

Contents

- 1. Terms of Reference**
- 2. The Placement Panel: FAQs**
- 3. Appendix 1:**

1. Terms of Reference

1.1 Purpose

- To make decisions about all children and young people who may require internal or external placements to meet education, care and/or health needs, or a combination of these needs. This includes residential schools, children's homes, foster care (respite, short and long term), parent and baby placements, supported lodgings and all other settings.
- To ensure that the holistic needs of children and young people are fully considered when making decisions about possible placements.
- To discuss budget arrangements, placement costs, timescales and review dates. This includes giving due consideration to contributions from Education/Social Care and the PCT. The panel may advise recourse to the Continuing Care Panel for tripartite funding for placements and the Permanence Panel to ensure that a child's needs are matched to any identified long-term fostering provision.
- To forecast expenditure on placements and ensure that the spending does not exceed the allocated budget.
- To monitor and review resources for children and young people to enhance the ability of local services to meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs in terms of facilitating multi-agency resources either to maintain a placement or to provide alternative services that prevent the need for placement.
- To consider unstable or disrupted placements and where a change of placement is required or additional resources are necessary.

1.2 Principles

- Wherever possible, and where appropriate, children and young people will be placed in local resources.

- Children will only be placed in external resource when their needs cannot be safely or appropriately met from within local resources, or there are insufficient internal resources available.
- All children should have access to some form of family life, either with their parents or extended family. It is expected that a Family Group Conference has been convened before any consideration is given to a placement outside the child's family.

1.3 Governance

- All decisions will be based on a child's assessed needs and all decisions will ensure that proper consideration has been given to the arrangements for the child's health, education, development, cultural/linguistic and broader needs including the need for protection. The panel will require a copy of the existing assessment.
- All decisions will clarify the expectation of the worker and timescales for any identified work to be completed.
- All decisions made by the placement panel will be recorded for inclusion in the child's record on ICS.
- All decisions made by the placement panel will be recorded and sent to all panel members and to the Head of Children's Social Care.
- The Head of Children's Social Care may request that a decision about a child's resource is reviewed by the placement panel. The placement panel will ensure that all options to meet the child's needs without the provision of a placement have been fully explored and acted upon, e.g. family support services, family group conferences, placement with connected persons or friends and family.

1.4 Operational Remit of the Placement Panel

- To consider the cases of all children and young people who may need a care placement and/or residential school placements, as soon as it is identified as a strong possibility.
- The Panel must be informed of:
- Placements made with connected persons and friends and family carers so as to document any money being paid from the looked after children budget
- Court ordered emergency placements made because of child protection concerns. The panel must be kept informed of the type and duration of placement so as to document the money being paid from the looked after children budget.

Version 1f

- The panel will operate within the guidance, policy and procedure of Portsmouth Council's Children's Social Care and Safeguarding Services and respective agencies. It will make decisions in accordance with statutory responsibilities.
- The panel will only agree a placement if evidence is presented that the needs of the child cannot be met by local services and resources.
- The panel will consider creative alternatives to external placements, where others have not been explored and may involve the allocation of further resources.

1.5 Panel Composition

The panel will consist of:

- Senior Manager, Children's Social Care & Safeguarding
- Financial representative
- Fostering Manager/Access to resources officer
- Residential Unit Manager
- Independent Reviewing Officer
- Integrated Youth Support
- Children's Centre Manager
- Contact & Intervention Manager
- Health representative
- Education representative

1.6 Frequency of Meetings and Administrative Support

- The Placement Panel will meet every Thursday at 3pm
- Records of the Placement Panel will be kept, with individual decision sheets being placed on children and young people's files.
- Support will be available to manage the administration of the placement panel. This will include invites and attendance, managing agendas, distribution of paperwork and recording decisions on the child's electronic social care record.
- The required paperwork (section 1.7) must be sent electronically to the panel administrator a minimum of 3 working days before the date of the panel (i.e. the Monday before Panel meets).

1.7 Unplanned Cases

- In exceptional circumstances a decision may need to be made about the placement of a child or young person outside of the Placement Panel. Placements can only proceed in these circumstances with the authorisation of the Head of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, the Director of Children's Services or a person who has been identified to deputise for them in their absence.

