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Peterborough Access to Support

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Contents

Section	Title	Page
1.	Context and Details of Panels in Peterborough	2
2.	The Peterborough Access to Support Panel [PASP]	3
2.1	Introduction	3
2.2	Care & Education Planning & PASP	3
2.3	Services & Resources Agreed at PASP	4
2.4	Booking a PASP Appointment	5
2.5	Requesting a Slot	5
2.6	Submission of Papers	5
2.7	Attending PASP	6
2.8	Urgent Situations	6
2.9	Notifications of Panel Decisions	7
2.10	Practitioners unhappy with a PASP Decision	7
2.11	Children, Young People, Parents or Carers seeking to appeal a PASP Decision	7
2.12	PASP Panel Membership and Responsibilities	8
2.13	Review of Resources	8

Section 1: Context & Details of Panels in Peterborough

These procedures relate to the Peterborough Access to Support Panel [PASP], the Peterborough Joint Access to Support Panel [PJASP] and the Peterborough Children with Disabilities [CWD] Panel. There are other panels that operate within the broader partnership of children's services, focusing on different levels of need and/or different areas of specialist need. These include:

- The **Multi-Agency Support Groups [MASG]**: these are based in each of the three localities and include representation by a number of partner agencies and services. The panels are communities' and schools' facing and are able to provide advice, support and in some cases, additional resources, to help those working with children and their families with complex needs achieve better outcomes. The priorities of the panel include providing a safe step-down for children and young people who no longer require specialist service support such as that provided by Children's Social Care and preventing needs from becoming more complex through the provision of coordinated and focused resources. Access to the MASG is via an Assessment [CAF or an Initial or Core Assessment]. More information can be found in 'Multi-Agency Support Groups: Information for Practitioners', available separately;
- The **Primary Pupils at Risk of Permanent Exclusion Panel**: this is a school-led panel which includes representation from the City's Pupil Referral Unit and which coordinates support to primary pupils who have been identified as being at risk of permanent exclusion;
- The **Statutory Assessment Panel**: Discusses the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs. As the reforms that flow from the Children and Families Act 2014 become implemented, the role and make up of this panel will be reviewed. A separate procedure document is available for this panel. The panel may make on-ward requests to the MASG, the Peterborough Access to Support Panel and/or the Peterborough Joint Access to Support Panel where evidence presented to it suggests that the child or young person's needs are wider than educational;
- The **Peterborough Access to Support Panel [PASP]**: This panel meets on alternate Tuesdays in the month. The panel allocates and helps to coordinate resources that are put in place for children, young people and their families where there is a risk or likelihood of children coming into the care system. The panel also reviews the effectiveness of resources that are allocated to meet assessed need. This procedure provides detailed information about this panel in Section 2;
- The **Children and Young People Quality and Expenditure Panel**: This panel meets fortnightly, on alternate Tuesdays of the month. This panel includes representation by health commissioners, finance, SAMS, a Children's services representative. The meeting is chaired by the AD from Adults service. The focus of the panel is requests for shared funding, as well as care packages for children with disabilities. This procedure provides detailed information about this panel in Section 3;

Section 2: The Peterborough Access to Support Panel [PASP]

2.1 Introduction

The PASP includes children's social care and education professionals and meets every Tuesday apart from the last Tuesday of the month [which is when the Peterborough Joint Agency Support Panel takes place]. Key roles of the PASP include:

- Identifying and allocating additional resources to meet assessed need where there is a risk of children and young people coming into the care system;
- To discuss and make decisions relating to the accommodation of children and young people, including decisions to hold legal planning meetings, commence pre-proceedings within the public law outline, issue proceedings or agree accommodation under S20 of the Children Act 1989;
- To discuss and agree additional resources to support pupils in school in order to maintain school places that may otherwise be at risk;
- To agree identified independent day or boarding school places for children and young people with special educational needs and where educational needs cannot be met through maintained mainstream or special school places within the City.

