

Resource and Care Panel Policy

Children's Social Care

Implemented: September 2016

Revised: August 2019

Due for Review: August 2020

Table of Contents

Purpose of resource and care panel.....	3
Principles of this policy	3
Time and Venue	4
Panel Members.....	4
Referral process to panel	5
Panel process and agenda.....	5
Outcomes and decision making.....	5

Appendices

Appendix A Referral and decision forms for resource and care panel	7
--	---

Purpose of Resource and Care Panel

- 1.1 The resource and care panel will review and make decisions where:
- a) An assessment identifies that a child or young person's needs may require them to be Looked After, and all other alternative options have been explored and ruled out. Full details of the desired type of placement and the care plan for the child/young person must be covered in the referral form;
 - b) A continued placement requires agreement following an Emergency Protection Order, Police Protection Power, or a child becoming Looked After under Section 20;
 - c) A child becomes looked after in the week since the last panel and will be discussed to ensure that there is senior leadership scrutiny and oversight of initial care planning to ensure that a return home to family is explored at the earliest opportunity, where it is safe and appropriate to do so. The panel chair may decide to review the case each week until such time as they are satisfied that suitable support is being given to the child and their family to affect their safe return home to the family or wider network;
 - d) A current external placement or provider is requesting a higher level of support or alternative package of support;
 - e) A support package has been agreed for a Child in Need, including those children/young people Looked After and Leaving Care in excess of £1000.
 - f) A request has been made by the panel for presentation.

Principles of this Policy

- 1.2 Agreement for a child to come into the care of the Local Authority is a significant decision and one that should not take place without due process. Through our relationship based practice and our commitment to the principles enshrined in the Children Act 1989 we will always try to support the network around a child to successfully care for them and unless it is unsafe for a family to care for their child our aim will be to support their safe return home when they do become looked after.
- 1.3 We believe that good practice only happens through the **relationships** we have with the children, young people and adults we are trying to help. We will always be careful to **balance the authority** we have with **empathy** and **respect** for everyone with whom we work.
- 1.4 The children's resource and care panel aims to ensure that this value is delivered in practice. In doing so the panel will:
- a) Ensure that every consideration is given to supporting a child or young person to live safely and happily within their home environment or extended family whenever it is safe enough to do so,
 - b) Ensure that where a child does need to be looked after; in house resources are considered as the first option and used whenever possible and in the child's best interest.
 - c) Ensure that when a child does become looked after our social work and allied support services (including but not exclusively: reunification services, Staying Together, MST, FFT, and any services developed under any future preventative/support scheme) rapidly develop a care plan where a return home is the plan and that this plan is understood by the child and their family network.

- d) Aim to reduce the use of external resources, especially residential, so as to keep children connected to their schools, support networks and local communities whenever it is safe enough to do so,
- e) Ensure that where there are housing needs resulting from intentional homelessness that these are short term and resolved at the earliest opportunity and any learning is progressed through our joint forums with housing.
- f) Ensure that newly looked after children and their family/family network are provided the appropriate resources and services to enable them to return home safely and quickly.
- g) Agree and review external placements for young adults leaving our care including unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The request MUST be presented to the panel following the child's last looked after children's review and before his/her 18th birthday.
- h) Agree and review all requests for support where a family present as intentionally homeless and support is required under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
- i) Agree and review any single request for support for a child/young person/family in excess of £1000.

Time and Venue

- 1.5 The panel will meet weekly on a Thursday at 2:00pm and will take place at the Bexley Civic Centre. Dates of all panel meetings will be sent in advance to attendees by the panel administrator.
- 1.6 The panel should not be cancelled under any circumstances, without the prior agreement of the Chair of the Panel.

Panel Members

- 1.7 Resource and care panel members will include:
 - a) Deputy Director as Chair;
 - b) Service Manager of Fostering and Placement as Vice Chair;
 - c) In the event neither the chair nor the vice chair are available, another Head of Service must attend and chair;
 - d) One representative from the virtual school;
 - e) The service manager of the Independent Reviewing service;
 - f) The team manager of the Staying Together service;
 - g) A finance service officer who will maintain a running log of all expenditure for sign off by the deputy director;
 - h) One representative of the Housing Department;
 - i) A dedicated business support officer to record decisions and actions for inclusion on the child's record.
- 1.8 Panel members must declare any involvement or pre-existing knowledge of a case being presented in the meeting.

Referral Process to Panel:

- I.9 Any child or young person who meets the criteria listed above must be referred to the resource and care panel. Referrals will be made using the form contained in Appendix A and can be accessed under forms on Liquid Logic. All referrals to panel are to be emailed no later than three working days before to the panel's administrator at Resourcepanel@bexley.gov.uk.
- I.10 Referrals should be succinct but contain enough information for the panel to have an understanding of the significant events in a child's life and to inform discussions and key recommendations or decisions. Additional reports should not be submitted along with a referral form unless the chair gives agreement.
- I.11 Referrals should also outline in the SoS framework what services were tried before and why this proved insufficient in meeting the child's needs. This helps justify the need for a more costly and intensive resource where no other voluntary or less costly option is available or sufficient in meeting the child's needs.
- I.12 Panel members are expected to read all referrals and come to panel prepared with questions and comments.
- I.13 All referrals must be signed off as ready to proceed by the relevant service manager.

