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| **LANCASHIRE CHILDRENS SOCIAL CARE**  **PERMANENCE PANEL**  **TERMS OF REFERENCE** |

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| **Purpose of Permanence Panel** |
| The Permanence Panel has responsibility for ensuring Permanence remains at the forefront of the child's journey and that Permanence Plans are achieved within statutory timescales.  The Permanence Panel is multi-agency in representation with the function of reviewing all Children Looked After and their Permanence options/plans.  The Permanence Panel focusses on Care Planning decisions made through multi-agency Children Looked After planning meetings, including those children and young people subject to Pre Proceedings and Care Proceedings.  The Permanence Panel will review and scrutinise fostering and residential arrangements for children and young people, provided both in-house and by agency providers, to ensure that our children and young people are receiving a high quality of care.  The Permanence Panel will provide a multi-agency approach to ratification of placements as permanent, where this is appropriate, and ensure that children are supported to celebrate their permanence  The Permanence Panel will support Lancashire County Council to fulfil their legal duties in respect of   * Ensuring all Children Looked After have a Permanence Plan that meets their individual needs; * Permanence Plans are achieved in the child's timeframe; * Ensuring all children and young people have a clear direction and timescale to achieve permanence by the second Looked After Review; * Scrutinising and escalating to minimise drift and delay in achieving Permanence; * Ensuring our children are in the right placement with clear outcomes for transition to adulthood. |
| **Responsibilities of Permanence Panel** |
| The Permanence Panel is responsible for:   * Reviewing and tracking Permanence Plans for all Looked After Children; * Identify barriers to achieving Permanence; * Setting clear, realistic timescales for action; * Providing approval/ratification for children and young people to be matched to permanent placements.   Each individual panel member also has individual responsibilities:  Children's Social Care Heads of Service are responsible for monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of Permanence Planning within the scope of the policy.  Children's Social Care Senior Managers have responsibility for ensuring high standards of practice and timeliness in the implementation of the policy in practice.  Children's Social Care Team Managers have responsibility to oversee the effectiveness of care planning for individual children taking into account relevant research and current best practice including ensuring timely Permanence Planning Meetings.  The Fostering and Residential Manager representatives have responsibility for ensuring children are provided a timely and high quality service of care, and matching children to the right carers at the right time.  The Fostering and Residential Manager representatives have responsibility for promoting, where appropriate, plans of transition to adulthood which are underpinned by high quality independence support  Health representatives have responsibility for providing the Panel with up to date relevant health information for the child/young person. This includes progress made against any health plan, and details in relation to Initial and Review Health Assessments  Education representatives have responsibility for providing the Panel with up to date relevant education information for the child/young person. This includes progress made against any education plan, and details in relation to Personal Education Plans (PEPs)  The Independent Reviewing Officer representative (Quality and Assurance Manager) has a key role in providing the Panel with advice and challenge to the plan, and ensuring the voice of the child's Independent Reviewing Officer are shared.  The Access to Resources Team have a role to ensure that the placement is providing evidence based outcomes and high standards of care. It is also important for the Access to Resources Team to provide financial information to Panel to ensure that appropriate and robust challenge and scrutiny can be made over placement costs, and any placement searches proportionately expedited in relation to individual need/risk. |
| **Membership** |
| Permanence Panels will ordinarily be chaired by Children's Social Care Head of Service, however local variations may be applied, and in some instances Children's Social Care Senior Manager will chair the Panel  It is expected that all partners are represented for each Panel, are that deputy arrangements are in place should a Panel member be unable to attend.  The core membership of Permanence Panel includes:   * Children's Social Care Head of Service * Children's Social Care Senior Manager * Children's Social care, Children in Our Care Team Manager * Education Representative (virtual school) * Health Representative * Fostering Manager * Residential Services Manager * Access to Resources representative   The above list is not exhaustive and local decisions may be taken to extend Panel member to include, for example   * Family Group Conferencing Services * Leaving Care Service * Foster Carer representative * Young person representative * Outreach services * External providers * Advocacy   There may be occasions when additional ad-hoc attendance is required by colleagues in different teams/departments/agencies to address a specific issue  The meeting is administratively supported by Children's Social Care Case Support |
| **Frequency of meetings** |
| Permanence Panels will be held at a frequency of at least monthly.  Panels will ordinarily be held for a full day, however local variations may be applied to meet local need  Panel agenda's will be distributed prior to each Permanence Panel to all core, and agreed additional Panel members |
| **Expected preparation prior to Panel** |
| Children's Social Care  It is expected that the child/young person's case summary is updated on their case file prior to presentation at Permanence Panel  It is expected that the record of the last multi agency Looked After Children care planning meeting record is available on the child/young person's file  The social worker is expected to complete the Permanence Panel Submission form and send this to the relevant Case Support Officer  The relevant Case Support officer is expected to retrieve the case summary, record of last multiagency Looked After Children care planning record and attach these to the Permanence Panel Submission form and the agenda for each child  Health  It is expected that the health representative obtain relevant information from the child/young person's health records to share at Panel  Education  It is expected that the education representative obtain relevant information from the child/young person's education records to share at Panel  Access to Resources (ART)  It is expected that the ART representative obtain relevant information from the child/young person's placement to share at Panel  Fostering and Residential  It is expected that the Fostering and Residential representative obtain relevant information from the child/young person's placement to share at Panel |
| **Format and structure of meetings** |
| A fully prepared agenda will be made available for all attendee's at least five working days prior to each Permanence Panel  Within the agenda, the reasons why the child/young person's has been selected to be heard at Panel will be clear. This may include   * Represented – to allow Panel to maintain grip and challenge over and drift or delay, and promote achieving permanence * New to care – to allow Panel to be assured that any child who has become Looked After in the last 12 weeks has a clear plan for permanence * Ratification – to enable Panel to ratify placements as permanent following CLA review, Case Management Discussion and matching meeting * Care Planning oversight – to promote multi agency decision making at senior management level around key decisions in line with Lancashire Children's Social Care scheme of delegation * Thematic selection – to allow Panel to have a regular focus each month on a specific activity related to Permanence |

