

Children's Social Care Transfer Protocol 2022

The purpose of this protocol is to outline the agreed process and points of transfer for children, young people and their families that require a children's social care intervention. It sits alongside the Early Help Step-Up Step-Down Protocol and the LSCB thresholds document.

Principles of Transfer Protocol

Transfer of change of social worker supporting the child/ren will be conducted in a timely fashion; the child's experience, needs and journey should always be at the heart of decisions to transfer.

Clear requirements and expectations will be agreed and delivered by the transferring team. Good quality information will be passed from the transferring team to the receiving team to prevent gaps in knowledge and to ensure that the welfare and protection of the child is paramount.

All managers will commit to attending the transfer meetings to secure consistency of approach. Children and young people and their parents/carers and agencies should be advised of the transfer process and timings.

Transfers will take no longer than 2 weeks from initial identification. Once the case has been presented to the Transfer Meeting the receiving Service has 2 weeks to identify Team/SW and then for the handover meeting to take place within the next 5 working days

Children looked after will always have an appropriately qualified worker allocated to them.

If capacity is proving challenging, this will be escalated for review and problem solving alongside Heads of Service when required.

One family-one social worker principle applies. Exceptions to this may be looked after children that become pregnant and the need for a separate referral in relation to their child, instances involving child-on-child abuse within the family home and some gang related affiliation whereby the young person is placing siblings at risk.

Children, young people, and families will sit within the relevant Service and any volume/demand pressures will be managed within that Service.

Standards of Transfer

To enable the effective team transfer of the social worker supporting the child/ren and their families, the allocated social worker and their Team Manager must ensure that the following actions have been undertaken.

- A transfer summary should be produced for any children/young people transferring within and between teams, which not only clearly identifies work undertaken but also identifies all dates for meetings and deadlines over the following eight weeks.
- All case file recording is up to date, including an updated chronology, genogram, contact records, court reports, and records of visits, (CIN, LAC, and CP): LAC paperwork, Statutory Review etc.
- All case file recordings on Mosaic must be completed, up to date and all errors rectified prior to transferring to the new team/ social worker.
- Supervision records should be up to date on Mosaic.
- A copy of all current Legal Orders is included.
- In the case of a Child in Care on a Care Order (under section 31 of the Children Act 1989) a copy of the birth certificate will be retained or for children (under Section 20) will have been requested.
- Financial agreements should be up to date and recorded on the transfer record.
- Children/young people and their families transferring from Assessment team to Family Support teams must have CIN or CP Plans.
- Personal Education Plans must be completed within 10 working days and available for the first LAC review process before being transferred to Family Support or CIC.

Points of Transfer

MASH:

Business function will be to:

- Manage and monitor the receipt of requests for support or protection.
- Secure the thresholds of the front door in line with the agreed partnership threshold document.
- Make decisions within 24 hours of receipt of the requests for support or protection.
- Transfer and allocate child and family assessments appropriately to Assessment, Children in Care, Fostering Assessment Team (Private Fostering), Safeguarding and Family Support
- Ensure those children requiring protection are quickly identified and responded to allocating Section 47 investigations within 24 hours and no later.
- Offer advice, support and appropriate signposting to partners.
- Refer back or onto other services when appropriate.
- Encourage and foster the use of Early Help Assessments across the partnership.

Assessment Teams:

- Duty cover. One week on and five weeks off.
- Back up to duty when required.
- Child and Family Assessments.

- Children and Young people, including those with complex needs, requiring Child in Need plans to secure short-term outcomes up to and including completion of the Child and Family Assessment (maximum 45 working days).
- Children and Young People, including those with complex needs, requiring Initial Child Protection Conference.
- Children and Young People, including those with complex needs, requiring Looked After status up to and including the 4-week LAC Review. Fortnightly attendance at transfer meeting with CIC Service, chaired by HoS from either CIC/SFS. Transfer taking no longer than 2 weeks from identifying CIC social worker, including handover meeting within this period taking place and transfer summary on the file. It is important to note that timely transfer is dependent upon early referral to Transfer Meeting so as to give the receiving Service as much notification as possible and time to plan. The point of transfer should wherever possible be the first CIC Review or Initial Court Hearing.
- HoS will review the need for increased frequency of transfer meetings to/from CIC/SFS in light of any changes in demand or capacity in either SFS/CIC service.
- Unborn babies whose siblings are currently subject to Care Proceedings
- Unborn babies whose mother has care experience status.
- Unborn babies (0-25 weeks) requiring a LPM and initiation of Care Proceedings post birth will transfer to SFS for issuing of application through the transfer over process overseen by HoS.
- Unborn babies (26 to birth) requiring a LPM and initiation of care proceedings post birth will remain in Assessment teams for issuing of application.
- Children requiring a LPM and initiation of Care Proceedings.
- Section 37 reports as requested by the courts.
- Step down to Early Help and Intervention service when appropriate through Step down process taking no longer than 2 weeks to formally transfer and overseen by HoS in Safeguarding and Early Help.
- Transfer of children and young people with CIN, CP plans or interim Supervision Orders to Safeguarding and Family

Support through a transfer over process, taking no longer than 2 weeks to formally transfer and overseen by HoS. The transfer meeting takes place on a weekly basis as necessary.