At all times, PASP will seek to ensure that resources identified to meet assessed need represent the best value for money. Value for money in this context means that the panel will consider the absolute cost of the resources being requested in relation to the likelihood that these will make a material difference to long term outcomes for the child or young person and/or their family.

PASP reviews the effectiveness of agreed resources in meeting assessed need and will therefore often request cases return to PASP for review. Where identified resources are having limited impact in achieving the required outcomes, PASP may agree to commission alternative resources.

PASP is intended to be a supportive process that enables open discussion about complex issues and specifically includes the sharing of risk between front-line practitioners and senior managers within Children's Social Care, Education and other service areas. This risk-sharing does mean that practitioners and professionals presenting cases to the panel can expect to be asked about the effectiveness of the care plan and/or proposed use of resources in ensuring that the needs of the child or young person are being met appropriately.

2.2 Care & Education Planning & PASP

The role of PASP is to identify resources that enable the objectives of the care and or education plan to be met. Care and/or education planning processes are not the responsibility of PASP. Care, education and pathway plans should all be formulated using relevant multi-agency procedures and frameworks. However, where PASP identifies through discussion that there may be a need to review the child or young person's plan, it can make a recommendation that a case discussion takes place.

2.3 Services & Resources Agreed at PASP

The role of the PASP is to consider the most appropriate and cost effective resources to meet identified need. This will include consideration of what may be available through the Community, Voluntary and Independent Sectors, as well as directly provided and commissioned services and/or direct payments.

The following services and resources are agreed through PASP:

- The need for a Legal Planning Meeting, Agreement to enter into Pre-Proceedings or to issue Proceedings;
- Agreement for a child or young person to become looked after under S20 of the 1989 Children Act;
- Support to families through the Direct Intervention Service or commissioned family support services to prevent the need for children to become looked after;
- Support to families with dependent children who have no recourse to public funds;
- Child-minding/Childcare where this is required for over 3 months and is over and above statutory entitlements [i.e. the offer of 15 hours childcare to vulnerable children aged 2 and over] as part of a wider support package;
- Family Group Conferences;
- Expert/Specialist assessments in pre-proceedings and court proceedings [although where assessments have been directed by the Court, the local authority will always comply with such directions and PASP agreement is not required in these circumstances];
- Exceptional support for Special Guardianship or Residence Orders including support for legal costs and agreement to payment of allowances;
- Agreement that a young person can 'Stay Put' with their existing foster carers post 18;
- Additional in-school support over and above the amount already delegated to schools;
- Requests for identified alternative school placements within the independent sector for pupils who have additional educational needs.

PASP may decide to allocate resources that are different to any that have been identified by the practitioners presenting the case.

PASP does not agree funding for:

- Holidays for Children;
- Child-minding/Childcare [except as above];
- Transport;
- Supervised contact;
- Day-care.

These resources are all funded from service budgets and are agreed by the Head of Service or as delegated.

2.4 Booking a PASP Appointment

Practitioners must seek agreement from relevant managers that an application to PASP is required in order that additional resources can be identified in order to meet assessed needs. For social workers and other council employers, this agreement will be from their team manager.

The position for schools is slightly different; prior to a case being presented to PASP, prior agreement is to be sought from The Head of Inclusion. Before giving agreement to a case being presented at PASP, the Head of Inclusion will make enquiries of relevant pupil support services to ensure that all available support arrangements are in place.

Requesting a Slot

The Panel Administrator can be contacted by email at PASP@peterborough.gov.uk and will book a slot for the case to be heard. It is helpful for the administrator to be informed of the contact details of any others who may need to attend panel to be supplied at this point. Where a request for additional support is being made for a child in a school who is subject to a child in need or child protection plan, or who is looked after, the child's social worker must also be invited, for example. PASP paperwork can also be submitted at this time if it is available.