1.8 Presentation Protocol

- The allocated social worker must attend the Placement Panel to present the request. If they are unable to attend the practice leader or team manager will make the presentation to Panel.
- The following information must be sent electronically to the panel administrator a minimum of 3 working days before the date of the panel (i.e. the Monday before Panel meets):
 - Placement Panel Form giving details of child, reason for request, placement required and duration required, including implications for arrangements for health, education etc. and anticipated cost
 - The most recent assessment detailing the child's situation

N.B. Placement decisions will never exceed 4 week approval in the absence of a core assessment. In cases where a recent core assessment has yet to be completed the panel will set a date for review within 4 weeks.

- Cases may be presented to the panel for information when there is a significant likelihood that they may require external placement at some point in the future.
- The panel will require the referrer to have reviewed all relevant up to date inspection reports and references for proposed placements (i.e. OFSTED, etc) provided by the Fostering Service and where appropriate visits should be undertaken by the appropriate professional in advance of presentation to panel. These visits should not include the child, young person or their parents and great care should be taken with the presentation of this information, as no placement can be confirmed until the panel has agreed it.
- The panel may opt to delay decisions if insufficient information is available. They may also call upon additional expertise if it is required to assist in the decision making process.
- The final decision on all cases will be agreed at the panel, with the Chair having the casting vote where required.

1.9 Financial Monitoring

- The panel will allocate and monitor the spending on placements to ensure that best value is applied to all requests and to ensure the appropriate use of resources.
- A spreadsheet will be maintained detailing: name of child; start of placement; predicted end of placement; total proposed cost and any date for review. This data will be held by the financial representative.
- A report on total forecasted placement spend will be prepared each month by the financial representative and presented to the Senior Management Team in Children's Social Care & Safeguarding.

1.9 Review

- Timescales for reviews at Placement Panel are at the discretion of the panel or at least annually - unless permanence approval through the LAC process has been given.
- The panel will commission the production of an Annual Report providing information about the needs of children who have been presented over the year.
- The panel chair will provide data on panel activity which will inform the Children's Services Annual Report
- The panel procedures and terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.

1.10 Links to Other Panels

- Placement Panel will be the forum in which decisions about joint funded placements between education and social care will be made. Referral to Placement Panel from education services will be through recommendation from the Inclusion Support Panel (ISP). Placement Panel will need to:
 - Consider placement and provision for those cases where there is a combination of social care and education needs to be addressed and where assessment and planning has indicated that these needs cannot be met within current City provision.
 - Co-ordinate effective financial planning for these children , constructing a joint plan for the child
 - Agree funding responsibility in each case prior to Continuing Care Panel

- Consider any such placements that may not meet Continuing Care Panel criteria.
- Inform strategic planning over out of city placements and as act as conduit to inform DMT of any issues or emerging trends.

2. The Placement Panel: Frequently Asked Questions

2.1 Why do we need the Panel?

The Placement Panel has been created to consider all decisions to offer Portsmouth's children alternative care placements and/or independent school placements. The purpose of the panel is to examine all decisions and ensure that they clearly focus on the needs of children and young people, delivering improved outcomes. The panel will make budget decisions for placements, highlighting funding provided for education, social care and health placement needs. This will act to simplify the process, reduce bureaucracy and help to focus on children and young people's needs rather than individual departments' requirements.

2.2 What Needs to Happen Before Cases are Presented to the Panel?

Before cases are presented to the panel there is an expectation that work will have taken place to try to identify alternatives to a care placement or an independent school. This will include creative problem solving, negotiations with partner agencies/organisations who may be able to help and consideration of alternative methods of supporting the child and his/her family. In the case of a school placement this will include exploration of Portsmouth's maintained schools and other out of area maintained provision. Evidence of this work will be required in order for the panel to reach a decision.

2.3 What are the Criteria for Presenting Children's Cases to the Panel?

All requests for a placement must be presented to the panel. This includes independent schools, (day or residential), specialist provision for children with disabilities, children's homes, foster care (respite, short and long term), parent and baby placements, supported lodgings and all other settings. It also includes all cases where a child or young person needs to move from an existing placement to a new one.

