's file and takes place at the frequency identified in the supervision policy.
- I use supervision to support workers to reflect upon their practice and use their PDR to review their progress and identify any areas for development. We consider what support or additional training needs they may have.
- I use supervision to explore training they have attended, the impact it has had upon their practice and any differences it has made to children they work with.

Screening

Social worker

- As a screening social worker, I always clarify consent with the referrer.
- As a screening social worker, wherever possible, I discuss the enquiry with parents/carers and young people and seek consent to speak with professionals and their wider family to consider next steps.
- As the social worker, I hold partner and other key people to account to ensure the child or young person's needs are met and they are protected from harm.
- I will ensure that referrals received contain the level and quality of information to enable me to make recommendations. In the event that the quality of the referral does not enable me to do so I will feedback to the referrer and my manager.
- As a social worker, I make sure the child's lived experience is considered within my screening record.
- As a social worker I ensure that I complete multi agency checks as proportionate and necessary and an up to date chronology. I ensure that personal information, relationships and contact details are up to date on the child's file
- As a social worker, I respond to enquiries for information **within 48 hours**.
- As a social worker, I make recommendations based on need, harm and risk **within 1 working day** on all contact records.
- As a social worker, I will progress children who need an assessment or strategy discussion within 1 working day of the enquiry being received. Responses will be proportionate to the perceived level of risk and always in line with the child's needs.

Team Manager

- As a team manager, I ensure all enquiries into the service receive a proportionate response based on need, harm and risk for a child or young person from the right person at the right time.
- As a team manager, I ensure that we only intervene in family life when this is proportionate to need, harm and risk to a child or young person.
- As a team manager, I ensure all enquiries into the service have clear management oversight and decision making at the beginning and end of the screening process.
- As a team manager, I consider need, harm and risk when making a decision whether to over-ride parental consent to speak with other professionals. Where consent is over-ridden, I ensure my rationale for this is clearly recorded.

Assessment

Social worker

- I always seek and record consent from carers and seek written consent where possible. I ensure that I clearly explain what a parent or carer is consenting to and that they understand. When consent is not given or is withdrawn at any time, I discuss with my team manager the next steps to ensure the child or young person is safe from harm.
- I seek consent from parents/carers to speak with professionals and their wider family. I complete a genogram and ecomap to clarify who is in the family and their support networks.
- I use the Barnsley Assessment Framework https://www.proceduresonline.com/barnsley/cs/files/assess_framework.pdf and other evidence based tools to agree an assessment plan with the support of my manager.
- When I am completing a pre-birth assessment I should refer to and follow the pre-birth integrated care pathway and the pre birth assessment guidance.
- As the social worker, I clearly explain to the child and their parents/carers the purpose of my involvement and how I will undertake the assessment.
- As the social worker, I see the child and family within the timescale set by the manager at the point of allocation based on risk and need, and always within 5 working days.
- As the social worker, I understand the family network and use the views of parents and relevant adults, including those who do not live in the family home, to understand the child's needs or risks and these are evidenced and detailed in my recording.
- As the social worker I ensure that I make every effort to engage both parents and any other carer holding parental responsibility, including non-resident fathers and those not living at the address. I will consider whether a Family Group Conference is required
- I ensure that I make contact with all relevant agencies who hold information about a child, parent, carer or relevant person and use this to inform my assessment.
- As the social worker, I consider the needs and safety of siblings and any other children living in the family home or network. Where appropriate, I refer any concerns to the relevant person or agency.
- As the social worker, I review my assessment with my manager **within 5 and 15 days** of allocation. All assessments will be completed within 45 days.
- I ensure each assessment has a clear chronology and genogram; which I use to inform my analysis and recommendations.

- I ensure that my assessment is evidence based, includes the views of family and professionals, addresses strengths, vulnerabilities and risk and has a clear analysis and recommendations which reflect risk and need.
- The lived experience of each individual child is clear within the assessment.
- As the social worker, **I will share a copy of the assessment with parents/carers within 5 working days of completion** and a note added to Mosaic to confirm this has been completed with the family. I will do this in person where this is in line with the wishes of the family.
- As the social worker I will share the outcome of the assessment with key professionals involved with the family.
- Where the assessment results in a transfer or a step down to another service, as the social worker, I follow the transfer/ early help procedures to ensure a smooth transition.
- Where children and young people are open as a child in need, in need of protection or a child in care I will complete a Child and Young Persons Assessment whenever there is a significant change of circumstances or at a minimum on an annual basis

Manager

- As a manager I will ensure that children will be allocated to a social worker as a priority and always within 24 hours.
- As a manager, I will give clear guidance and oversight at the point of allocation and record this on Mosaic
- As a team manager, with the social worker, I will agree an assessment plan and timescales for review at **5 and 15 days** and record these on Mosaic
- At any point if consent is withdrawn, I will record what action will be taken with a clear rationale
- I will quality assure the assessment with the social worker in the identified timescales
- As Team Manager, I ensure my management rationale and decision making is recorded on completion of the assessments

Section 47 Child Protection Enquiries

Social worker

- I visit to see the child **within 1 working day**, I see the child alone if they are aged 4 or over, in line their needs and development. If the child is unborn I will ensure that I see the mother within 5 working days of the case being allocated.
- I make it clear to the parents/carers and the child, the purpose of my involvement and what the likely outcomes may be as soon as it is safe to do so.
- I consider the needs and safety of siblings and any other children living in the family home or network. Where appropriate, I refer any concerns to the relevant person or agency.
- I gather information from other agencies regarding their involvement with the child and this informs and influences the outcome of the S47 enquiries.
- I review my S47 with my manager **within 3 working days** of allocation to determine next steps. The S47 will be completed within 15 working days.
- Where it is agreed that the threshold is met for an Initial Child Protection Case Conference (ICPC), this will be organised without delay and will take place within 15 working days of the strategy meeting.
- In writing the S47, I clearly set out the risks to the child or young person and the rationale for significant harm.
- If the decision is made to progress to Initial Child Protection Case Conference, I complete an ICPC report which describes what life is like for the child. I am clear about what we are worried about and what is working well. I share this report with parents/carers a minimum of two days before the ICPC
- For children above the age of 8, I inform and offer them an advocate to ensure that their voice is heard.
- If the child is too young to attend the ICPC, I make sure their voice and lived experience is part of the ICPC and understood.
- I invite key agencies to the ICPC, who can provide the right information to make the right decisions for the child
- I let parents/carers know that they can be supported by a relative, friend or advocate to enable them to be involved and supported at the ICPC
- I make every effort to attend the ICPC.