Safeguarding & Family Support Teams

- Children and Young People, including those with complex needs requiring the implementation of a Child in Need plan.
- Children and Young People, including those with complex needs requiring the implementation of a Child Protection plan, including receiving requests from other authorities. Transfer in request is received by MASH and overseen by HoS for Safeguarding who allocates work on a rotational basis.
- Children and young people requiring Child in Care status, including those with complex needs, up to and including the first CIC review if rehabilitation is not possible within a three-month timescale will be transferred to CIC. Fortnightly attendance at transfer meeting with CIC Service, chaired by HoS from either CIC/SFS. Transfer taking no longer than 2 weeks from identifying CIC social worker, including handover meeting taking place and transfer summary on the file.
- HoS will review the need for increased frequency of transfer meetings in light of any changes in demand or capacity in either SFS/CIC service.
- Permanence Planning (identified at 4-week review, second review latest).
- Children and Young People requiring an LPM and initiation of Care Proceedings.
- Unborn babies (0-25 weeks) requiring a LPM and initiation of Care Proceedings post birth
- Section 7 reports as requested by the courts.
- Children and Young People subject to Supervision Orders (12 months)
- Step down to Early Help when appropriate through step down process taking no longer than 2 weeks to formally transfer and overseen by HoS in Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting.

Children in Care Service

- Step Relinquished babies at the point of identification to transfer to CIC with a parallel referral to Adoption team for Early Permanence.
- Siblings of children subject to Care Proceedings or Permanency Plans that have not yet been finalised.
- Care Proceedings: CIC representative to be invited to the LPM convened by SFSS and accept formal case transfer at the first hearing. (There may be some exceptions if an Order is not made and if children are not Looked After but court proceedings are progressing).
- Children in Care subject to Section 20 wherein reunification is no longer possible (identified at 4-week review, second review latest).
- Permanency Planning (identified at 4-week review, second review latest).
- Children in Care from the 4-week review.
- Once Adoption, Special Guardianship, Child Arrangement Order granted then the case will close to CIC Service.
- Supervision Orders granted for 6 months will remain in the CIC Service.
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.
- Looked After Disabled Children and Young People.
- Children who cease to be Looked After by virtue of becoming subjects to CIN/CP plans or 12-month supervision orders will transfer to SFS.
- HoS will review the need for increased frequency of transfer meetings in light of any changes in demand or capacity in either SFS/CIC service.

Leaving Care Service

When CIC reach 17.5 years notification is sent to the Leaving Care Team Manager. A Leaving Care Coach (LCC) may be allocated at this point, or 8 weeks before the transfer.

To enable LCC to attend a child's final CIC review before they turn 18, the Leaving Care Team Manager should be notified of the review date 3 months in advance.

The transferring social worker and team manager will complete a Transfer Checklist to request the transfer to a LCC. The pathway plan must have been completed and reviewed, and statutory visits need to be written and up to date. All key information including transfer summaries, management oversight/supervision, genogram, chronology, whereabouts of passport, birth certificate, NI number and other relevant documents, if relevant must be on the case records and/or must be up to date.

The social worker should ensure an introductory visit is booked to introduce the Young Person to the LCC. Once the checklist and visit have been completed a formal handover meeting should take place between the social worker and LCC, which may involve both team managers as required.

The LCC will provide support to former relevant Young People in terms of preparing them for independence. This will include those:

- Young People aged 18-21 (who were relevant /eligible).
- Young People aged 21+ who remain in education/training.
- Young People aged 21-25 (who were former relevant) who re-present to the service as they want to return to education.

Leaving Care Coaches will maintain regular contact (1 in 8 weeks), review the pathway plan, provide support and advice in respect of ETE, housing, finances etc.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children & Young People

Those under the age of 18 newly arrived will be supported by the Duty CIC Service to undertake a Child & Family Assessment and initiate the CIC process. They will be supported in relation to their asylum claim and will be eligible for the same services as other Children in Care.

An age assessment will be completed by appropriately qualified workers on all children where their age is disputed.

If over 18 and the Young Person has leave to remain in the UK then they are entitled to full leaving care support. If the Young Person is over 18 and has exhausted all rights of appeal; or made a fresh claim to the Home Office and awaiting a decision, CSC will make a decision whether to refer Young Person to NASS for support.

No Recourse to Public Funds

A Senior Practitioner post has the lead to oversee all NRPF assessments and monitoring of children and Families going forward.

If a child has been assessed as requiring a Child Protection, Child in Need or Children in Care intervention they will be allocated to Safeguarding and Family Support or Children in Care at transfer points identified.

If families are assessed as not requiring interventions as above they will be retained by the NRPF team and visited not less than every six months to monitor appropriate intervention in financial support.