Please note that requests for consideration of Pre-Proceedings, issuing care proceedings or agreeing to accommodation under S20 require prior agreement from your Head of Service.

Any request for a placement at an independent special school for children and young people with special educational needs must first have been discussed at the relevant Special Educational Needs or Education/Health/Care Panel where agreement must have been reached that there is no maintained provision that can meet identified educational needs.

Any other requests for support by schools will first be forwarded to the Head of Inclusion in order for them to ensure that all available support for the pupil concerned is in place and that there are additional resource needs that require discussion at PASP. Schools may wish to discuss requests in advance with the Head of Inclusion prior to submitting paperwork in order to avoid unnecessary work.

2.6 Submission of Papers

The practitioner must complete the PASP application form and submit this along with any other relevant assessments to their manager for quality assurance. In most circumstances the paperwork should be submitted to the PASP inbox [PASP@peterborough.gov.uk] on the Wednesday prior to the PASP date. Later submissions may be accepted in exceptional circumstances but papers submitted after the Thursday prior to the panel date are likely to be rejected and appointments re-booked. ***Practitioners completing paperwork need to remember that sufficient time for managers to quality assure their application is also required.***

There is a checklist on the back of the PASP application form that sets out what other paperwork may be required. However, in all cases, it is a minimum expectation that the most recent assessment of need is submitted [Initial, Core or Single Assessment; Common Assessment Framework; Statement of Educational Needs, Education, Health and Care Plan or Coordinated Plan depending on the circumstances]. Where relevant, a copy of the child's Child in Need, Child Protection, Care or Pathway plan should also be submitted.

The best decisions are based on the best quality information. The PASP application form does not need to duplicate information available in assessments of needs that are also supplied to the panel,

but it should offer a good summary of this information, and practitioners are asked to ensure that particular attention is given to informing panel of:

- The views of the child, young person and their family and/or carers;
- Any relevant features of the child or young person's background including ethnicity, religion, language, gender, disability and/or sexuality;
- Any risks and protective factors present;
- What interventions have been put in place already and their impact;
- Progress being made in school/education and details about school attendance;
- Any relevant information about physical and/or emotional or mental health, with supporting assessments where available;
- Any other relevant details about the child's broader community including extended family, school or education setting and peer or friendship groups.

In addition to the PASP paperwork identified above, ***where additional resources have been commissioned, it is the usual expectation that the provider of those services submits a report to panel.*** This is always the case where external family support services have been commissioned or where any child or young person is placed in a residential school or care placement. The Access to Resources Team will ensure that reports from these providers are made available to the panel.

There may be other occasions when provider reports are requested. If this is the case, the panel chair will identify who should liaise with the provider to request the report and detail what the report should cover.

2.7 Attending PASP

The allocated professional who submitted the paperwork should attend the panel. It is also the expectation that the practitioner's manager attends, although where practitioners are experienced and used to the process, this may not always be necessary. Where the practitioner is not available, their manager may present the case alone, providing that they have a good oversight of the child or young person and family being presented.

Joint presentations are encouraged where relevant to the needs of the child or young person being discussed. This might include practitioners from CAMH or other support services attending panel with the allocated social worker, for example. Where the child or young person has a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan or is a looked after child, the expectation is that the allocated social worker should always attend any panel where resources are being requested by another agency for the child concerned.

Slots for discussion at PASP are limited to between 10 and 20 minutes. It is therefore not appropriate for young people or their parents or carers to attend the panel. It is the role of the referrer attending to represent their views prior to attending the panel and to feedback decisions afterwards.

2.8 Urgent Situations

Two emergency slots are retained within each panel agenda for urgent cases to be heard on the day with or without all the paperwork having been completed. The Assistant Director, Commissioning is responsible for deciding whether a case can be heard in this way; requests can be made to the Panel Administrator by email. Practitioners will be asked to demonstrate that they have their manager's prior approval.