Team Manager

- I ensure that **within 24 hours** of the decision that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, a strategy discussion is undertaken between the social worker, team manager, police, education and health services as a minimum, who provide the relevant information and decide whether the threshold is met for S47 enquiries.
- For all children and young people who require an immediate response, there is an urgent strategy discussion, and the child or young person is seen to ensure they are safe and protected from harm. The timescale for the visit is agreed as part of the strategy discussion.
- I will chair the strategy discussion. I will ensure that there is a clear and agreed plan of actions required to safeguard children and set out the timescales for these.
- I will hold partners to account for their actions in safeguarding children.
- I will escalate any children and young people where there are immediate concerns and risk cannot be mitigated to senior management. I will complete a senior management alert when appropriate.
- I ensure that any ICPC report is authorised **at least 2 working days** before the ICPC so it can be shared prior to the conference, which ensures a timely meeting and all professionals, parents/carers are sighted on the information.

Children who are Vulnerable to Exploitation

Social worker

- As the social worker I will complete a referral to MACE when I am worried a child or young person is being exploited or is vulnerable to being exploited.
- As the social worker I will work with my young person to identify their network, using an ecomap to identify relationships both in the family and with friends.
- As the social worker I will ensure that my assessment considers the wider community, social media use, social network and activities outside of the family. I will use appropriate tools to inform my assessment.
- As the social worker I will work with the child, family and professionals to develop clear safety plans that are understood and agreed by all. These will be recorded on the child's file.
- As the social worker I will identify who is the safe person to complete work with the young person, ensuring that their voice is heard and that they are supported to lead on their safety planning.
- As the social worker I will work with parents, carers and safe adults to equip them with tools and skills to help keep the young person safe.
- As the social worker I will be tenacious and persistent in my commitment to building a relationship with the young person and working with them to help them keep themselves safe.
- As the social worker I will use the third-party intelligence form to share any intelligence I have with the police and encourage other professionals to do so also.
- As the social worker, I will complete and follow the Philomena protocol form where relevant for young people who go missing. I will ensure that this is recorded on Mosaic.
- As the social worker, I will ensure that all planning for young people is aspirational.

Contextual Safeguarding Team Manager

- I will have oversight of all children and young people at risk of exploitation or currently being exploited through chairing MACE.
- I will have oversight of all missing children and young people through oversight at daily briefing and the missing meeting.

- I will offer advice, support, and guidance to all partners.
- I will have oversight of situations involving potential multiple young people and locations and co-ordinate meetings as required.

LADO Process

The role of the LADO:

The role of the LADO (or Designated Officer) is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (Chapter 2 Paragraph 4) and is governed by the Local Authorities duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

The LADO is responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children. This involves working with police, children's social care, employers and other involved professionals.

The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- behaved in a way which indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

The above criteria relates to the adult's behaviour in the **workplace**, the **community** and in their **home and social life**.

- The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaises with police and other agencies and has oversight of all investigations to ensure a timely, thorough and fair process.

The practice standards for LADO are based upon the National LADO Standards:
<https://national-lado-network.co.uk/lado-minimum-standards/>

The LADO will:

- Provide an initial response to the referrer within one working day advising the need for further action under the LADO procedures and where appropriate include involvement of other sectors including the police, social care, employers and regulatory bodies.
- Conduct an initial evaluation which will focus on the nature of the concern, safeguarding for the particular child and appropriate consideration for the practitioner concerned including whether referrals to the Police and Social Care are necessary.
- Record any new allegations on to the relevant database within 24 hours of a contact being accepted as a referral.
- Record matters that are not progressed as a referral on the 'advice log' within 24 hours of a decision being made.

- Where determined an allegations management meeting is necessary, this will be held within 10 working days.
- Follow up ongoing matters at a maximum of monthly intervals. This will include discussions with the Police, Social Care and employers.
- Ensure that there is clear and concise recording of discussions that have taken place within the allegations management process including rationale for any delay.
- Endeavour (where possible) to conclude matters within a 3 month timescale.
- Ensure that accurate and concise meeting minutes are completed following allegations management meetings and will ensure that minutes are distributed within 5 working days of the meeting.
- Ensure that plans are implemented during the process in regards to communication with the child and the subject of the allegation regarding the progress of any investigation.
- Ensure that the child's views are considered as part of any investigation and recorded.
- Ensure that the provision of support to the child and the subject of the allegation is considered as part of any allegation on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure that information regarding allegations is kept securely.
- Ensure that there is consideration to any additional elements that may relate to inclusion, equality and diversity in regards to the child and subject of the allegation.
- Escalate any matters where delay is considered unnecessary, disproportionate or avoidable.
- The LADO is responsible for ensuring that the arrangements for managing allegations within the local authority are publicised and understood by partners. This may include conducting training/ development sessions/ Conferences and on site visits.
- Provide an annual report to the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership outlining the work of the LADO, activity within the children's workforce, emerging themes from allegations management, and the outcomes of allegations.

Children In Need

- As the receiving social worker, I will arrange a handover visit with the transferring social worker **within 5 working days** of being allocated the case
- I will visit children **every 4 weeks** at a minimum and will see the child alone where appropriate
- I let parents/carers know that they can be supported by a relative, friend or advocate to enable them to be involved and supported at Child in Need reviews
- I promote wider family engagement at all points of my intervention, and will offer a Family Network Meeting to the family. I will consider whether a Family Group Conference is required
- The outline Child in Need plan is developed by the assessing social worker based on the outcomes of assessment and agreed at the first Child In Need review. I actively support and encourage families to develop their own plans and professionals to contribute to the plan. The language and format used is understood by all. The plan is clearly linked to the needs identified in the assessment and to improving outcomes for children.
- Where the outcome of an Initial or Review Child Protection Case Conference is that a child or young person be subject to a Child In Need Plan, the outline plan will be developed at the Case Conference. This plan will be finalised, with families and partners at a Child In Need Meeting, within 10 days of the Case Conference.
- I will ensure that Child in Need meetings will take place a minimum of **every 6 weeks. I will agree with professionals who will take a minute of the meeting. The minutes will be shared within 7 working days of the meeting.**
- Children should be invited to their meetings where appropriate, and their views should be clearly shared. CIN meetings should include the parents/carers and wider family where appropriate and all relevant professionals.
- I will review the progress and impact of the plan at every meeting with the family and professionals. Changes will be made to the plan in line with the child's needs.
- In families where neglect is evident, I will use the Graded Care Profile to inform my intervention.
- I am accountable for actions and timescales against my name in the plan, as are family members and other professionals. Where actions have not been completed, I will clearly record why and what needs to happen next, including escalation where appropriate. I will discuss this with my manager in supervision
- I will continually review risk and need and discuss this with the family and professionals in the meeting and with my manager in supervision.

