Policy

1. The Closure Record summarises the impact of actions and services provided to a child and their family, and the evidence that supports the decision to close a case. This is used when it is planned to cease work with a child or young person and their family.

2. The Closure Record should be completed as soon as the decision to close a case has been made. A case is deemed to be closed from the date the Closure Record is authorised on PARIS by a team manager.

Procedure

3. The procedure for completing the Closure Record is described, step-by-step, in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social worker</td>
<td>Discusses with the team manager, (or senior practitioner, where so delegated), the case for no further action by social care with regard to the needs of the child</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Social worker</td>
<td>Consults the child (where they are of appropriate age and understanding), the parent and other involved professionals, about the decision to take no further action. The social worker must also inform Child Health in writing about case closure. See template Letter to Child Health.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Social worker</td>
<td>Records on the Closure Record the views of the child and parent about the case closure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Social worker</td>
<td>Completes the Closure Record and notifies the team manager.</td>
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<td>5. Team Manager</td>
<td>Authorises the Closure Record, if approved.</td>
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Guidance

4. A Closure Record should include:

   - a summary of the child’s identified developmental needs, strengths and difficulties
   - a summary of Interventions e.g. the actions and services provided and
   - a summary actual outcomes e.g. the progress achieved,
   - the reasons for successful outcomes or for non or partial achievement of the
planned outcomes, since the referral.

- the views of child, their family (and when appropriate, service providers from relevant agencies), about the decision to close the case.

5. If the case is being closed because a child is moving to another local authority area, and the child has continuing needs, a **Referral must** be made to the local authority to which the child is moving, and the date of this **Referral**, and the date of acknowledgement of this **Referral** included in the **Closure Record**.

6. The **Closure Record** provides a summary of the reasons for social work involvement, the work carried out and the progress made (or not, made).

7. The **Closure Record** should:

- support the decision to close a case and
- facilitate and inform decision making if a further referral is received.
Overview

The **Closure Record** is completed in all cases which progress beyond **Initial Assessment** when it is planned to close a case.

The **Closure Record**:  
- draws together information about the impact of actions and services provided to the child and family since the first contact.  
- explains reasons why case is closing.

The decision to close a case is taken by the team manager and the closure process must demonstrate that relevant consultations with family members and other professionals have occurred and usually requires that a CIN Review takes place. See: CIN Review.

Structure of the Closure Record

The structure of the **Closure Record** follows the domains of the **Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families**.

Two further sections record the **parenting capacity** and **environmental factors** for both the **Birth Family** and the 'Corporate Parent'.

The inclusion of a separate section to record the performance of the 'corporate parent' is the result of successive enquiries, evidence from research, including the testimony of formerly looked after children, which has highlighted often neglectful experiences of many looked after children.

There is a need, therefore, to have in place, mechanisms which help ensure a constant focus upon the quality of care for these especially vulnerable children and young people, designed to highlight resource deficits as much as shortcomings in practice.

Key Features of the Closure Record include:

Reason for social care involvement

Social workers:
- should summarise why services services were provided;  
- may include the reason why the child was referred originally, which may be particularly relevant if involvement has not been long term;  
- should record the outcome of any assessments completed and;  
- should include details of any additional needs identified during the time that services were provided.

Information relating to the reasons for social care involvement can be found in sections of other records which summarise the reason for that process, and thus:

a) 'child- in -need reasons' are given at the start of the  
  - Contact Record,  
  - Referral and Information Record,  
  - Initial Assessment, and
b) 'child protection reasons' are given at the start of the
   - Strategy Discussion Record and
   - Initial Case Conference Report

c) 'child Looked After reasons’ are given at the start of the
   - Placement Information and
   - Child's Care Plan

Interventions since the assessment, admission or last review
This section records the dates that the child or young person and other family members were seen.

For care leavers up to their 19th birthday, dates of all contact with the young person, including letter and telephone contact, should be recorded.

Review of the 'Planned Outcomes'
The social worker should:

- evaluate the outcome, or impact, of all planned actions and services, including those actions to be taken by the child or family, under the heading of each dimension or domain of the Assessment Framework and;
- describe the actual level of services offered and to what extent they were taken up
- construct a summary of progress achieved which addresses each aspect of the planned outcomes found in the relevant plan, namely the Initial Plan, Child In Need Plan, Child Protection Plan, Child’s Care Plan, Adoption Plan or Pathway Plan.

Reason for Closure
The CIN Review is usually the first step towards the closure of the case, providing logical evidence for the decision which will be recorded as an actual outcome of the Plan constructed at the last review.

A proposal to close the case should be discussed with the relevant parties prior to the review enabling the family to comment on whether they believe closure is appropriate at this point. In addition to the social care view for the reasons for closure it is important to record the child's view (where of appropriate age and understanding), the parent/main carer's view, and that of involved professionals.

It is good practice to invite the family to comment on the services they have received and record their observations at the point of closure.

The decision to close the case rests with the team manager.

Copies of the Closure Record

The child, where of sufficient age and understanding, and/or parent should sign the closure record.

When a Closure Record is given out it should be marked to indicate whose copy it is, and on what date it was given. This can be hand-written next to the authorisation section e.g. 'parent's copy'.
Where a parent does not speak or read English, the social worker should arrange for the **Closure Record** to be explained to the child, where of appropriate age and understanding, and to the parent with an interpreter.

The social worker can arrange for the **Closure Record**, as with any of the key procedural records to which family members may be entitled to receive a copy, to be made available in the language, or format, of their choice.

In the event of the child referred to social care again the record will provide a summary of previous work carried out and its impact on outcomes for the child and their family members.

**Closure Date**

The new information included in this record is the date of closure. This is determined by the team manager when the **Closure Record** is authorised.

**Referral regarding a Child after Closure**

In the event of a new referral being made regarding the child the case will be automatically re-allocated to the previously involved social worker:

- 60 **working days** for a district social worker
- 20 **working days** for a duty social worker

The social worker should respond to the new information *within twenty-four hours*, in line with the time-scales for a new referral.

The latest episode of involvement will be deemed to have started from the date of the new referral; and will follow established procedure for a new case.