

North West Notification and Transfer of Children Subject of Child Protection Plans across Local Authority Boundaries Procedure

Introduction

1. This procedure is intended to apply to a child and their brothers and sisters, including unborn children. This document will refer to the 'child' with an understanding that there may be multiple children to which the procedure applies. Specific reference should be made to *North West Pre-Care and Care Proceedings Notification and Transfer across Local Authority Boundaries Procedure* where care proceedings are being considered.

Purpose

2. This procedure aims to:
 - i. Promote the safe and efficient transfer of children subject of Child Protection Plans in and out of the local authority area
 - ii. Promote consistent action and responses to the transfer of cases where children are subject of a Child Protection Plan to and from other local authority areas
 - iii. Ensure a quality assessment that informs evidenced-based, defensible decision-making throughout case transfer to avoid drift or delay.

Principles

3. This procedure should be applied based on the following principles:
 - i. The child's welfare and safety are paramount.
 - ii. Promoting and creating positive communication and information sharing between referring and receiving local authority areas in respect of children subject of Child Protection Plans.
 - iii. Promoting effective Child Protection Plan case transfers to avoid drift and delay for the child and their parents/carers and to ensure children are safeguarded.
 - iv. Ensuring services in the local area are identified and offered in a timely manner to children suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm who move across local authority boundaries.
 - v. Child Protection Planning is robust and timely, considers all available information, the impact of the history, lived experience, and trauma upon the strengths, needs, and risks of the child.

Movement of children subject of a Child Protection Plan from another local authority (inward)

4. All requests for a transfer-in conference should be received via the local authority's 'front door', such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The 'front door'/ MASH Team

should load the contact and then share this with the Child Protection Reviewing Officer team (immediately) who will respond to the request for a transfer-in conference.

5. The receiving local authority 'front door'/ MASH will also notify the Children's Social Work Team Manager, in the locality where the child is to be resident, of the possibility of a transfer-in conference.
6. It is the responsibility of the referring local authority to ensure that written follow-up is made in a timely manner. Where a request is made by telephone, this should then be put in writing and sent via secure email. The **15 working day** timescale for convening the transfer-in conference will commence upon receipt of the written information. See 7 for required written information.
7. Following a request for a transfer-in conference, the referring Child Protection Reviewing Officer (CPRO) will collate relevant information. As a minimum this will include:
 - i. Details of all child/ren subject of a Child Protection Plan – name, DOB, current and planned addresses, gender, ethnicity
 - ii. Details of any brothers and sisters– names, DOB, current and planned addresses, gender, ethnicity
 - iii. Details of parents and/or carers – names, DOB, current and planned addresses, gender, ethnicity
 - iv. Details of other adults who will be living at the planned address
 - v. Full details of the allocated Social Worker – their name, work address, telephone number and email address
 - vi. Team manager's name and contact information
 - vii. Background information relating to the case – reason for the Child Protection Plan, category of abuse, length of time the child has been the subject of a plan, assessment and intervention work undertaken, the organisations involved and the planned outcomes for the child. This information should specifically include documentation relating to risk of and/or specialist multi-agency intervention pertaining to complex/contextual safeguarding or children missing from home, care or education.
 - viii. Copies of the assessment, Child Protection Plan, minutes of the Initial Child Protection Conference, Child Protection Review Conferences, all core group minutes, and all other relevant assessments or information, including the Section 47 Child Protection Enquiry
 - ix. A template is appended to the end of this document that is recommended to be used.
8. The transferring authority should send the information above (7) within 3 days of the initial contact seeking transfer, to avoid delay for the 15 working day timescale for convening the transfer-in conference.
9. The documents listed above in 7. viii. should be uploaded on to the child's file in the receiving authority, when they are provided.