- If the child/young person has been open for 6 months on a CIN plan my manager or AP will chair the 6 month CIN review.
- I will complete an updated Child and Young Persons assessment every 12 months or sooner, based on need and as agreed with my manager
- When stepping down from Child In Need, I will follow the step down process to step down to Early Help where appropriate

Children subject to Child Protection Plans

- As a receiving social worker, I will make every effort to attend the Initial Child Protection Case Conference (ICPC). If possible, I will make contact with the family prior to the meeting to introduce myself.
- I ensure that the family know how to contact me and how to access support if I am not available.
- I clearly explain my role; what we are worried about and how I will work with the family to achieve change.
- I see the child **every 10 working days at home** as a minimum, with each home visit to the child and family being purposeful and linked to the Child Protection Plan.
- In families where neglect is evident, I will use the Graded Care Profile to inform my intervention.
- I will engage the wider family and networks as part of the plan and give consider to a Family Group Conference
- I see children on their own at every visit, where appropriate, and check where the child sleeps including beds and bedding.
- I will ensure that I share the minutes to the Initial Child Protection Conference and Review Child Protection Conference with parents. Minutes will be send out within 15 days of the meeting. The recommendations of the ICPC or RCPC will be shared within 5 working days.
- The first core group is arranged at the ICPC takes place with the family and professionals **within 10 working days** of the ICPC.
- I use the first core group to review the plan agreed at ICPC and to ensure that family and professionals are clear around the actions and timescales for these.
- Subsequent core group meetings take place **every 28 days** and as the social worker, I chair the meetings and am responsible for the minutes, unless otherwise agreed within the core group. The agenda for the meeting is the Child Protection Plan which is reviewed and updated within the core group.
- I ensure that arrangements for core groups take into account the needs of parents and young people, including child care and working arrangements.
- I support young people to attend their core groups where appropriate and ensure their voice is heard whether they attend or not.
- A record of the core group meeting is shared with parents/carers and professionals involved with the plan **within 5 days**.

- At the core group before the review CPCC (Child Protection Case Conference), I discuss the recommendations that will be made to the CPCC around whether CP planning is still required based on the identified risk.
- Core group meetings are held with at least 2 other professionals attending with the social worker. In exceptional circumstances, if a professional is unable to attend, a summary report is provided to assist with reviewing the CP plan.
- I complete a review report for the review and share this with parents/carers and the child **at least 2 working days** before the review conference. I ensure that parents/carers are aware of my recommendations and understand the reasons for these.
- When it is identified that parents need help to care for their child(ren) or there is a need for alternative care arrangements, I organise a family network meeting to help identify suitable family members to help the child(ren) remain at home or provide alternative care. I ensure that the family understand it is important they share this information at this early stage so that decisions can be made for the child(ren) as quickly as possible.
- If I plan to present a child/family at legal gateway then I will obtain the view of the conference chair.

Children in Care

- The child in care, their carers and their family know who I am, how to contact me and also how to get help when I am not in work.
- There is a photograph of the child on their case file.
- I engage with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, background and ability. Where the child's first language is not English, I use an interpreter to support our communication. My work and observations enable me to build a good relationship with the child.
- I am aspirational for the child/young person and talk to them about and understand their hopes and dreams.
- I take pride in all of the child's achievements and recognise these in visits, meetings and when I am writing my reports. I nominate the child for awards when appropriate and I celebrate each successful step in the child's journey.
- I will support the child to have good quality family time with their family and other people who are important to them and that the safety of this has been assessed, understanding that the significance of these relationships in the child's life story. Where the child's family and other significant people are not resident in the UK, I make every effort to support communication and ask other services to help with this.
- I will ensure that if a young person becomes looked after I will change their status to looked after on Mosaic within 24 hours. I will also send a notification to the IRO service to request that an IRO is allocated within 24 hours, this is completed via the 'decision for legal/confirmation of CIC' form on mosaic.
- I will update the child/young person's care plan within 10 working days of each LAC (Looked After Child) Review. My plans are completed with young people where appropriate and are aspirational for their future.
- I will share my reports to review with the child, carer and IRO at least 5 working days before the meeting so that everyone has time to read them in advance of the meeting taking place.
- I update the child/young person's care plan **within 10 working days** of each LAC (Looked After Child) Review. My plans are completed with young people where appropriate and are aspirational for their future.
- I make sure that young people know how to get involved in participation groups such as the Care4Us Council (if age appropriate) along with any other participation activities and feel supported to access these.

- If I am completing a placement referral, I will make sure that I gather information from all sources and the form reflects the child's personality, hobbies and interests, and their strengths and aspirations are balanced with any challenges they may face. I will also complete a pen picture; completed with the child where appropriate.
- I always arrange introductory visits to new placements with young people.
- I ensure that all relevant information is shared with carers. This includes family history, the vulnerability of the child and any identified risks. The voice of the child is central in this.
- Within 2 working days of the child coming into care, I make the necessary arrangements for an initial health assessment to be carried out.
- The child has a health assessment **every 6 months** if they are under 5 years old and **every 12 months** once they are over 5 years old. The child will also visit the dentist regularly.
- I follow up any actions from the health assessment in a timely manner and hold partners to account in their actions.
- I am actively involved in the child's education and ensure there is an up-to-date Personal Education Plan for them which is reviewed termly.
- I contribute appropriately to the Annual Review of the foster carers who are looking after the child.
- I understand the importance of a child understanding their identity and carry out planned life-story work for the child and collate information for their life story on a regular basis.
- I see the child at their home **within 5 working days** of the child's first or any subsequent placement, explain to them the reasons for coming into care and try to answer all of their questions.
- I hold a Care Planning Meeting with the child, carers and parents (if appropriate) ideally **within 72 hours**.
- I see the child alone in their placement **every 6 weeks** or more frequently if required. I always see them alone if appropriate and check their sleeping arrangements and record this on their case file.
- I see and observe babies and toddlers when they are awake, and I plan my visits around their routine. My visits are **every 6 weeks** as a minimum.
- I will complete a Child and Young Persons Assessment whenever there is a significant change of circumstances and at a minimum every 12 months
- In certain situations, statutory visits to children and young people may take place less frequently. The child or young person must have been in placement for over 12 months and long term matched with their foster carers through permanency panel and be meeting the young person's needs. The plan for visiting frequency of **no more than three months** must be agreed with the child / young person and

their carers, the rational detailed in their care plan and endorsed by the Independent Reviewing Officer and reviewed through supervision and LAC reviews.

