



Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Children in Care

Permanency Panel

Terms of Reference

July 1st 2017

(To be reviewed 1st January 2018)

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Children in Care – Permanence Panel

Terms of Reference

1 Purpose of the Panel

1.1 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council must ensure that there is sufficient accommodation of all types for children in care and meet its sufficiency duty as laid down in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989. The Act requires local authorities to take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the authority's area, which meets the needs of children that the local authority are looking after and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the local authority's area ('the sufficiency duty'). The Statutory guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children 2010 clearly sets out the Local Authorities responsibilities.

1.2 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council must also give due consideration to the permanency placement arrangements for children for whom a return to birth parents, placement with relatives or friends, or adoption, is not possible.

1.3 A permanency arrangement will be one where a child is likely to need to remain until they reach adulthood.

2 Key Objectives of Panel

2.1 i. The Panel will give oversight of arrangements for children where a return to birth parents, placement with relatives or friends, or adoption, is not possible.

- ii. The Panel will consider the needs of all children in the care of the Local Authority requiring long-term permanent placements.
- iii. The Panel will consider the matching of children and young people with long term foster carers where long-term foster placements or Adoption/Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Orders are being considered.
- iv. The Panel will also consider transition plans and 'staying put' arrangements for older young people needing support into adulthood.

3 Key Actions of the Panel

3.1 The Panel will ensure oversight and management of all:

- i. Placements currently within the PLO / Care Proceedings process to ensure that, when required, permanence arrangements are put in place at the earliest opportunity.
- ii. Current short term placements requiring a long term permanence plan; Fostering Long term, Special Guardianship Order and Child Arrangement Order.
- iii. Social Care cases to be presented to the multi-agency Children's Resource Allocation Group (CRAG) for joint tri-partite funding applications.
- iv. Joint / tri-partite funded cases transferring to adult social care responsibility to ensure financial responsibility is also transferred and confirmed.
- v. Placements of young adults aged 17 who have additional needs which will extend into adulthood.
- vi. LAC review notifications from IRO's concerning the identification of issues

regarding approved permanence placements and / or transition plans to adulthood.

3.2 The Panel will also ensure:

- i. There is a clear decision-making trial and financial accountability in place.
- ii. That all planned permanency decisions are progressed in a timely manner.

3.3 The Panel will consider any legal arrangements required to secure the future of the placement particularly whether the child should remain in the care of the local authority or whether other orders would be more secure such as Adoption Orders, Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangement Orders

3.4 The Panel will consider any practical arrangements needed such as single placements, restrictions on the needs of other children placed or any other requirements needed to ensure the placement's long-term success.

3.5 Decisions at Panel will be binding on both placing and providing services. Any proposed changes to the arrangement agreed at Panel will need to be brought back to Panel for further discussion and approval.

4 Accountability and Governance

4.1 The Panel will be chaired by the Head of Service, Children in Care.
The Panel will feed into, and will be held accountable, by the Placement Sufficiency Project Board.

5 Membership

5.1 The Panel will comprise of the following;

- HOS Children in Care – Chair
- Service Manager for Provider Services,
- Service Manager for Children in Care,
- Service Manager – Safeguarding Services,
- Placement Team Manager,
- Team Manager Fostering – Fostering Support,
- Team Manager – Children in Care Team,
- Business Support Officer – Minute Taker.

Other managers and social workers who have a role in the confirmation of the permanency plan will be invited to attend as required.

6 Frequency of Panel

6.1 The Panel will meet once a month on a Friday 09.30am to 12.00pm

7 Structure/Process of Panel

7.1 The Panel consists of three parts:

1. Review of current short term placements to permanence plans;
 - Short term placements requiring permanency.
 - Requiring placement/permanency placement.
 - Progress to Special Guardianship Orders/Child Arrangement Orders/Adoption
2. Oversight of Current Placements/Permanence plans.
3. Social Care cases to be presented to the multi-agency Children’s Resource Allocation Group for joint tri-partite funding applications.

