

Case Transfer Protocol and Guidance

Children Social Care and Early Help & Prevention

The purpose of this document is to outline the expectations and processes when children transfer from one team to another:

- MASH to Early Help & Prevention or Children Social Care
- Early Help & Prevention to Children Social Care
- Family Support & Safeguarding to Through Care Team (inc Adoption Pod)
- Through Care Team to Family Support & Safeguarding or to Early Help & Prevention
- Transfer to EH&P, CwD workers (re managing small care packages/ direct payments)
- Through Care Team 1 - Through Care Team 2
- Transfers between Family Support & Safeguarding Teams

This guidance was created through working groups that included:

- Adam Shepherd: Head Family Safeguarding
- Julia Newton: Service Leader - Family Support & Safeguarding North
- Katy Willcox: Manager - Early Help & Prevention North
- Sara Sweeney: Service Leader - Through Care Team 1
- Vicky Cuthbert: Team Leader - MASH
- Charlie Pitt - Team Leader - Through Care Team 2

And via correspondence with:

- Karin Downer: Service and Quality Manager, 0-19 Public Health Nursing
- Bruce Marr: Head Harm & Exploitation for YOT

The guiding principles have to be that:

- Transfer of case responsibility between teams fully considers the needs of the child and family and they experience a positive handover from one team to another.
- This should not create any delay for the family as transfer meetings and joint visit will allow full opportunities for the plan to be smoothly progressed.
- It is recognised that during the period of transferring case responsibility this can present a heightened risk in supporting the child and family. As such, practitioners involved should be especially mindful to this.
- Where children are going to close to the Service within 3 months all efforts should be made to avoid any change of case responsibility to provide continuity for the child and family.

MASH to EH&P or CSC

Allocation as a Child in Need will come through MASH and will follow a thorough multi-agency decision process. The lead MASH worker will begin the information gathering process, each multi-agency worker will consecutively add their own information before the lead worker makes a recommendation for the safeguarding pathway; this recommendation will then pass to a Senior Social Worker for a further decision. At this point the decision is likely to be either Early Help support, or support from the Family Support & Safeguarding Teams as either a Section 47 enquiry, or assessment under Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989.

EH&P to CSC

If a family is open to the 0-19 Early Help and Prevention service, and there are concerns relating to immediate significant harm, MASH will need to be informed immediately and a referral made.

Where there are increasing concerns for a family open to the Early Help service for targeted support, these will initially be discussed with the Early Help Social Worker. If interventions to strengthen the plan have not achieved improvement for the family, then the Early Help Social Worker will need to have a threshold discussion with MASH Team Leaders, and where appropriate a contact will be made to the MASH. This discussion should be recorded on a case note in MOSAIC by the relevant EH&P practitioner/ manager.

This contact will then be progressed by MASH, against the threshold document. Where a Tier 4 outcome (referral to Children's Social care) is agreed the Early Help Social Worker will complete the necessary escalation steps on Mosaic; including completion of a contact and referral that clearly states the reasons for Tier 4 intervention and where ever possible obtain consent from the parent/carer. The Early Help practitioner/ manager will inform the relevant Family Support and Safeguarding Team of the MASH threshold outcome. The lead professional from Early Help will be able to support with a handover where required and should be invited to attend a strategy meeting where a Section 47 is to be considered.

Early Help & Prevention need to close the family's case on MOSAIC before the contact and referral in MASH is completed, as they can only be open to one service.

YOT to EH&P or CSC

If a family is open to the YOT and there are concerns relating to immediate significant harm, a contact should be made to MASH immediately.

Where there are increasing concerns for a family open to the YOT, these will initially be discussed with the YOT Team Leader. If there are identified needs under either section 47 or section 17 Children Act 1989, then a contact should be made to MASH.

This contact will then be progressed by MASH, against the threshold document and MASH will inform the relevant YOT practitioner of the MASH threshold outcome. The YOT practitioner will be able to support with a handover where required and should be invited to attend any strategy or planning meetings.

CSC to EH&P

When the Service or Team Leader within a Family Support and Safeguarding Team has identified that a referral to Early Help and Prevention should be part of a families plan, they will, in conjunction with the Social Worker, discuss the proposed plan of intervention with a manager from the relevant 0-19 Early Help and Prevention Team. This will be recorded on a case note in MOSAIC by the relevant CSC practitioner/ manager.