- I will make every effort to ensure that children and young people attend at least part of their review, unless they choose not to, or it is agreed with their IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) that it is not in their best interests to attend. I will ensure that the child/young persons views are shared within the review in a manner that is agreed with them. *If a child or young person decides not to attend their review, attempts to engage and the rationale for this will be recorded in the minutes and in supervision.*
- LAC Reviews are held **within 20 working days** of the child entering care and then **at 3 months** and then **at 6-month intervals** or earlier where required. A LAC review will be held if there is any change in placement or significant change to the care plan.
- LAC review minutes will be sent out within 20 working days of the meeting. The social worker will share the minutes with parents.
- I keep the IRO informed of any significant changes to the care plan.
- I will share my reports to review with the child, carer and IRO at least **5 working days** before the meeting so that the IRO has time to read them in advance.
- I will consult the IRO about any significant changes in the child's circumstances as they happen, including where there are plans to change or end a child's legal status.
- When placing the child subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order with a person who has parental responsibility, I ensure Placement with Parents approval has been given by the Service Director and this decision is recorded.
- When placing the child with a connected person who has not been assessed as a foster carer, I ensure Regulation 24 approval has been given by a Head of Service and that this decision is recorded and a referral into fostering has been completed for a full connected carer assessment.

Young People Leaving Care

- I ensure that all young people are aware of their rights and I will give the young person a printed copy of the [Barnsley Care Leavers Offer](#), unless it is requested in another format. I will record in the young persons file in the Care Leaver contact when I have shared this and will also record this on the Case Summary.
- Young people always know how to contact me and also who to contact when I am not in work.
- I take the time to get to know the young person, their wishes, feelings and aspirations. I recognise the importance of formal and informal support networks for young people and of my role in building and supporting these.
- I am aware of any risks that the young person may be exposed to and that they are safe from harm, including exploitation. I take necessary steps when I am worried about them to support their safety and wellbeing.
- I promote and encourage family time between the young person and their family and friends, when safe to do so and support them to develop new support networks in their community. I support relationship with siblings, including younger siblings who may be looked after.
- I recognise and celebrate young people's successes and achievements with them and those who are important to them.
- I actively involve the young person in the development and review of their Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan which takes place at least **every 12 months, but sooner if there has been significant change** and fully reflects their life, needs, wishes and feelings.

- I support the young person to obtain a National Insurance number, birth certificate, bank account and a passport if they do not already have them.
- From the age of 17 the young person will have an allocated Personal Advisor who will help them prepare for independent living by making sure all support identified is provided.
- The young person is supported to access education, training and employment as well as understand how to access financial support if they want to attend University.
- The young person is aware of how to access their records including their health records.
- The young person is supported to access Leaving Care Services until the age of 25 if they need to.

Permanence

- I complete viability assessments on connected people identified by the family as alternative carers. I use the genogram to make contact with extended family to ensure all family are considered for assessment. I understand these assessments need to be progressed promptly to enable children to remain within their family whenever safe to do so.
- I complete a Regulation 24 assessment on any potential carers. If there are more than 1, I will work with the family to identify the most appropriate carer for the child(ren).
- I provide timely updates to my manager on permanence arrangements for the child(ren) This is then shared and discussed at the monthly Permanence Tracker meetings.
- By the second Child in Care review, all permanence options have been explored and a Permanence Plan will have been identified for the child.
- When a plan for a child could be for adoption, I ensure One Adoption South Yorkshire are notified from the moment the child comes in care to ensure all plans are considered with minimal delay.
- When an approved Permanence Plan is for long-term fostering for a child, I will make a referral to the Placement Team at the earliest opportunity. I will ensure that all referrals are child focussed and that the voice of the child runs throughout.

- When the approved Permanence Plan is for adoption, this is ratified by the ADM. I complete the child's Permanence Report for the ADM to consider the child's plan prior to filing my final evidence with the Court.
- For all connected carers of Special Guardianship Placements, a support plan is formulated, and the relevant financial assessments are undertaken.
- I understand how important planned introductions are for children. I will plan for any moves and support children, in line with their needs, through the process.
- If I am concerned about the stability of a placement, I ensure I refer into the Vulnerable Placements Panel (VPP) for a discussion and next steps at the earliest opportunity.
- For unplanned placement endings, a placement disruption meeting will take place to ensure any learning is captured as to the reasons why a child has had an unplanned ending within 5 days.
- I will support children's understanding of their identity, life story and journey through life story work, which will be completed and shared in a timely way with the child and their carer. If the child remains in care, this work is updated regularly to support their journey and understanding.
- Where we cannot support children to remain in their families, I will make sure that birth parents are given opportunities to access independent support and counselling.

Children subject to Public Law Outline (PLO)

- If I am concerned that planning is not keeping children safe or if there is a significant incident that increases risk, I will speak to my manager, who if in agreement will seek agreement from my service manager
- Unless the risk to children is immediate, I will ensure that a referral has been made for Family Group Conference and that this has taken place prior to children being presented to LGM.
- When my service manager has agreed that a child/ren should be considered at Legal Gateway Meeting (LGM) I complete and submit the paperwork 48 hours before the panel takes place. The paperwork should clearly set out the risks, recommended plan, including any necessary expert assessments or testing and enable legal advice to be given about threshold. I ensure that I include

The LGM form (from Mosaic)
A recent assessment (within the last 6 weeks)
Genogram and Chronology (can be within the assessment)
Viability assessments
A draft letter and contract of expectations (if pre proceedings)
- In the case of unborn children, I refer the family to LGM as early as possible if I consider there to be high risks or if a decision about pre-proceedings PLO needs to be considered. This is **no later than 24 weeks** gestation.

