

'Three-month update' case note guidance 20 April 2020

As part of our continued road to excellence and the child being at the centre of our practice we need all our children and young people to have a **three-month update** case note.

What is a 3-month update?

The 3-month update is not an administrative task. It does not need to be lots of information, just key information so that anyone reading the file is clear about what is happening in the young person's life. More importantly if the child comes back as an adult to read their file they will easily be able to understand their history and the decisions that were made for them and why.

It must be meaningful for the child. It does not replace the SW's responsibility to talk to the child and explain what is happening directly in conversations with them and for this reason it is expected that the content of the 3 month update is shared with the child as part of our contact with them.

The note can be used as the basis of the update to ROA and Review conferences AND to reflect on case progress with managers during supervision. The content may also provide a way to summarise some of the important conversations with the child by the social worker and generally to capture how the social worker judges' things are going for them.

Managers will want to reassure themselves of the quality of the 3 month update in supervision as part of the routine case discussion.

What we are doing to introduce this into our practice?

To start this off we have written an explanation for the young person outlining why we are doing this and what it will include. **It is the expectation** that this explanation will be put onto every child's file including **new cases** where the child will have an allocated Social Worker. After the explanation is the following heading – and this will become the format for the 3-monthly update in the future.

'These are the important things that have happened in your life in the last three months'

This heading will capture a summary of all the most important things that have happened during this period. In the future this will be added as a case note called **Three Monthly Update**. Going forward you will need to provide an update every three months. We are developing a report to ensure that this is in place for every child.

Instruction

All staff are now required to add the following case note to each open case – **This must be completed before Friday 29th May.**

All cases transferring from FRCD will need a summary adding from 20th April.

The FIRST 3 Monthly update must include this explanation for the child - FRCD updates will always include this explanation when cases transfer to a locality to start the process.

Content of this first update: - All cases will have an 'Explanation for the child' recorded in the first 3 monthly update (this is only added to this first update record unless transferring from FRCD for the first time).

HERE IS THE EXPLANATION TO COPY AND PASTE TO THE CHILD'S FIRST 3 MONTHLY UPDATE.

INSERT Child's name - It's important that you understand all the things that happen in your life, this includes;

- decisions that are made on your behalf, why they were made and what difference people hoped it would make.
- Important meetings that have taken place.
- Important things that have happened in your life.
- Important things that have happened in your family's life.

To make sure this happens every three months your Social Worker is going to write a three-monthly update for you setting out the important things that have happened in your life. This will mean if you decide to read your information when you are an adult you will be able to understand and make sense of your history and journey with us.

These are the important things that have happened in your life in the last three months:-

Insert PERSONALISED CONTENT :-

The personalised content will set out any key meetings that have taken place for example a Family Network Meeting, Key Decision-Making Meeting, Child Decision Making Panel, a pre-proceedings meeting, a Court hearing, a core group, child protection conference or looked after review. This should set out what these meetings are (no abbreviations please), why these meetings took place, outline key decisions that were made, what was hoped to be achieved for the child by taking this action.

Next think about what other important things have happened for the child. For some children meetings may not have taken place during this time so the focus will be on these important things that have happened. For example, learning to ride a bike, taking driving lessons, getting 8 in a spelling test, getting a certificate for being on time, having a birthday, remaining safe at home, remaining settled in placement, moving placements, another young person joining them in placement, a goodbye contact, a sibling being born. The list is endless!!

Important things that have happened in the family, this may include a relationship ending, getting married, someone dying, parents starting a new relationship, losing a baby'

Here are some examples of what the Section ***These are the important things that have happened in your life in the last three months: -***

Might look like.

Example 1

Since I last wrote your three-monthly update a lot has been happening. On the 24th February when you went to school your teacher Mr Brown noticed a bruise to your face and you said your mum had done it. We spoke to your mum who admitted she'd hit you and was really sorry. Everyone one was so worried we had a family network meeting where all of your family got together and came up with a safety plan to make sure nothing like this happened again. Everyone was so worried by what had happened we had a meeting called an Initial Child Protection Conference. Everyone at the meeting agreed that you needed more than a Child in Need Plan to keep you safe, that due to the harm you had experienced you needed a Child Protection Plan. As part of this plan your mum thought it was best that you live with your GiGi whilst mum got the help she needed. You moved to GiGi's on 7th March, you are happy there, you still go to the same school, you speak with mum every day and spend time with her every weekend.

Example 2

Since I last wrote your three-monthly update you have started taking swimming lessons, you told me at first you didn't like going but now you love it. Sandy your

foster carer has told me that you did really well in your spelling test and got a certificate which is brilliant. You have been seeing your mum and dad every week at the contact centre where you played tennis and drew lots of pictures which Sandy has put on her fridge door. You told me you made a new friend at school his name is Denny and you have been to tea at his house and you had fish fingers. Denny has a dog called Benji and now you keep telling Sandy you want a dog.

What to do now: -

Add the content of the **Explanation for the child** with the added personalised content in line with the above examples on all your cases. Siblings will need some individual content.

This is recorded in a case note – not attached as a document in word

For all new cases – usually transferring from FRCD just add the explanation and the update will be focused on the reason for the case being allocated – in a way that the child can understand.

A full update will be required in three months' time and this will become a routine feature of our case recording and form part of the supervision discussion.

Here is how you record it:-

Case note type :- 3 month update –

Case note title 3 Month update

Content of Case note:- copy this text for all children

INSERT *CHILDS NAME - It's important that you understand all the things that happen in your life, this includes;*

- *decisions that are made on your behalf, why they were made and what difference people hoped it would make.*
- *Important meetings that have taken place.*
- *Important things that have happened in your life.*
- *Important things that have happened in your family's life.*

To makes sure this happens every three months your Social worker is going to write a three-monthly update for you setting out the important things that have happened in your life. This will mean if you decide to read your information when you are an adult you will be able to understand and make sense of your history and journey with us.

These are the important things that have happened in your life in the last three months: -

Add your own content: - in line with guidance above.

Update in 3 months using same case note type and heading – omitting the explanation and focusing on the :-

Important things that have happened in your life in the last three months