10. This information should enable the receiving local authority to gain an up-to-date understanding of the child, and the referring authority must ensure that the information is current. Good quality information about the child and their circumstances will enable the receiving authority to be confident in their decision-making, ensuring there is no drift or delay in achieving positive outcomes for the child. Where the assessment, plan, or minutes are unclear, the receiving local authority can request further clarity on information.
11. The receiving CPRO will then:
 - i. Establish if the receiving local authority holds any historical information in relation to the child, their brothers and sisters, their parents, or carers and record the information in the relevant format in the electronic case management system.
 - ii. Liaise with the Front Door/ MASH to request that information is shared to enable all relevant systems in Children's Services and in partner agencies to be updated to include details of the child and their status.
 - iii. Inform the Children's Social Work Team Manager, in the locality where the child is to be resident, of the intention to convene a transfer-in conference and provide the background information to the case; sharing contact details for the referring Local Authority.
 - iv. Request and convene the transfer-in conference within 15 working days of written notification of the permanent address.
 - v. Where this is required, include in the recommendations of the transfer-in conference the need to undertake an assessment in the receiving local authority.
12. The Social Worker/ Children's Social Work Team Manager in the receiving local authority should always consider the need to read the case records held by the referring local authority. This can be either done 'on-site' or through a secure virtual platform, such as Microsoft Teams. It is always encouraged that historical records relating to the child or their family in the referring local authority are accessed and read by the allocated worker in the receiving local authority.
13. Where the child and their family are moving to the receiving local authority and the planned address is temporary, e.g. a refuge, supported housing provision, or other temporary accommodation, the CPRO will collate the information as outlined above. The information should then be passed to the Team Manager, Conference and Review.
14. The Team Manager, Conference and Review will be responsible for liaising with the referring local authority on at least a monthly basis to monitor the progress of the case and continue to confirm plans to secure permanent accommodation in the receiving local authority area.
15. Where a permanent address has been secured, the transfer-in conference should be convened within 15 working days of written notification of the permanent address by the Team Manager, Conference and Review, in line with the requirements above.

16. A permanent move is defined in this procedure as:
- The family have moved to another area.
 - They are clear that they are not planning to return to the area that they previously lived in.
 - There is evidence that other arrangements to settle into the new area have been made. This could include accessing education, health or other services.
17. Responsibility for the Child Protection Plan during the period living in temporary accommodation will remain with the referring local authority, until the transfer-in conference has been held in the receiving local authority, and a decision on whether a Child Protection Plan is required has been taken. The referring local authority is responsible for linking in with local professionals and can expect the receiving local authority to share contact details, where they are not easily available.
18. If after a period of three months the child and their family continue to live in temporary accommodation in the receiving local authority, a transfer-in conference must be arranged within 15 working days. This will be the responsibility of the Team Manager, Conference and Review, in line with the requirements.
19. At the transfer-in Child Protection Conference, the CPRO will ensure any gaps in information/ assessment are identified and action is taken to address this. This includes the allocated worker completing an assessment. Action and recommendations should be monitored at future Child Protection Review Conferences until fully completed.
20. Where an assessment is not completed in time for the first Child Protection Review Conference in the receiving local authority, the CPRO should ensure this is recorded in the minutes, along with a recommendation for completion in 10 working days. The CPRO should also ensure the relevant Team Manager and the Head of Service is notified.

Movement of Children Subject of a Child Protection Plan to another Local Authority (Outward)

21. It is the responsibility of the Social Worker, or in their absence their manager, to notify the local authority's 'front door', such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), when a child who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan is intending to move or has already moved out of the area, whether this is to a permanent or temporary address.
22. The notification should be made within one working day from the information coming to the attention of the social worker or their manager.
23. The Social Worker/ Team Manager should provide the following information to the Duty CPRO or Team Manager, Conference and Review:
- i. The address to which the child has moved and confirm whether this is temporary accommodation.
 - ii. The names of all adults who have moved with the child.

- iii. Adults with whom the child will be living with in the receiving local authority area.
- iv. The reason for the move and any additional risks associated with the move to the child.
- v. The arrangements made by the Social Worker/Team Manager to safeguard the child in the receiving local authority area