- **Early warning/concern a placement may be required** - When it starts to become apparent that a child or young person's needs cannot be met by his or her family or a

Portsmouth maintained school, or a more specialist provision is required

it should be discussed with the relevant line manager. Early identification can help to identify creative alternative solutions to meet children's needs

- **All care placements** – For all care placements, permission to approach the Fostering Service needs to be gained from the relevant senior manager before a referral and risk assessment is completed. These cases will then be presented to the panel with available options. The panel may identify possible alternatives or make an 'in principle' agreement to placement
- **For children with disabilities** - Request for placements will follow the recommendations from the relevant panel e.g. SEN Panel and Continuing Care Panel prior to being presented to the Placement Panel for discussion
- **Emergency placements** - Where an immediate or emergency care placement is required that day, permission to place must still be sought initially by the service manager then permission gained from the Head of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding. The case will then be presented to Placement Panel retrospectively
- **Targeted placement reviews** - The panel will periodically review selected cases to ensure that they are providing the help and support children and young people require. In these cases the appropriate manager will be asked to provide specific information to the panel

2.4 How does the Panel Link to cases in Legal Proceedings?

In some circumstances courts are empowered to order Local Authorities to place children and young people in specific placements or resources (e.g. Children Act Proceedings). These are unusual and infrequent, often resulting from a major difference of opinion between the Local Authority/Guardian and or Judge/Magistrates. Every effort should be made to avoid these circumstances through negotiation and attempts to resolve the conflict. Where this is not possible it is important that Commissioning Managers and the Head of Service are kept fully informed.

When there is a strong possibility of a placement being ordered by a court, consideration should be given to presenting the case to the Placement Panel. This will provide the opportunity for early discussion and the exploration of alternatives that may be able to better meet the child or young person's interests. In all cases when a child or young person is placed in an external

Version 1f

resource as the result of a court order, the case should be retrospectively presented to the Placement Panel. Whenever placements are ordered by the courts, all efforts must be made to maximise the contributions to the cost of the placement from the other parties (e.g. parents and guardian's legal aid).

2.5 How Should Children and Parents be Involved in the Panel Process?

The panel will not make decisions about placements in the absence of information about the wishes and feelings of children, young people and their parents/carers. These should be gathered in the normal way via the care planning processes and included in the referral information to panel.

2.6 How will Decisions Made by the Panel be Recorded and Reported?

The panel will produce a written summary of any decision and action required arising from presentation to the panel. No commitment to place a child in an external placement should be made until this has been received. A copy of the panel's decision should be placed on the child or young person's record. The decision should be conveyed to the child and their family by the most appropriate case worker or manager.

2.7 What if Professionals Disagree with a Decision Made by the Commissioning Panel?

This needs to be considered and discussed within your supervision/1:1 meeting with your manager. If he or she is in agreement they can make representations to the chair of the panel who will consider the reasons as they would in any other area of potential professional disagreement.

2.8 Why Do We Need a Panel if the Assessments Have Been Made by Suitably Qualified Staff?

The panel is designed to be an additional safeguard to ensure that the best decisions are made for children and young people both in a care setting and independent schools. Placing a child or young person away from their home is a major and potentially life changing event, consequently it is appropriate to have an enhanced level of scrutiny. The panel also discusses resources provided by different organisations e.g. PCT Continuing Care.

People?

No, if a child or young person cannot wait for a placement until the next panel meeting a decision can be taken outside the panel process. In these exceptional circumstances placements can only proceed with the authorisation of the Head of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, Director of Children's Services or a person who has been identified to deputise for them in their absence. The placement must then be presented to the next Placement Panel.

The panel may also help to speed up progress in some cases as it will reduce the need to attend multiple panels.

2.10 Is the Panel Designed to Save Money?

No, the purpose of the panel is to improve services for children and young people. There is extensive research available that demonstrates children placed away from their family and community often suffer poorer outcomes than children placed locally. The research shows that children in care often fail to achieve good educational and health outcomes and are significantly more likely to experience abuse when placed externally. Many external providers claim to ensure better outcomes for children and young people; part of the role of the panel will be to test these claims and ensure that we achieve value for money.

