**Process for Sourcing Placements including Education**

**Key messages**

* Wherever possible, it is **expected that education needs will be met through mainstream educational provision**. A placement including education should only be requested when no other option is available.
* No search for a residential placement including education will be undertaken without agreement given that a placement including education is appropriate from either Virtual School (if the child does not have an EHCP) or SEND (if the child has an EHCP).
* Sometimes providers offer residential placements which include education when this was not part of the placement request. These offers will still be sent to the Social Worker for consideration, but will be flagged. Social Workers are expected to consider the suitability of all other offers first before considering offers which include education not originally requested. Wherever feasible, a Social Worker should request a wider placement search is undertaken, to see what else may be available, and have discussions with Virtual School/ SEND before accepting a placement offer which includes education not originally requested.
* All placements which include education will need to be ratified through the agreed panel process before funding for education can be provided. Any education costs will initially need to be paid for out of the Children's Social Care Placements budget until ratified.
* Once ratified, all education costs will be funded via High Needs School Block Funding/ SEND, including any interim payments made by CSC.

**PROCESS TO FOLLOW IF SEARCH FOR A PLACEMENT INCLUDING EDUCATION IS FELT TO BE REQUIRED**

1. **The need for a placement which includes education is identified by Children's Social Care:**
2. **For CYP without an EHCP**, Social Worker to complete Stage 1 of Placement including Education Request Form, detailing why a placement with education is required and send to Virtual School
3. **For CYP with an EHCP**, discussion to take place with child's SENDO
4. **Agreement is given by Virtual School or SEND for a placement search to commence.**
5. **Up to date referral (PL1) and evidence of agreement to commence the search is sent to ART.**
6. **ART commence placement search and send any offers received to Social Worker for consideration.**
7. **Children's Social Care consider offers received and identify most appropriate placement.** Approval for the placement is sought from: Senior Manager if placement costs are less than £4k p/w; Head of Service if placement costs are over £4k p/w; Director of Children's Services if placement costs are over £7k.
8. **Request for the education element to be funded by SEND/ School Budget is progressed:**
9. **For CYP without an EHCP,** Social Worker to complete Stage 2 of Placement including Education Request Form, providing details of the placement and associated costs, and send to Virtual School for consideration
10. **For CYP with an EHCP,** County Moderating Panel form is completed
11. **Date for case to be discussed at County Moderating Panel is agreed.**
12. **Social Worker attends County Moderating Panel to present case**
13. **If ratified at panel, education costs to be paid by SEND/ Schools Budget. If NOT ratified at panel, all placement costs to be met by Children's Social Care.**
14. **Decisions made at Panel are emailed to finance**: Kath.loynd@lancashire.gov.uk and Jason.lynam@lancashire.gov.uk to ensure paid from correct budget.

**Process if a Residential Offer which includes Education is received (which was not requested in PL1)**

If **NOT RATIFIED**, education costs to be met from CSC Placements Budget

ART to challenge education element with provider and ask whether offer without education element is available

Residential offer including education is received by ART following a residential only search

**PROVIDER DOES NOT AGREE** to remove education element from offer

**PROVIDER AGREES** to remove education element from offer

Revised offer is sent to Social Worker for consideration with any other residential only offers received

ART to send all offers received to the Social Worker and ensure that any offers which include education are flagged and SEND/ Virtual School are copied in.

Social Worker to consider the suitability of all other offers first before considering offers which include education.

Wherever feasible, Social Worker should request a wider placement search is undertaken, to see what else may be available, before accepting a placement offer which includes education which was not originally asked for.

Social Worker to gain approval from:

1. Senior Manager if placement costs are less than £4k p/w;
2. Head of Service if placement costs are over £4k p/w;
3. Director of Children's Services if placement costs are over £7k.

ART is notified and placement is confirmed

Decisions made at Panel are emailed to finance: Kath.loynd@lancashire.gov.uk and Jason.lynam@lancashire.gov.uk to ensure paid from correct budget

If **NOT RATIFIED**, education costs to be met from CSC Placements Budget

If **RATIFIED** at panel, education costs to be paid by SEND/ Schools budget

If **NOT** **CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE** by Virtual School/ SEND, CSC to determine whether search should continue OR placement should go ahead, with full costs meet from CSC Placements Budget

Social Worker completes form for County Moderating Panel and presents case at agreed panel

If **CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE** in principleby Virtual School/ SEND, Social Worker to gain approval from:

1. Senior Manager if placement costs are less than £4k p/w;
2. Head of Service if placement costs are over £4k p/w;
3. Director of Children's Services if placement costs are over £7k.

ART is notified and placement is confirmed

If CSC consider offer including education is appropriate, Social Worker to discuss appropriateness of education element offer with Virtual School/ SEND