**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Children Looked After Reviews**

* Children Looked After Reviews (sometimes called CLA or LAC reviews) are planned meetings where the child and all the professionals involved with the child discuss how they are getting on in the place they are looked after and whether any changes are needed.
* Meetings take place within 20 working days of a new placement, after 3 months and then six monthly after this. Meetings may be arranged early if there are any significant changes or concerns.
* Everyone at the meeting will discuss whether the child’s Care Plan needs changing. The following plans will also be considered at the meeting:
* Permanence Plan;
* Health Plan;
* Pathway Plan if applicable;
* Personal Education Plan (PEP);
* Any other plans or strategies used with the child.

**Who attends Children Looked After Reviews**

* The child should be fully involved in deciding who is invited to attend their review meeting, for how long and at what stage they attend. They should also be supported to be involved in arranging where and when the meeting takes place, taking into account the needs for confidentiality. Ideally, this will be the children’s home where the child is living.
* Everyone who is involved in supporting the child, and everyone who is important to the child should be considered to be invited to attend the review meeting.
* This may include the following:
* The child (for some or all of the meeting depending on their age, understanding and wishes)
* The child’s key worker or a representative from the home who knows the child well
* The child’s parent/carer
* The child’s social worker
* The child’s Independent Reviewing Officer (who will lead the meeting)
* The child’s teacher
* The child’s nurse or doctor
* Any other person who the child would like to invite who is significantly involved in their life
* Other professionals who are involved may also be invited to the review meeting. Some people may send in a written report rather than attending in person.

**How to prepare for a review**

* Ensure you have reviewed the Key worker monthly summary reports since the last review meeting and can present up to date information of how the child is getting on at the home.
* Ideally, the key worker will prepare a ‘Keyworker Report for CLA review’ documenting the main changes and progress made by the child since the last review. This summary will be shared with the child and then sent to the social worker and IRO before the review meeting so they have an idea of how things are going.
* Remember not to share any personal or intimate information that has not been discussed and agreed with the child. Always use language and terminology that maintains the child’s dignity.
* The key worker should spend time consulting the child for their views on the home and the care they have received since the last review meeting. This may include video footage and photographs, especially if the child is not comfortable or able to share their views verbally.
* The key worker should also help arrange a time for the IRO to meet the child prior to the review meeting and support this meeting to be positive.

**At the review meeting**

* The meeting will probably be held at the children’s home and will be quite relaxed and informal in most cases. The key worker will help to prepare the room where the meeting will take place to make sure there are enough chairs and that the meeting will not be disturbed.
* The keyworker and the child should discuss any refreshments or environmental changes they would like in advance of the meeting, and set these up as required.
* The meeting will be chaired by the IRO who will ask each person attending for their summary of the child’s placement since the last review. They will most likely start with the child if they are attending their meeting. There will also be a wider discussion about some issues and the IRO will make a note of any decisions or actions to be taken after the meeting.
* Key workers will take their own notes about any actions for them to complete as it can often take a while for the meeting report to be sent out. This enables the keyworker to let the rest of the team know any changes or new information about the child as soon as possible.

**Links to related documents:** Keyworker Report for CLA review