Placement Referral Form

The information provided on this first page is for INTERNAL USE ONLY, and will not be issued to any third party until a placement is confirmed.

Case Holder Details			
Case Holder name:		Telephone Number:	
Email Address:		Team Manager name:	
What attempts have been made to arrange for the child/young person to live with a relative or a close family friend as an alternative to care or accommodation if the child/young person is not already in a family or friends placement?			
Agreement to child becoming looked after must be given by Senior Manager. N.B. Recording this agreement assumes that verbal agreement has been obtained from HEAD OF SERVICE			
Name of person agreeing to placement proceeding:		DATE:	

Child's Details			
Child's surname		Forenames	
Any other names		DOB	
Child's G.P.		G.P.'s tel no	
Child's current address & telephone no			
Address type: (e.g. with parents, carers, friends etc)			
Family address & telephone no (if different from above)			

FOR PLACEMENT COMMISSIONING TEAM USE ONLY

Date Referral Received	
Time Received	

Chronology of search

Referral to Provider	Date	Provider Response	Date
Tier 1			
Tier 2			
Tier 3			

Disabled Child Tier 1			
Disabled Child Tier 2			
Reference Number			
Date of Referral		Date placement required	
Anticipated duration of placement			
Type of Placement required			
Key Information			
Age of child			
Gender			
Ethnicity			
Religion			
Country of origin			
Requested locality (e.g. anywhere in county, or specific area of city)			
Name and location of school attending			
Disability / Registered Disabled			
SEN status			
Child's legal status			
Placement restrictions e.g. cannot be placed with any other looked after children; location; pets			
Does the child or young person smoke?		Yes No	
Sibling Groups- please indicate the age, gender and system reference number of siblings that should be placed together			
Transport requirements, including contact, school, regular activities			
Contact Arrangements			
Please provide details of the contact plan, including frequency, location, and whether contact needs to be supervised			

Placement History (Total number of previous placements)										
Family		Adoptive		Foster		Residential		Respite		Secure
Details of last three placements										
Placement			From	To	Reason for Leaving – please give a context to this placement move					

Care Plan	
Reason for child/young person being looked after?	
What is the care plan for this child/young person?	Remain with birth family supported by shared care/short term breaks
	Return to birth family within one month
	Return to birth family within six months
	Eventual return to birth family
	Further exploration of placement with alternative family member
	Long term placement with relatives/friends
	Residential placement until independence
	Long term placement with foster carer (intended to last until 18, no return home envisaged)
	Supported living in community (with view to independence)
	Adoption
	Other (Please state)
Are legal orders being sought to support this plan?	Supervision Order
	Residence Order
	Special Guardianship
	Adoption Order
	Care Order
	Placement Order
	Other (Please state)

Family Background
Please provide a brief pen picture of the child's family background and their journey in to care.

Profile of Child	
Strengths – please include full details of the child’s strengths and achievements	
Personality – please include likes and dislikes	
Hobbies and interests	
Further Information – please detail any specific matching considerations	

Developmental Needs and Outcomes required from the Placement	
<p>HEALTH This section should refer to the child / young person's health history, needs, strengths and difficulties and how any needs will be met. Please include relevant information about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current medication and the treatment of any health conditions • ability to make attachments • allergies and attitudes to pets; • Resilience and self-esteem • Substance misuse issues • Sexual health • Attitude to food and weight • Smoking • Personal hygiene • Learning difficulties • Physical or sensory impairments. 	
Summary of Developmental Needs	
Outcomes to be achieved – clearly indicate what this placement request is expected to help achieve; outcomes should focus on anticipated value-added if a placement is provided.	
Select broad outcome from drop down box	Specific details of outcome to be achieved

EDUCATION

This section should refer to the child / young person's education history, needs, strengths and difficulties and how any needs will be met.

Please include relevant information about the following:

- Education history (including dates / reasons for leaving educational establishments)
- Statement of SEN
- Any needs where English is a second language
- Attitude to education and attendance levels
- Educational aspirations, achievements and attainment targets
- Any action needed to help the child catch-up with peers and/or achieve their aspirations
- Importance of continuing at current school/college
- Support required for homework
- Any support required around accessing or sustaining apprenticeships or further / education
- Arrangements for work experience, volunteering, career mentoring or pathways into employment etc.