Where situations require an even more urgent response, out of panel decisions can be made. These should usually be via the relevant Head of Service who will discuss the matter with the Assistant Director, Commissioning. It will usually be the case that where a decision has been made outside of

panel in this way, the next available panel date will be arranged so as to provide an opportunity to ensure that all required resources are in place.

2.9 Notifications of Panel Decisions

Decisions will be made on the day in most cases and will be stated verbally by the panel chair. Where this is not possible, clear timescales for decision making will be agreed.

A written decision will be circulated to all panel members, the person making the referral and to any relevant others. For children and young people with records on the Liquid Logic system, the decision will also be uploaded to their electronic case record by panel administration.

It is the responsibility of the allocated social worker/case worker or lead professional within the school to inform the parents or carers and child or young person of the PASP decision.

2.10 Practitioners who are unhappy with a PASP Decision

Where a practitioner who is also an employee of the Council is unhappy with a panel decision, they should first discuss this with their line manager and not with panel members or the chair. If the line manager agrees that the decision should be reviewed, they will ask their Head of Service to look at the case background and panel decision.

Where the head of service agrees that the decision should be reviewed, they will discuss the matter directly with the Panel Chair.

Where the referrer is a school or other organisation outside of the Council, they should send a brief note of why they believe the decision needs to be reviewed to the Panel Administrator [email: PASP@peterborough.gov.uk]. The panel chair will review the decision and make contact with the referrer directly to discuss further if necessary.

2.11 Children, Young People, Parents or Carers Seeking to Appeal a PASP Decision

Any child, young person, parent or carer who is unhappy with a decision made by PASP is able to ask for the decision to be reviewed before seeking resolution through relevant complaints procedures.

They should ask their social worker or lead practitioner to ask to request a review of the decision. The chair will convene an appeals meeting with a relevant head of service and one other panel member. The child or young person, or parent or carer, is welcome to submit a brief statement outlining why they think the decision is wrong. The social worker or lead professional can assist in this process if necessary.

If following the appeals meeting the child or young person, or parent or carer remains dissatisfied, they are able to use the Councils' formal complaints procedures.

2.12 PASP Panel Membership and Responsibilities

The panel is chaired by the Assistant Director for Children's Services. The role of the Chair is to facilitate open discussion and ensure that presenters and panel members are able to share their views in a constructive manner that focuses on how the objectives of the care/education plan may best be achieved by child centred approaches while securing value for money.

There are a number of core members of the panel, as follows:

- One Head of Service from Assessment, Family Safeguarding or Corporate Parenting on a rota basis;
- Head of Fostering and Adoption;
- Head of Access to Resources and Specialist Commissioning;
- Finance Manager;
- Business Support Administration.

It is the responsibility of all panel members to ensure that they have read the paperwork provided by the person presenting the case. Where a panel member has an area of core expertise relevant to the needs of the child or young person, they should also ensure that they have accessed any additional information that may be relevant to the case discussion. Specifically this includes:

- **Heads of Service; Children's Services:** Recent assessments, case discussions and any other relevant information from Liquid Logic;
- **Head of Fostering & Adoption:** Any relevant information about foster carers who have vacancies or may have vacancies in near future;
- **Head of Access to Resources and Specialist Commissioning:** Ensuring that reports from providers are available as required and that details of any placements or other resources being considered are available to the panel;
- **Team Managers:** Information about any current involvement with children, young people and/or families concerned together with information about capacity.

2.13 Review of Resources

Where PASP agrees to commission additional resources to support the objectives of a care, education or other plan, there will usually be an expectation that the effectiveness of those resources in meeting the identified outcomes will be reviewed at a subsequent PASP meeting. Review dates are agreed at the time the resources are agreed by the panel; reminders will be sent out but it is the responsibility of the person presenting the case to make a note of the review date and to ensure that they are prepared in advance to collate relevant information and submit panel papers in the usual way.