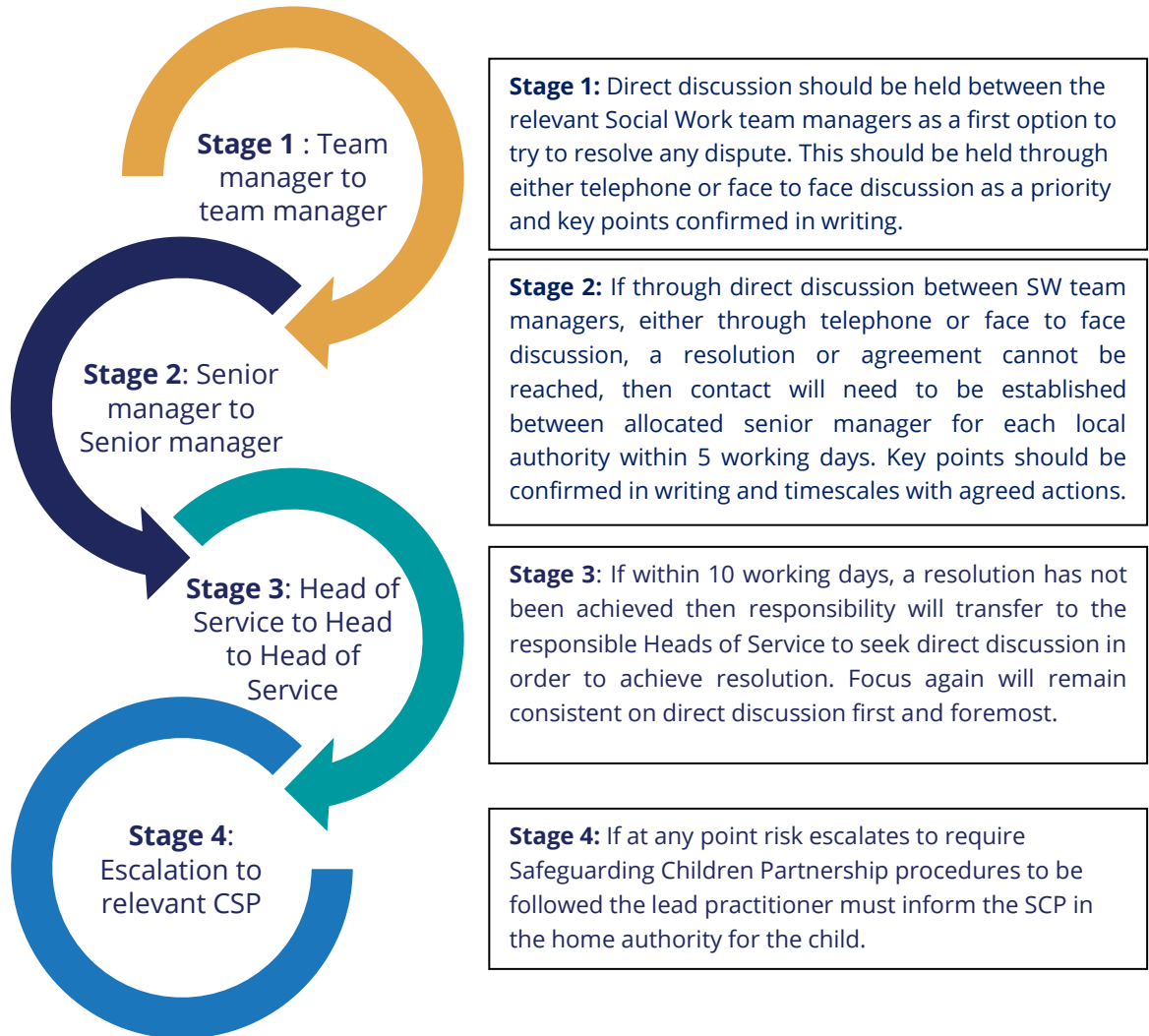
24. The Social Worker/ Team Manager must notify the receiving authority's Children's Social Care services, providing the required information and determining the need for a transfer-in conference.
25. The Duty CRO or Team Manager, Conference and Review will liaise by telephone with their equivalent in the area to which the child has moved. They will provide the required information and determine the need for a transfer-in conference.
26. If a transfer-in conference is to take place, this will be followed up in writing by the CPRO of the referring authority. As a minimum, the following information will be sent securely by the CPRO to the receiving authority:
- i. Details of all child/ren subject of a Child Protection Plan – name, DOB, current and planned addresses, gender, ethnicity
 - ii. Details of any brothers and sisters– names, DOB, current and planned addresses, gender, ethnicity
 - iii. Details of parents and/or carers – names, DOB, current and planned addresses, gender, ethnicity
 - iv. Details of other adults who will be living at the planned address
 - v. Full details of the allocated Social Worker – their name, work address, telephone number and email address
 - vi. Team manager's name and contact information
 - vii. Background information relating to the case – reason for the Child Protection Plan, category of abuse, length of time the child has been the subject of a plan, assessment and intervention work undertaken, the organisations involved and the planned outcomes for the child. This information should specifically include documentation relating to risk of and/or specialist multi-agency intervention pertaining to complex/contextual safeguarding or children missing from home, care or education.
 - viii. Copies of the assessment, Child Protection Plan, minutes of the Initial Child Protection Conference, Child Protection Review Conferences, all core group minutes, and all other relevant assessments or information, including the Section 47 Child Protection Enquiry
 - ix. A template is appended to the end of this document that is recommended to be used.