- In the case of unborn children where either parent has had a previous child subject to care proceedings, I refer the family to LGM as soon as I am allocated the case to consider if pre-proceedings PLO should apply while the pre-birth assessment is being completed
- If pre-proceedings PLO is agreed at LGM, I provide the parents and anyone with parental responsibility a Letter Before Proceedings **within 5 working days** of the panel's decision. The letter is sent to parents even if they are not involved in the child's life.
- I write the Letter Before Proceedings using simple and plain language which is jargon free. The letter clearly identifies the concerns and what needs to happen to make positive change. I detail how I will work and support the family, what needs to change to improve their child's situation and detail the timescales.
- I ensure that parents/carers understand that they are entitled to receive free legal advice and representation, encourage them to obtain it and share a list of local solicitors.
- The first PLO meeting takes place **within 10 working days** of the letter being shared with the family and involves the attendance of a legal representative. This meeting is chaired by the team manager and agrees a contract of expectations, setting out the expectations on parents and the local authority and the timescales for these.
- I will agree an assessment plan, which is shared with parents at the PLO meeting and complete all agreed assessments of parents and carers within the agreed timescales.
- Subsequent PLO review meetings take place with the family **6 weekly** as a minimum. I determine the child and family's wishes and feelings at each stage. My team manager continues to chair these meetings.
- I will return to LGM midway through the pre proceedings process to review progress. I will return to LGM again when I plan to end pre proceedings, whether that be to issue care proceedings or when positive progress has been made
- I will assess extended family identified within the period of PLO and make every effort to keep the child within their immediate or extended family. I will evidence parallel planning to reduce any potential delay.

If public law proceedings are agreed at LGM:

- I provide the legal department with the evidence and supporting documents in the form of the updated assessment, a SWET (Social Work Evidence Template) assessment, a chronology, genogram and an interim care plan **within 5 working days** of the LGM agreeing proceedings and **within one working day of birth** in the case of new-borns.

- Viability assessments of all family members must be completed and submitted with the evidence to support a placement within the family if this is the recommended plan.
- My statement provides a confident, evidence-based explanation and analysis of the decision making and the recommendations detailed in the interim care plan and this includes any necessary additional assessments required within the care proceedings.
- At the Case Management Hearing (CMH), the timetable for the filing of assessments and evidence is agreed. I will add all filing and hearing dates to my calendar. I will complete and submit all assessments on time. If there are any issues which may impact the filing of my assessment, for example the late filing of an expert report, I will discuss this with my manager and legal representative at the earliest opportunity.
- Following attendance at a court hearing, myself or my manager will record a case note updating the outcome of the court hearing. If the order sought was not granted, for example if the court orders a S38 (6), a rationale for this and any further safety planning required from the decision will be clearly recorded.
- I contact the children's guardian (CAFCASS) and liaise with them throughout the proceedings. Any changes to the child's interim care plan is discussed with the children's guardian as soon as possible.
- If the child is made subject to an Interim Care Order, I liaise with the IRO so the LAC Reviews can be diarised in line with the child's timescales within the Court process. The final Care Plan is ratified by the IRO prior to finalising my evidence.
- I am aware of the process and timescales for relevant panels e.g., Fostering Panel, Adoption Panel, medicals and ADM. I plan these into my diary to ensure that there is no delay to the court timetable and planning for the child.
- I complete a sibling assessment if there is a sibling group.
- Where children are old enough to understand, I explain the Court process to them and help them understand how decisions about who will look after them are made. I make sure that their views are shared with the Judge.
- I complete direct work with the child, so I know who and what is important to the child within and beyond their immediate family.
- I comply with all Court directions. Where compliance is a problem, I raise this quickly with my team manager and legal service so that the parties and the Court can be notified without delay.

For children/young people subject to Supervision Orders

- I will ensure that for children/young people subject to a Supervision Order that we adhere to the CIN Policy in relation to the frequency of CIN Meetings, Child's Plan and CIN visiting.
- A Supervision Order Review Meeting will take place **3 months prior to the end of the Court Order**. This Meeting will be chaired by my team manager. From this Meeting a recommendation will be made as to whether an application for a further Court Order should be made. If it is agreed that a further period of Supervision Order is required, then we will follow the process for Legal Gateway agreements.
- A Child and Young Persons Assessment will be undertaken **prior** to the Supervision Order Review Meeting. This assessment will inform future decision making about the need to make a further application for an extension to the Supervision Order, or as to continued support for the child/young person and family.

Section 7 and 37 reports – Private Law

- I will use the agreed reporting templates to guide me.
- I will ensure I am aware of the timescales for completion and submission of any section 7 and 37 reports, determined by the courts.
- I will be clear on what has been ordered by the court to consider in my report.
- I will attend hearings at court.
- All my reports will be child focused, ensuring that the needs, wishes and feelings of the child are evident.
- When writing a report, I will consider the Welfare checklist (Children Act 1989) and consider those sections of the checklist which are relevant to a particular child. I will analyse within those factors the relevance and the vulnerability that results in respect of each child.
- I will make every effort to see both parents and any other adult with parental responsibility. I will listen to, acknowledge and reflect their views in the report however understand and will be open with parents that my role is to make recommendations based on my assessment and analysis of what is in the best interests of the child/ren.

- I will draw on information from other professionals who know the child and family and evidence this in my report.
- I will undertake relevant safeguarding checks with other agencies including the police.

For Section 37 reports I will be clear if:

- The Local Authority should consider applying for a Care Order
- If the Local Authority should provide services or assistance for the child and her/his family
- If the Local Authority should take any other action in relation to the child.

For Section 7 reports, I will give consideration about the legal framework for a child, I will consider how much time a child should spend with each parent/carer or the behavioural changes, usually for parents, that will promote the child's healthy development based on the information gathered for the report.

- My recommendations will always aim to improve outcomes for the child and support them to maintain positive family relationships where it is safe to do so.

16- & 17-year-old Homeless Young People

- As team manager, I ensure that the young person who identifies as homeless or at risk of homelessness is allocated a social worker at the point of referral.
- As the social worker I seek consent from the young person to speak to other professionals and their parents/carers. Where this is not possible, I speak with my manager to agree next steps.
- I ensure the young person is aware that an assessment will be completed to understand their needs. I will make sure that the young person understands what this means.
- I ensure that I provide the young person with realistic and full information at the outset of my involvement about the support they can expect to receive as a child looked after under S20 of the Children Act and care leaver, as well as assistance they will receive under S17 of the Children Act if they are not in care so they can make an informed decision regarding their legal status.
- I complete a joint assessment to determine the current needs of the young person; this is completed in partnership with Housing Options and other relevant agencies.

