

Your Independent Reviewing Officer



Leaflet for Children aged 12 and under

This leaflet explains how Kent County Council Children's Social Services makes plans for your care and how your Independent Reviewing Officer reviews those plans with you and the people working with you.

Your Care Plan

Your Care Plan says how you will be cared for and what needs to be done for you to make the plan work.

Your Care Plan includes:

- Who will look after you
- Where you will go to school
- How we will make sure you are healthy
- How you can do the things you enjoy such as sport or hobbies
- When you will see your family
- How you can practice your religion and culture
- What will happen to you in the future

Your Social Worker must listen carefully to your wishes and feelings. They must also listen to what your parents have to say and talk to other people, such as your teacher.





Your Review Meeting?

The people involved with you must meet on a regular basis. This is called a Review Meeting.

People who are invited to your Review Meeting?

This is your meeting so it is important that you are there. The other people who may be there are:

- Your parents/relatives
- Your carers
- Your social worker/Key worker
- Your teacher
- Your foster carer's social worker
- The Children's Guardian
- The Looked After Children's nurse or school nurse
- The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)
- Your foster carer
- Your Independent visitor or advocate

You can talk to your social worker about who should come and where the meeting is held.



How often Review Meetings happen

The first Review Meeting is held within four weeks of you becoming looked after by Children's Social Services. The second Review meeting is held within three months of the first. There will be a Review Meeting every six months after that, if you are still in care.

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Every child and young person who is looked after must have an IRO. It is their job to:

- Chair the meeting
- Make sure that everyone listens to what you have to say
- Check that everyone is keeping to their part of the plan
- Check that there are clear plans for your future

At the review the IRO will want to hear about what you have done well or any problems you may have so that you can get the help and support you need.

Your IRO will want to meet with you before the meeting to make sure you understand what the meeting is all about and to hear what you have to say. This will give you an opportunity to say what you want to talk about and if there are things you do not want to talk about.

Attending your Review Meeting

You should be part of any decisions for your future. If you are worried about talking in the meeting you can ask someone you trust to speak for you. You do not have to stay for all of the meeting and you can go out at any time.

If you do not want to go to your Review meeting you can talk to your carer or social worker and they can speak for you.

Preparing for your Review Meeting

Before the meeting you will be given a Consultation Book to record what you want to say. You can also write a list or send a text to help you say what you want to say. If you wish to chair all or part of your review, your social worker or IRO will support you with this.

After your Review

Your social worker or carer or the IRO should talk to you after your meeting to make sure you understand what was discussed and the decisions that were made.



Making a Complaint

If you do not agree with any decision that was made you can speak to your carers and social worker or contact your IRO. If you are still not satisfied you can make a complaint. To make a complaint or for further information you can contact:

Independing Reviewing Service:

- North/West

Worrall House
30 Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling ME19 4AE

Tel: 03000 421543
email: IROServiceNW@kent.gov.uk

- South/East

Brook House
Reeves Way, John Wilson Business Park
Whitstable CT5 3SS

Tel: 03000 421544
email: IROServiceSE@kent.gov.uk

Advocacy and Independent Visitor Service:

- Young Lives Foundation

71 College Road
Maidstone ME15 6SX

Tel: 01622 683815
email: advocacy@ylf.org.uk

