**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.

**Placements and Admissions**

*Please also see Practice Guidance on ‘Referrals’.*

**Admission Procedure – prior to arrival**

* It is our aim that all children will experience a consistent, calm and welcoming arrival at our children’s homes. In the majority of cases, admissions will be planned in advance and co-ordinated by all professionals involved in overseeing the support of the child.
* The home requires the following information prior to a placement commencing:
  + Up to date CLA Care, Placement and Pathway Plan
  + Completed Referral form
  + Signed consent forms
  + Copies of Support Plans, risk assessments and incident summaries from previous placements (as applicable)
  + Copy of any current legal documents i.e. Care Order (as applicable)
* All children will have an Impact Risk Assessment conducted by staff at the receiving home and the child’s social worker which identifies the child’s individual needs and the measures required to keep the child safe.
* Prior to arrival, staff will undertake the following tasks:
  + Prepare the child’s file including a draft Support Plan, Safety Plan and Positive Handling Plan and Missing Plan based on existing information
  + Prepare a personalised Children’s Guide taking into account any additional needs or language requirements
  + A member of the Management team will make contact and visit the child at their current placement or family home as soon as possible to introduce themselves, allay any fears they may have and gather any additional information required to support their arrival and settling in to the Home.
  + The child will be offered the opportunity to visit the home and if possible, to stay overnight if they wish. During these visits, the child will be shown around the home, meet their prospective key worker and other children living in the home.
  + Children living in the home should be informed of a new placement prior to their arrival.

**Emergency admissions**

* Where possible, we aim to avoid emergency placements being made in our children’s homes as this can influence the child’s acceptance of the environment and detrimentally affect their ability to settle and engage.
* There may be emergency admissions to some homes where the Statement of Purpose allows for this. New admissions may be accepted on an ‘emergency’ basis as long as all relevant information is shared with the home prior to the child’s arrival.
* An emergency admission will be subject to an Impact Risk Assessment and the Registered Manager reserves the right to decline an emergency admission if this would be to the potential detriment of other children in the home.
* The home will require the same documentation for an emergency placement as for a planned referral.

**On arrival**

* Staff will make every effort to make the child feel welcome, and offer any support they need on arrival. This may include:
* support with unpacking and personalising their room
* making sure the child knows essential home routines and health and safety requirements
* Ensuring there is food and drink in the house that the child likes
* Providing the child with equipment and resources they may need (toiletries, chargers etc.)
* Introduce the child to others in the home (if not already undertaken)
* Arrange for the child to be shown the local area if they are unfamiliar with it

**Links to related documents:**

Referral Procedure

Impact Risk Assessment

Emergency Placements and Emergency Reviews