- I will prioritise my attempts to engage parents/carers, extended family, and friends support networks. Where possible and safe to do so I will support my young person to return home or to live with family or friends with the right support.
- If a young person cannot live with family, I will support the young person and their family to rebuild and maintain relationships.
- As the social worker, I hold partners and other key people to account to ensure that the young person's needs are met, and they are protected from harm.

Children living with extended family in informal arrangements

- When children are living in informal kinship arrangements, I will advise carers to seek independent legal advice to ensure that they are aware of their legal rights.
- Should informal kinship carers request additional support from the local authority, a S17 assessment will be completed, considering any support needs and including consideration of financial assessment or support.

Carer Recruitment and Assessment

- I respond to initial enquiries **within 5 working days** and provide the enquirer with any further information they require to inform their decision in relation to pursuing a career in fostering.
- I signpost them to our Barnsley website where they can access an information pack and also signpost to our Facebook page.
- Where the enquirer or member of the household is known to the fostering service or Children's Social Care, I pass the enquiry to a manager for a decision on how to proceed.
- If the managers decision is not to progress the enquiry, I communicate this decision and the reasons for the decision to the enquirer and follow this up in writing before closing down the referral.
- I keep track of enquiries on a daily basis. If the enquirer has not responded to our correspondence **after 2 weeks**, the enquiry form is closed, and the manager informed of the outcome.

- I undertake a home visit **within 10 working days**, during which I explore the applicant's suitability to foster. I consider all members of the household, the suitability of the home, previous fostering/adoption applications or experience, previous significant relationships and the health of the potential carers.
- If after the telephone discussion and home visit, it is my assessment that the applicant is not suitable to foster, I discuss the reason for this with my manager and I notify the applicant verbally, providing written confirmation if required of the service's decision. The home visit form is authorised by my manager.
- I inform all enquirers and applicants of their right to make a complaint to the Fostering Service and how to do this, if they do not agree with the outcome of their enquiry or stage 1 assessment.
- If the home visit is successful, I proceed to send an application form and ensure I receive this back to the service **within 10 working days**.
- On receipt of the application form, our Business Support team complete all statutory checks, not limited to Probation, Children's Social Care, Education and the applicants right to work in the UK. Business Support record the dates these checks are requested and the outcome. The social worker undertakes a DBS check and reviews all the checks once received. The Manager is notified if any check outcomes raise concerns.
- Business Support request 2 personal references and obtain these in written form. The social worker, as part of their assessment, obtains a family reference.
- Business Support request medical oversight of each applicant's fitness to foster.
- All applicants are booked onto and attend preparation training and I consider their engagement and learning from this as part of my assessment.
- I undertake a stage 2 assessment of the applicants and prepare a written report that includes all relevant information, a recommendation as to the applicant's suitability to foster and proposals in relation to terms of approval. I undertake health and safety checks of the applicant's home as well as any relevant risk assessments including transport and pets.
- Where I become concerned about the applicant's suitability to foster, part way through the assessment, I compile a brief report documenting the work undertaken to date and present this to the Fostering Panel for consideration as to whether the assessment should be terminated.
- I share my completed assessment with the applicants for their comments and agreement. I take into consideration issues of consent for information sharing and redact the assessment if necessary and in consultation with my manager.
- Upon completing the assessment, I present the applicants assessment to the Fostering Panel. I fully prepare the applicants for attendance at the Fostering Panel.
- When a child is placed with any connected carer under Reg 24, the assessing social worker will adopt a dual role of the supervising and assessing social worker during the period of assessment to meet timescales for all visits.

- I complete the entire assessment process for mainstream and full connected carers, from initial enquiry through to approval at Fostering Panel and ADM **within 24 weeks (6 months)**.
- I will complete a connected carer assessment within 16 weeks, where a child is already placed under regulation 24.
- If I need more than 16 weeks, I will ensure my manager is aware and I will present to fostering panel for an extension in line with the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations) 2010.
- As the team manager, I will undertake an annual audit of the file.
- I will ensure I refer to the deadline document for the timing of assessment to be presented to the Fostering Panel for approval, which includes ensuring my paperwork is with my manager 24 days prior to panel. I will receive my paperwork back from my manager by 21 days before panel. Panel admin will have all the paperwork 14 days before fostering/review panel.
- Following Fostering Panel, I will arrange a handover joint visit with their new supervising social worker and complete a case transfer summary.

Foster care supervision and support

- I will ensure that newly approved foster carers are allocated a mentor for the first 6 to 12 months following approval.
- I will support newly approved carers to work towards meeting the Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Carers. I will ensure that all foster carers' training and development needs are identified and have personal development plans.
- As a manager, upon allocation of a carer household, I will ensure the SSW reads the Form F assessment and the last 2 panel and agency decision making decisions so to be familiar with the family and to ensure any outstanding actions are addressed.
- I will complete supervisory visits to foster carers homes, once a week during the first 4 weeks of approval and when a child\ren is placed, then fortnightly for two months and subsequently **every four weeks**. This will be reviewed in line with the foster carers needs.
- I will ensure that the frequency of visits ties to the foster carers support needs,

and their learning and development needs. We have ensured that the frequency set and agreed between the Supervising Social Worker and Manager is recorded on the foster carer's record.

- I will speak with the foster child and any birth children a minimum of every 3 months to ascertain their views.
- I will record supervisory visit on the system within 72 hours (3 days) of the visit taking place. I will record the foster carers practice, giving specific example, recording impact and an analysis. Foster carers will be given a copy of their supervision notes within one week of the visit taking place.
- I will ensure that I make both **announced and unannounced** visits to the foster carer. I will ensure that there are 2 unannounced home visits a year as good practice.
- During the supervisory visit, I will ensure that discussions take place about all issues regarding any child in placement and any issues relevant to the fostering task. This will include, for example, support, learning and development opportunities, and family dynamics. Discussions will particularly focus on how children's needs are being met within the placement, and how the child can be helped to achieve their maximum potential.
- I will regularly review a foster carer's training needs and support them in their development, recording the impact of training attended in their supervisory visits. I will complete an annual Personal Professional Development Plan with foster carers.
- When a child has been living with a foster carer for six months, I will have discussions with the foster carers, IRO and child's social worker about long term matching/permanence panel.
- I will ensure that foster carers are aware of the out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT) and have the correct e mail and contact numbers.
- I will remind foster carers of their responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any significant changes. For example, changes in employment, entering into a new relationship, offences or deteriorating health issues.
- I will attend all relevant meetings in relation to the child/young person and family and support the foster carer in attending all the relevant meetings.
- In supporting foster carers, I will actively work with the child/young person's Social Worker and team around the placement. We understand that by doing this we can support the carers to work to fulfil the child/young person's care plan.
- Where carers are finding it difficult to meet the needs of the child/young person in placement, I will refer into the Vulnerable Placement Panel (VPP) so we can have a discussion and agree next steps.
- Within a week of the VPP a placement support meeting should take place with all professionals involved with the family. If this is not possible, I will complete a joint visit with the child's social worker before the placement support meeting date.