TEMPLATE AGENDA

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| PERMANENCE PANEL  AGENDA | |
| Date of panel |  |
| Thematic selection for the month |  |

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| AGENDA ITEM 1 – Case re-presented back to permanence panel  AGENDA ITEM 2 – New Children Looked After  AGENDA ITEM 3 – Ratification of placement as permanent  AGENDA ITEM 4 - Head of Service case planning oversight  AGENDA ITEM 5 – Thematic selection |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Time slot | Name of child | Agenda item | Name of social worker | Name of manager | | 9.30 |  |  |  |  | | 9.50 |  |  |  |  | | 10.10 |  |  |  |  | | 10.30 |  |  |  |  | | 10.50 |  |  |  |  | | 11.10 |  |  |  |  | | 11.30 |  |  |  |  | | 11.50 |  |  |  |  | | 12.10 |  |  |  |  | | 12.30 |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 1.00 |  |  |  |  | | 1.20 |  |  |  |  | | 1.40 |  |  |  |  | | 2.00 |  |  |  |  | | 2.20 |  |  |  |  | | 2.40 |  |  |  |  | | 3.00 |  |  |  |  | | 3.20 |  |  |  |  | | 3.40 |  |  |  |  | | 4.00 |  |  |  |  | |

PERMANENCE PANEL AGENDA

Definitions

AGENDA ITEM 1

These cases will have been heard at panel previously and the panel will have made the recommendation to re-present the case back to panel within a specific timeframe. Business Support to the panel will capture this at the panel and forward book for the social worker and add to the appropriate agenda. Business Support will provide to the Panel the reason for the case to be re-presented and details of any actions set from the previous Panel

AGENDA ITEM 2

These children will have become Looked After and are to be presented to Panel shortly prior to their second CLA Review to seek Panel agreement to the plan for permanence, to be presented to the second CLA review. This may include reunification, long term foster care/residential, adoption etc

AGENDA ITEM 3

Where children are in long term settled placement, permanence of the placement should be considered. Prior to seeking ratification, matching meetings should have been held and the child and carers consulted. Financial agreement to any planned celebration event will be given by Panel

AGENDA ITEM 4

This section of the agenda provides for Head of Service oversight and/or decision making in line with the scheme of delegation and care planning protocol. Case presented under this section include for example: request to move placement; request for additional finances etc

AGENDA ITEM 5

The HoS will identify a specific theme to be presented to Panel and this will differ for each Panel. Business Support will request details of the theme in advance from the HoS

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| Expectations |
| It is expected that attendance is prioritised by all social workers  It is expected that social work managers will attend if the allocated social worker is unable to attend  It is expected that all Panel members attend each month or send a representative  It is expected that all Panel members attend prepared  It is expected that the agenda will be made available at least five working days prior to each meeting  It is expected that a brief record of the panel discussion and actions agreed, are recorded on the child's file by Case Support within 5 working days. |