27. All documents that are sent to other local authority areas should be sent via secure email, with a request that the receiving local authority acknowledge safe receipt; where confirmation is not received within 5 working days, the sender should follow this up.
28. The CPRO Team will notify relevant local partner agencies that the child has moved out of the area and the forwarding address. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Unit to ensure all information is sent and notifications are made in a timely manner.
29. When a date for the transfer-in conference in the receiving local authority has been set, the allocated Social Worker or social work representative from the referring local authority must attend the 'transfer-in' conference. Transfers of cases should never stop the referring local authority from continuing with appropriate planning for children.
30. The Child Protection Plan should not be discontinued until written confirmation has been given by the receiving local authority that the transfer-in conference has been held and a decision made on whether the child remains subject of a Child Protection Plan. On receipt of this notification, the originating Conference and Review Clerk should:
 - a. Confirm the decision of the transfer-in case conference in writing to all relevant organisations and individuals in the area.
 - b. Update the electronic case management system and discontinue the plan, recording the end date as the date the receiving local authority held the transfer-in conference and the decision was made.

Action to be taken in cases where there is dispute or delay in case transfer

31. Communication throughout any dispute remains key priority – ensuring that direct discussion is the primary remit of communication and this is an understanding by all local authority representatives.
32. For clarity, agreed outcomes will be recorded and shared via email to ensure decision making captured on each local authority's electronic recording system.
33. Until dispute is resolved, case responsibility/oversight and decision-making for the child will remain with the referring local authority, including responding to any concern or safeguarding issue. A dispute resolution flowchart is included below (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Dispute resolution



Review

34. This procedure will be reviewed no later than **31 September 2024**.

Child Protection Transfer from another Local Authority

Referring Local Authority	
Name of referrer	
Email Address	
Contact Number	

Please ensure that you have included electronic attachments for all relevant documents.

These should include:

- An up-to-date assessment,
- Child Protection Plan,
- Minutes of the Initial Child Protection Conference,
- Child Protection Review Conferences,
- Core group minutes
- Any other relevant assessments or information, including the Section 47 Child Protection Enquiry.

Name of child/children (including the names which they are known by)	Date of Birth	Gender	Ethnicity	First Language

Name of Parent/ significant adults/ carers for the children	Date of Birth	Gender	Ethnicity	First Language	Relationship with child

Current Address of the Family	Planned address of the Family

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Background information relating to the case - please provide all information below	
Start date of current child protection plan	{DD/MM/YYYY}
Category of abuse	
Has the child previously been subject of a CPP in your area before the current CPP Please include the start and end dates of previous plans in your area and the category of abuse here	{Yes/ No}
Overview of the historical involvement with the child and their family, including any history of previous adoptions of brothers or sisters or previous periods of being a Looked After Child This information should enable the receiving authority to understand the family's historical and current context and enable them to make defensible decisions.	
Assessment and intervention work undertaken, specifically including risk of and/or specialist multi-agency intervention pertaining to complex/contextual safeguarding or children missing from home, care or education. This information should be detailed enough to ensure that the receiving Local Authority can continue with the work that has commenced and avoid a 'start again' approach to services for	

the family. Please outline both what has worked well and where there are gaps in engagement	
The family view of the current plan (including absent parents, parents living apart from child/ren, extended family, support network) Please include any family/network safety or support plan.	
The voice and lived experience of the child/ren. Please include when this was obtained and impact on planning.	
The organisations contributing to the plan currently Please also state how they are contributing and how effective engagement is.	
The planned outcomes for the child Provide information about short and long term plans for the child/children	
Team Manager name and contact details	
Service Manager / HOS name and contact details	

Annex B.

Parties to the Procedure

The following local authorities are party to this procedure by virtue of their membership of the North West Association of Directors of Children's Services. The procedure may be applied to by agreement with other Local Authorities outside the North West on a case-by-case basis, or by ongoing formal agreement.

- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
- Blackpool Council
- Bolton Council
- Bury Council
- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Cumberland Council
- Halton Borough Council
- Knowsley Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Liverpool City Council
- Manchester City Council
- Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- Salford City Council
- Sefton Council
- St Helens Council
- Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- Trafford Council
- Warrington Borough Council
- Westmorland and Furness Council
- Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
- Wirral Council