From the meeting a SMART plan will be devised and reviewed in four weekly meetings.

- I will attend Placement disruption meetings with the child/young person's Social Worker and foster carer, when a placement has had a unplanned ending. The Disruption Meeting will take place as soon as the foster carer has given notice in writing.
- For placements I will complete a risk assessment, health and safety and review the safer caring policy. I will complete risk assessments regarding bedroom sharing when this is necessary.
- I am aware of our role when allegations are made against foster carers and will follow the guidance. In all circumstances I will seek advice and guidance from my manager.
- I will ensure that a Foster Carer Review takes place annually. The first year review will be presented at the fostering panel.
- I will ensure I refer to the 'Review Deadline Document' for the timing for the review which includes; ensuring my paperwork is with my manager 24 days prior to panel. I will receive my paperwork back from my manager 21 days before panel. Panel admin will have all the paperwork 14 days before fostering/review panel.
- I will ensure that the Social Worker for any child/young person currently placed, or those placed and have moved on within that year, have been consulted and their views are incorporated into our written report.
- I will seek out and record in our report the voice of the child/young person and gather their views of their experience within this placement.
- I will share and discuss or report with the foster carer before the Review meeting and ensure that they are able to comment on its content.
- I will ensure that the foster carer takes part in their Review.
- As part of the annual review process, I will update the carers health and safety assessment, risk assessment, safe care plan and pet questionnaire as these **must** be reviewed annually.
- I will review the delegated authority in partnership with the foster carer and the child/young person's Social Worker.
- I will remind foster carers that they are to give 28 days' notice when they wish to cease caring for a child and to promote a planned move.
- When an allegation has been made against a foster carer or child, I will refer the foster carer to FosterTalk for independent support through the investigation process.
- I will ensure foster carers receive a copy of, sign and adhere to the Foster Carer Agreement, which is completed after a foster carers review.

- I will encourage foster carer (where risk assessed) to promote family time between children and their birth family- facilitating, transporting and/or supervising.
- I will ensure that the foster carers know of the various support groups within the Local Authority and attends these to gain support from the wider fostering community.
- I will ensure that every foster carer and member of the fostering household over the age of 16 years has a DBS in place, and that these are updated **every three years**.
- I will ensure that every foster carer has a medical **every two years** and these are kept up to date.
- I will support the foster carer to progress through the skills level progression framework.

SGO Support

- Once a referral is received the Team Manager will allocate to the social worker within **24 hours**.
- As the social worker, I see the child and family within the timescale set by the manager in allocation, always within **5 working days**.
- As the Social worker I will complete a Children and Young person's assessment with **45 working days**.
- As the social worker, I clearly explain to the child and their carers the purpose of my involvement and how I will undertake the assessment.
- As the social worker I will share the outcome of my assessment with the child and their carers explaining what will happen next.
- As the social worker I will visit the child and their family every **6 weeks**, this will include seeing the child alone and seeing the child's bedroom.
- Following the completion of the assessment the social worker will complete an SGO Support Plan. This support plan will be SMART and detail what support is

being offered to the child and their family.

- If an application to the Adoption Support Fund is required, I will complete this within within 3 months of assessing a family's support needs.
- As the social worker making the application to the Adoption support fund, I will source the right therapy for the child and the family the outcome of the assessment will have informed the therapy identified.
- As the social worker I will contact the therapist, make a referral and receive a proposal for the therapy to be undertaken.
- As the social worker I will make the application and it will be authorised by the Team Manager.
- The Adoption support fund timescales for the application to be approved are usually **25 days**. Following the approval as the social worker I will inform the therapist and the family, and the therapist will arrange a date for the therapy to commence.
- As the social worker I will then close the case if the family do not need the continued support and a closure summary will be completed. The social worker will apply for additional therapy should that be identified.
- If the family continue to need support from the social worker, as the social worker I will arrange regular Team Around the Family meetings to offer support.

Private Fostering

- Once a referral is received the Team Manager will allocate to the social worker within **24 hours**.
- As the Private Fostering (PF) social worker I will be allocated as a secondary worker and complete the private fostering assessment and visits to the child and carers as per private fostering regulations.
- As the PF social worker, I see the child and family within the timescale set, always within **5 working days**.
- As the PF Social worker I will complete a Private Fostering assessment within **45 working days**.
- As the PF social worker I will ensure that the Private fostering carers details are correct and recorded on our electronic recording system.
- As the PF social worker I will visit within the 1st week of placement as defined in the Private fostering regulations. Subsequently, as the social worker I will visit the child and their family every **6 weeks**, this will include seeing the child alone and seeing the child's bedroom.

- As PF the social worker, I will clearly explain to the carers and the child the purpose of my involvement. My assessment addresses whether or not the arrangement is viable and suitable.
- As the social worker I will complete a DBS on the Private fostering carers and any adult in the household over the age of 16.
- I will discuss with the carers regarding finances to ensure that they are in a position to provide the right support for the child.
- As the social worker I will undertake a Health and Safety assessment of the home and request the carers obtain two referees as part of the assessment who can comment on their parenting capacity and the ability to keep the child safe.
- As the social worker I will liaise with the child's school to ensure that the carer can support their educational needs.
- I will visit and obtain consent from the parents that they are happy with the arrangement and gain medical consent.
- As the social worker I will notify Health and education department of the private fostering arrangement.
- As the social worker I will ensure that the child is registered with a GP and a dentist.
- I will share the outcome of my assessment with the carers and the child explaining what will happen next.
- As the social worker, if the Private fostering assessment is negative, I will inform the allocated social worker to the child.
- Once the child is 16 years of age the private fostering arrangement will end, and the carers and family will be informed.

Short Breaks

- At the point of screening carers will be offered a short breaks assessment with a family support worker or a CYP assessment under section 17. The difference between these will be explained to carers to enable them to make an informed choice
- Direct payment assessment can be offered by family support workers
- If the package of support requested is likely to exceed 20 hours per week a joint assessment with FSW and social worker should be completed.