8 Review of current short term placements to permanence plans.

8.1 All children in care will be referred to the Permanency Panel after their second LAC review or as soon as it becomes clear that a return home, placement with family and friends or adoption is not an option.

8.2 The weekly Placement Sufficiency, Oversight and Resource Panel will refer to Permanency Panel all young people who require permanence.

8.3 When a young person has a clear plan for permanence, the relevant professionals to each case will be invited to the panel.

8.4 Each professional will have specific roles and responsibilities:

8.5 Childs Social Worker;

- i. Prior to the panel meeting the child's social worker will ensure the views of the child and the birth parents in respect of the permanence plan are known and available for consideration.
- ii. The child's social worker will complete the Childs section within the Permanency Panel Referral Form on TED. The child's social worker will ensure there is an up-to date (within 3 months) Child and Young Person Assessment available, as well as the IRO's report from the last review meeting.
- iii. The child's social worker will present the child's situation and the permanence plan to Panel.

8.6 The Fostering Service (in house / IFA);

- i. The Fostering Assessment/Support Worker or the Agency Support Worker (if the placement is with an IFA) will ensure that the views of the carers are

known and available for consideration. This will be by way of an assessment of their long-term capacity to meet the child's needs contained within the carers section of the Permanency Panel Referral Form on TED.

- ii. The views of the current carers should be represented at Panel by the Fostering Service. If the placement is with an IFA carer, the plans should have been discussed with the carers and the agency and an agency representative should attend.
- iii. Any decision which affects a foster carer's approval must be agreed at a Fostering Review or any planned fostering review should be brought forward to address the proposed change and the outcome should be ratified by the Fostering Panel at the earliest opportunity.

8.7 The Independent Reviewing Service

- i. The child's IRO or a representative from the Independent Reviewing service should attend Panel to represent the independent view of the child's needs.

9 Post Approval

9.1 Consideration should be given to holding a celebration event to consolidate the permanent placement once this has been agreed.

10 Oversight of Current Placements/Permanence plans.

10.1 When IRO's have concerns regarding a placement of permanence and / or a transition plan into adulthood the concern will be logged at Permanence Panel by the Service Manager of Safeguarding, and the relevant Social Worker and Team Manager will be requested to investigate the concern.

10.2 The Permanence Panel will receive notification of the investigation and agree actions

where appropriate to support the current placement, commence new placement planning or support the transition to adulthood.

11 Social Care cases to be presented to the multi-agency Children’s Resource Allocation Group (CRAG) for joint tri-partite funding applications.

11.1 Placements needing input from more than one service to ensure their success including Adult Services will be referred to CRAG via the Permanency Panel.

11.2 A completed CRAG Referral / Resource Application form should be presented to Permanency Panel for authorisation.

11.3 If authorised Permanency Panel administration will submit the application to the next available CRAG meeting.

12 Business Support – Administration Support to Panel

12.1 Panel administration email contact: PSORPPaneladministration@barnsley.gov.uk

Pre Panel

- Create the agenda for the Permanency Panel from the Permanence placement rolling review spreadsheet and requests from Team Managers and Social Workers, making any adjustments as requested.
- Confirm the agenda with the Chair and relevant Team Managers two weeks prior to the next Panel.
- Distribute the agenda to all panel members, as well as the minutes from the last Panel.
- Invite additional attendees as necessary e.g.: Team Manager and Child’s Social worker, Supervising Social worker, Carer. Chair to confirm invites with Panel Administrator at a pre panel preparation meeting.
- Make any further adjustments to the agenda prior to the Panel date

12.2 During Panel

- Update Panel attendance list.
- Attend Panel, take minutes and record actions.
- Update TED Managers decision on Permanency Panel Referral Form (approved, not approved, further work required)

12.3 Post Panel

- Type up minutes and actions and request authorisation
- Update the rolling permanency panel log
- Send minutes and actions once authorised