Summary of Developmental Needs

Outcomes to be achieved – clearly indicate what this placement request is expected to help achieve; outcomes should focus on anticipated value-added if a placement is provided.

Select broad outcome from drop down box

Specific details of outcome to be achieved
Put a tick by the top 3 initial priorities

Select broad outcome from drop down box	Specific details of outcome to be achieved Put a tick by the top 3 initial priorities

EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DEVELOPMENT: SELF CARE SKILLS

This section should refer to the child / young person's emotional and behavioural needs, self care skills, strengths and difficulties and how any needs will be met.

Please include relevant information about the following:

- Any emotional and behavioural difficulties, including abusive incidence to self or others and in particular, any behaviours which have been of concern to a child's previous carer and how these were managed.
- Fire setting or sexually abusive incidents and any existing management strategies
- The child / young person's self-care skills, and any support required
- The practical, emotional and other skills the child / young person already has and what further skills are needed

Summary of Developmental Needs	
Outcomes to be achieved – clearly indicate what this placement request is expected to help achieve; outcomes should focus on anticipated value-added if a placement is provided.	
Select broad outcome from drop down box	Specific details of outcome to be achieved

IDENTITY AND SOCIAL PRESENTATION

This section should refer to the child / young person's identity and social presentation needs, strengths and difficulties and how any needs will be met.

Please include relevant information about the following:

- Sense of self and self esteem
- A positive sense of his / her ethnicity in the family as a black or minority ethnic child
- Religious, spiritual and / or culturally specific needs, and any requirements to strengthen the child's links with the religious and cultural practices of their birth family
- Life story information that may be required

Summary of Developmental Needs	
Outcomes to be achieved – clearly indicate what this placement request is expected to help achieve; outcomes should focus on anticipated value-added if a placement is provided.	
Select broad outcome from drop down box	Specific details of outcome to be achieved

FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

This section should refer to the child / young person's Family and Social Relationships and indicate any difficulties and needs.

Please include relevant information about the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with and support available from parents, siblings, wider family and carers Age appropriate friendships with peers and other significant persons If the young person is a parent, then attention should be paid to their parenting capacity. 	
Summary of Developmental Needs	
Outcomes to be achieved – clearly indicate what this placement request is expected to help achieve; outcomes should focus on anticipated value-added if a placement is provided.	
Select broad outcome from drop down box	Specific details of outcome to be achieved

Risk Assessment – consider:

Are there measures that have been effective in managing the risk? What has worked well previously?

Who else is involved and what will their role be in helping to reduce the risk?

What are the CYP views on the risk, when do they feel most vulnerable and how can they enable you to recognise when risk is developing/increasing?

Behaviour / Hazards	Details of the last known incident of the behaviour and frequency of occurrence	Known triggers	Controls to reduce/eliminate risk
Absconding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - category 1 or 2 absence - from the home - from school - from home - failure to return 			
Self harming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cutting, scratching - using medication - using alcohol/substances - strangulation, head banging 			
Impulsive/dangerous behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self - involves others - involved by others 			
Substance/alcohol misuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self - involves others - involved by others 			
Attendance at School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - refusal to attend - no school placement - missing from school 			

<p>Verbal aggression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - abuse - threats - challenging - from others 			
<p>Physical aggression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - threatening - assaults - fighting - from others 			
<p>Bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - of other children - of adults - by other young people - by others 			
<p>Sexually abusive/inappropriate behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - towards other children - towards adults - from others 			

Racial violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - towards other children - towards adults - from others 			
Damage to property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - own property - others property - deliberate - accidental - own property damaged by others 			
Offending <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self - involves others - involved by others - persistent or ongoing and likely to result in further convictions 			
High needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'victim' mentality - high levels of reassurance required 			
Behaviours which repeatedly put themselves or others at high risk of harm This assessment may be based on any of the above categories			
Ongoing lack of engagement with family, carers or professionals – may be evidenced through any of the above			
NB – identified risks should cross-refer to the 'Developmental Needs and Outcomes' sections of this form.			