If a Short Break assessment is agreed:

- FSW will make contact within 5 working days of allocation.
- Assessments will be completed within 20 working days.
- Application will be made to next accessible Short Breaks panel once consent is given by the parent or carer.

- If a direct payment is agreed by panel and ratified by senior manager, the referral will be made to brokerage within 5 working days once consent is given.
- FSW will arrange a joint visit with brokerage service to support with set up of direct payment.
- Once in place the FSW will review within the first 6 months and annually thereafter.
- FSW will attend annual review for child and provide social care advice and escalate case if needed.

If section 17 assessment is requested by the parent in respect of short breaks

- A FSW will be co-allocated to support.
- The Social worker will see the child within 5 working days of allocation.
- The C&YP Assessment will be completed within 20 working days.
- Short Application will be made to next accessible Short breaks panel once consent is given by the carer.
- At completion of section 17 step-down to family support worker will be discussed with parent and if agreed step-down plan will be completed and shared with parents and professionals.
- All overnight short breaks will be assessed under Section 17, and the rationale for the recommendation under which legislation the short break be offered be clearly reflected.

Short Breaks Provided Under Section 17

- Prior to the overnight short break taking place a Placement Planning Meeting must take place with the provider, social worker, parents, and education, where appropriate. The aim of the meeting will be to complete the Short Breaks Placement Plan, to assess and discuss risk, staffing ratio, medications, the child's routine, and care needs. This can be combined with a Child in Need Meeting.
- A child in need plan is required covering all the support services provided and how the child and family's identified needs are to be met. This also needs to include outcomes in relation to preparing for adult hood such as socialisation and independence.
- For children that are open solely for the purpose of an overnight short break, the first visit must take place within three months of the first placement day. Subsequent visits should be at intervals of no more than six months. This recognises the fact that children go home after a short period in placement to their parents, who are nearly always best able to see whether the placement is meeting their child's needs or not. There are also no safeguarding concerns regarding the family.

- There should be a child in need review at least every 6 months to the review the child's Child in Need Plan. This review can be combined with other reviews e.g. education, EHC Review.
- Visiting and Meeting timescales are to be confirmed in supervision with Team Manger.
- There are no time limits in law on s17 short breaks, so longer stays away from home may still be treated as s17 if all of the other safeguarding factors are well met.

Short Breaks Provided Under Section 20(4) Regulation 48

If short breaks are provided under Section 20(4) we need to consider if Regulation 48 applies. Regulation 48 applies if:

- The child is accommodated for 24 hours or more.
- Breaks are pre-planned and all in the same setting;
- The child is accommodated for no more than 75 days in the year;
- Each break is less than 17 days.
- If a child is in receipt of more than 75 nights a year overnight respite the child will become a looked after child, subject to a Shared Care Arrangement. This is not subject to Regulation 48 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations. This requires parental consent and approval by Head of Service prior to commencing. LAC Procedures will commence.

Children who are being assessed for/have an Education Health and Care Plan

- The Social worker/FSW will be registered to use EHCP hub.
- The allocated worker will provide social care advice in respect of sections D and H of the EHCP. This will clearly identify the child's social care needs including preparation for adulthood. The child's voice will be central to this.
- The allocated worker will attend the annual EHCP review
- The allocated worker will attend any mediation meetings where elements of an EHCP are disputed.
- Should a case go to education tribunal as part of the national trial the allocated worker will discuss with their manager and meet with the senior EHC co-ordinator to agree the LA position.
- If required to attend as a witness the allocated worker will attend the education tribunal.

- Any recommendations made by the tribunal will be discussed in supervision. If the local authority is unable to meet a recommendation or are not in agreement the team manager will write to the tribunal judge setting out the local authorities position and rationale.

Transitions to adulthood

- As a social worker I recognise the importance of the transition to adulthood and will work with young people, families and services to support this process, focussing on the needs of the young person
- When a young person has complex or additional needs or vulnerabilities but does not automatically meet the criteria for a transition to adult services, then the social worker should make a referral to Directions Panel. This referral should be completed after the young person's 16th birthday

For children and young people with additional needs who are allocated within DCT:

- The allocated worker should complete a Notification to Adults Social Care should be made when the young person turns 14 (or as soon as is possible if young person is older than 14 when first referred in). This to be sent to adults services alongside a completed Transitions Checklist. It is not anticipated that all tasks on the checklist will be completed at this point in the pathway.
- The allocated social worker will complete the Transitions Support Assessment when the young person is 16 (to be completed before the child's 17th birthday).

This will be sent to adults services alongside a completed Transitions Checklist, it is not anticipated that all tasks on the checklist will be completed at this point in the pathway.

- The allocated worker will complete Adults Continuing Care Checklist and submit to ICB Continuing Health Care Team when young person turns 17. If young person already receives support from Children's Continuing Care then worker to liaise with ICB over who is most appropriate to complete the checklist.
- Allocated worker to complete a referral for Diagnostic Assessment when young person is 17 and 6 months (referral cannot be made before this time). If young person has had a CAMHS Cognitive Assessment since turning 16 this referral may not be needed, discussion should be had with the allocated adults worker. If the young person has a significant learning disability or has no learning/cognitive needs a discussion should be had with the allocated adults worker as to whether an assessment is appropriate.
- Allocated worker to complete a joint visit with allocated adults worker when young person is over 17 and 6 months (this may be earlier if the case is deemed to be more complex due to young person's needs or legal status).
- Allocated worker from adults to be invited to all meetings once the young person is 16.
- If the young person is Looked After the social worker must also follow the pathway for referral to Future Directions.
- If there are DOLS or ongoing proceedings within the court of protection all orders should be shared with the adults worker and included in the care plan prior to the child turning 18.

Glossary of Acronyms

CIC	Children in care
CP	Child protection
CIN	Child in need
ICPC	Initial child protection conference
IRO	Independent reviewing officer
PLO	Public law outline
LGM	Legal Gateway panel
VPP	Vulnerable Placements Panel
PSORP	Placement Sufficiency Oversight Resource Panel
Care4Us Council	Voice and influence group
PDR	Personal Development Review
RCPC	Review Child Protection Conference
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan
ADM	Agency Decision Maker
SWET assessment	Social Work Evidence Template
CMH	Case Management Hearing
IRH	Issues Resolution Hearing

OASY	One Adoption South Yorkshire
CAFCASS	Child and Family Court Advisory and Support Service