Panel Process and Agenda

- I.14 The chair is responsible for facilitating discussions in a timely, respectful and focused manner using the agenda set out below.
- I.15 In order for panel to proceed in a timely and focused manner it requires panel members to come prepared having read all referrals prior. It also requires social workers and team managers to complete referrals properly, in a timely way, and present in a succinct and focused way on why the resource is needed for the child.
- I.16 **The agenda for case presentations will be as follows:**
 - a) Introductions
 - b) Review of previous recommendations when applicable
 - c) Social worker or team manager gives brief case summary and what they are seeking from panel
 - d) Chair opens discussion from panel members
 - e) Chair summarises discussion and recommendations or decisions made

Outcomes and Decision Making

- I.17 When reaching recommendations and decisions the chair should solicit the views of all panel members.
- I.18 The chair will confirm the decision and summarise the reasons for this at the end of each presentation, this will be recorded in an action log of each meeting and directly onto the child/young person's electronic case record.
- I.19 **The panel is able to make the following recommendations and decisions:**
 - a) Approve funding for requested resource;
 - b) Decline the requested resource and recommend alternative resources and approve their expenditures;

- c) Defer the funding request to another panel date (in cases where further assessment or information is needed, or where further agreements are required which are beyond the panel's remit – ie: joint funding arrangements with health and education services);
 - d) Decline funding approval for the requested resource;
 - e) Authorisation of any expenditure will be made and signed off by the Chair on the decision sheet in Appendix A.
- 1.20 The panel may further decide that any case where funding for a resource is approved be reviewed again by the panel, with a date and/or frequency specified. Failure to bring a presentation back to panel as requested may result in the funding for the resource being ended, unless otherwise agreed by the panel chair. It is the role of the Chair to ensure, with the Panel minute taker, that presentations are returned to Panel for review in a timely manner.
- 1.21 The Panel should reserve itself to making decisions on resource and expenditure issues and avoid making case management type recommendations that may substantially change a child's plan.

Part A – To be completed by worker

Appendix A

Resource and Care Panel Referral

Name of Worker	Team	Date

Name of Subject Child/Young Person (s)	Date of Birth	Age

Relevant Family Members (starting with the children and including all carers):

Name	Date of Birth	Age	Relationship to child (or self)

Who else is part of the family's support network? (friends, professionals, community members)

Name	Role

Has a family network meeting already taken place? Yes No

Is there a safety plan already in place for the child(ren)? Yes No

If you answered no to any of the above questions, please explain why:

--

Brief summary of the main issues

(Only write the key events that took place for the child/ren that led to this referral being made.)

--

What recommendations or decisions are you seeking from the panel?

(Think about what the panel can do to help create a better and safer outcome for the child. State why any placement you are seeking for the child is necessary and why other voluntary or in house resources are insufficient in meeting the child's needs. This needs to be linked to the child's care plan.)

--

Views of the parents/carers

--

Child/ren's wishes and feelings

--

What are the projected costs of the resource and service being sought?

(State what your projected costs are for the stated resource on a weekly basis and the total cost for the projected period you will need it for, or to a maximum of one year if it is projected to be longer.)

--

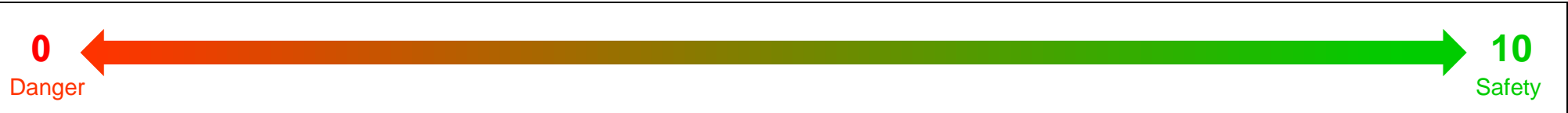
Signs of Safety Case Summary

Child/ren's Name	Date of Birth	Ethnicity	Disability/Special Need	Legal Status

What are we worried about?	What is working well?	What needs to happen?
Past Harm	Existing Strengths	Next Steps
Future Danger	Existing Safety	
Complicating Factors		

Danger Statement	Safety Goals

On a scale of 0–10, where 10 means the child(ren) are safe and supported enough and we no longer need to be involved or no longer need extra resources, and 0 means things are so dangerous or unstable for the child(ren) we must take action to remove them and place them in the care of someone safer or provide extra support, where do you rate this situation today?



Name	Role or Relation to Child	Scaling	Reasons

Referral Completed and Authorised by:

Name of Worker	Signature	Date
Name of Team Manager	Signature	Date
Name of Service Manager	Signature	Date

Please note that referrals that are submitted late, incomplete, or unsigned may be rejected and deferred by the panel chair.

Part B – To be completed by panel chair

Name of Child/ren	Name of Worker	Team

Resource and Care Panel Decisions

The panel agreed that:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

- Resource approved
 Alternate resource approved
 Deferred to: _____
 Resource declined
 Return to panel (date or frequency): _____

What is the rationale for the recommendations and decisions made:

Name of Chair

Signature

Date