If capacity is stretched within the NRPF team the respective Assessment Team on duty that week will be allocated the assessment monitors to complete on that occasion.

All NRTPF families are to be presented at the NRTPF panel, taking place fortnightly

Children who have been adopted from care

Once children who were in care have been made the subject of Adoption Orders, they cease to be Children in Care. The electronic system record should be ended at that point and recording only made in the new restricted access record as the adopted child.

Post Adoption Support social workers in the Coram Ambitious for Adoption RAA and Permanence team will maintain access to the record which will also be open to access by Adoption Team staff and managers.

Post Adoption social workers within the Coram RAA will deliver Post Adoption services.

Once children who were in care have been made subject to Special Guardianship Orders, they cease to be Children in Care and will be closed to the CiC Service. Post order support will be provided by the Permanence Team.

Cross-Borough cases

Cross Borough children and young people and their families are referred through MASH. The documentation specified in the London CP procedures is reviewed and overseen by HoS. Children and young people are allocated on a rotational basis. The HoS will QA the documentation received and liaise with the CP Conference Team as appropriate. It is expected that the process from receipt of documentation to transfer in CP conference/CIN Meeting should take no longer than 15 days.

Cross Borough children/ young people and families must have an up-to-date assessment (having been completed and updated as close to the transfer request as possible, but no longer than 3 months prior to transfer), a current plan, chronology, genogram, details of the professional network and previous conference minutes.

The SFS Team allocated will identify a social worker who will attend the transfer conference or the CIN Review.

Decisions The final decision as to accepting responsibility must be made during the Transfer Conference/CIN Review.

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Process of Transfer

Assessment-Safeguarding-Cooperate Parenting

This transfer process is to ensure that there are smooth and efficient transfers between service areas. Team Managers need to take ownership of the process.

An ineffective transfer process causes delays in moving children/young people between services resulting in a number of difficulties:

- Children and young people experiencing a change in social worker at the wrong point in time for them.
- Drift in the planning and work with families.
- Increased pressure on social work practitioners (either by needing to hold on to the children/young people for longer than expected or by social workers receiving several new children/young people allocations at one time to meet demand)
- Pressure on working relationships between service areas.

The purpose of this transfer process is to:

- Make the process more manageable and purposeful (reduce the numbers of emails and meetings required)
- Ensure that Children/young people and their families transfer at the right time between services .
- Ensure that all required pieces of work are completed prior to transfer – or an agreement with regards to what needs to be completed, by whom and by an agreed date.
- Encourage earlier joint work with children and young people and their families.

- Improve communication between the service areas
- Accountability for the process

How:

The transfer template (see below) is completed and sent to the Team manager by the end of **Monday** each week with CIN/ICPC/ LAC date. Do not enter the child/ren/young people on the list unless you have the date of the relevant meeting (CIN, ICPC, LAC Review).

The relevant Corporate Parenting Team manager will hold a transfer meeting to discuss the allocation of the family in the service. It is the expectation that the team manager of the transferring team will attend to ensure all work is completed.

The receiving team manager will review and return the template with name of identified SW by the end of **Wednesday** each week.

The SW or SP/ AP from the receiving team to attend CIN/ICPC/LAC review meeting or next court hearing.

The receiving team SW SP/AP/ will complete the minutes only if given enough notice to attend the meeting; otherwise, it would be the responsibility of the transferring SW to complete the minutes before transfer.

CIN plans and minutes must be on Mosaic.

Transferring team manager or senior practitioner to review case file; if work is outstanding, the child/ren/ young people will not be accepted. (Although as a rule outstanding work should not prevent transfer if agreement for outstanding work can be agreed)

Any challenges or disagreements to be discussed between team manger's, if not resolution this will be escalated to HOS..

Transferring SW to ensure a brief summary is added on casenote with any upcoming dates/ meetings.

The allocation on Mosaic will take place on the day of CIN, ICPC and initial or LAC Review and Court hearing by the receiving team manager.

Not having capacity must not be a reason for not allocating/accepting for transfer. Any issues of capacity to be discussed within the service and escalated to HoS as appropriate.

Transfer to CPS, complete transfer checklist and transfer summary – see attached.

Escalation:

Any child/young person not allocated after the CIN review or first Core Group for CP and or initial CIC review to be escalated to HoS by the transferring manager.

Escalation meeting will take place between the transferring managers and the heads of service within 3 days.

TRANSFER TEMPLATE

Date of transfer request (Mondays)	Child's name and Mosaic ID	Type of case (CIN, CP, LAC) and date of meeting	Transfer team identified SW (Wednesdays)	Comments by Transferring team	Comments by transferred to team

TRANSFER CHECKLIST

<u>Task</u>	<u>Tick to confirm or comment when it'll be done:</u>
Date of last visit and is the visit within timescales, date of next visit	
Date of CIN/ICPC/LAC and date of next meeting	
Chronology and genogram completed	
Front page up to date	
Case summary completed	
For CPS – complete check list and update Mosaic	