

Education and Childrens Services

SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY HELP

Permanence Progression Panel Terms of Reference

Practice Guidance

2017

OUR MISSION:

'To improve children and young people's lives by working in partnership to raise aspirations, build achievement, and protect the most vulnerable'

Overview

Early permanency planning is essential for all looked after children/young people to avoid drift and to progress plans for security and facilitate attachment. The objective of **planning for permanence** is to ensure that children/young people have a secure, stable and loving family to support them through childhood and beyond. Senior management oversight ensures plans are robust, timely and meet the needs of the child/young person.

Permanence is a framework of emotional, physical and legal conditions that gives a child/young person a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity.

Permanency is a guiding principle for all our services working with children/young people and their families. It applies to all looked after children/young people and care leavers. We recognise and accept that permanence begins at our front door when a child/young person and their families first make contact with our service. It is a thread that continues throughout the child/young person's involvement with our services and this is embedded in our practice.

Purpose

The Permanence Progression Panel will:

- Ascertain how the child's permanence needs are going to be met.
- Monitor and track the progress of plans which should incorporate parallel planning where appropriate.
- Ensure all plans are progressed in a timely manner.
- Monitor and report on the themes and issues the department can learn from and adapt accordingly.
- Ensure that there is a permanence plan in place by the second looked after review.

Permanence is achieved through a number of routes – return to family, adoption, special guardianship, connected person placement, child arrangement order and long term fostering.

All of these will be duly considered by the Panel and ensure these options are considered for each child/young person as appropriate.

The Permanence Progression Panel will also:

- Advise and make recommendations in respect of care planning and ensure that case planning is effective
- Monitor and advise on permanency planning processes
- Monitor FGC contribution to permanency planning
- Track permanency planning through to point it is secured for the child i.e.: Permanent return to family network, Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangement Order or approved match of a permanent fostering placement
- Focus on plans being progressed in a timely manner
- Endeavour to resolve any presenting issues/obstacles and seek senior manager decisions/view if required and ensure that there is effective communication between the professionals involved
- Escalate concerns with senior manager, as required, where particular cases highlight drift or difficulties that will hinder implementation of agreed plans
- Provide quarterly reports to the Senior Management Team (SMT) on the numbers of cases reviewed, outcomes and any practice issues

Membership

The Permanence Progression Panel will have the following representatives:

- Chairperson – Head of Service
- Deputy Chairperson – CIN or LAC Service Manager
- Case Progression Manager
- IRO Service Manager
- Placement Management Service
- Fostering and Adoption Service Manager
- Panel Administrator

Accountability

The Panel is accountable to the Director of Social Care & Early Help and the Senior Management Team (SMT).

Frequency

The Permanence Progression Panel will take place fortnightly. The frequency of these panels will be subject to review.

The allocated social worker and team manager will be asked to present an update in reference to any identified cases. Information presented to the panel will be both verbal and nonverbal.

The minutes from the Permanence Progression Panel will be available within 3 working days of the panel and be uploaded to the child/young person's Liquid Logic file.

Next Steps

Cases will continue to be monitored by the Permanence Progression Panel until permanence is achieved for the child/young person.