Where there is appropriate consent and an agreed need for Early Help and Prevention support, the allocated Social Worker will ensure that they have discussed the plan with the family and professionals contributing to the plan. They will then complete the relevant steps on Mosaic to close the family to their service. The family's basic information will need to be current with all relevant markers / registrations completed .The closure will need to reflect the plan that has been agreed with the family and the Early Help and Prevention service and be signed off by the relevant Team Leader.

At point of closure an Early Help Assessment is generated and sent to the relevant Early Help and Prevention Locality. A lead professional will be allocated in a multiagency allocations meeting.

It is critical that on all cases there is a handover between the Social Worker and the Lead Professional from Early Help. This handover should include the family so that everyone is clear what work has been undertaken and what the plan is moving forward. This should be a joint visit to family, wherever possible.

Please note that where a single assessment has been completed with a family, a full Early Help assessment will not be completed. Early Help will use the plan that is stepped down from Children's Social Care, and complete an Early Help review.

FS&S to TCT (inc Adoption Pod)

➤ *Children subject to Care Orders:*

While children are subject to Interim Orders they will remain within the Family Support & Safeguarding Service. Children who are subject to placement with parent regulations will remain within the Family Support & Safeguarding Service.

For children subject to parallel planning a referral should be made to the Adoption pod at onset of Public Law Outline - Pre-Proceedings. The Adoption Team will be aware of cases going into PLO due to attendance at Legal Gateway.

Once Final Orders have been made the child/ren will need to be transferred to the Through Care Team, with a clear plan in place.

1. Family Support & Safeguarding Service notify Through Care Team of child/ ren who will need transfer, this should notification should be made when it is agreed that Care Proceedings will be issued (by Head of Service at Legal Gateway Meeting).
2. Transfer Checklist (attached - Appendix A) completed by FS&S, Service or Team Leader - at conclusion of proceedings/ prior to transfer
3. Within 2 weeks of conclusion of proceedings, a transfer meeting will take place between the relevant FS&S team, a Manager and Social Worker, and TCT, Manager and Social Worker, if identified - This meeting will discuss the child's journey into care

and their current circumstances. At this meeting a handover visit will be arranged for within two weeks of the meeting date.

4. Within 2 weeks of this meeting, there will have been a joint visit to child, carer and relevant family members (as identified at transfer meeting) by current FS&S Social Worker and the Social Worker being allocated in Through Care Team.
5. After the handover visit the FS&S Service or Team Leader will change the MOSAIC key worker/Team details.

In the event of sickness or absence by the Team Leader or Social Worker for either the meeting or the visit then another Team Leader or Social Worker will step in for their colleague. This will avoid drift or delay for the child/ren and will mean that the allocated SW can confidently prepare the child/ren for the change of SW and team.

➤ **Children subject to Section 20:**

Children subject to S20 will remain in the Family Support & Safeguarding Service until a decision has been made by Senior Management that there are no plans for them to return to their parent's care at this time. This decision will also have been ratified by the Independent Reviewing Officer at the second LAC Review and recorded within the LAC review record by the IRO. The child should be settled in placement and have a family time (contact) plan established. It is expected that a child would remain within the Family Support & Safeguarding Service until after the Independent Reviewing Officer has ratified agreement to a longer term placement.

1. Family Support & Safeguarding Service notify Through Care Team of child/ ren who will need transfer, this should happen when it is agreed by the Independent Reviewing Officer.
2. Transfer Checklist (attached - Appendix A) completed by FS&S, Service or Team Leader - prior to transfer meeting
3. Within 2 weeks of ratification by Independent Reviewing Officer, a transfer meeting will take place between the relevant FS&S team, A Manager and Social Worker, and TCT, Manager and Social Worker, if identified - This meeting will discuss the child's journey into care and their current circumstances. At this meeting a handover visit will be arranged for within two weeks of the meeting date.
4. Within 2 weeks of this meeting, there will have been a joint visit to child, carer and relevant family members (as identified at transfer meeting) by current FS&S Social Worker and the Social Worker being allocated in Through Care.
5. After the handover visit the FS&S Service or Team Leader will change the MOSAIC key worker/Team details.

TCT to Family Support & Safeguarding or to Early Help & Prevention

When a child or young person ceases to be Looked After they should remain in the Through Care team for a period of at least six months to ensure that the current plan is embedded and sustainable.

Once the child or young person is settled back with their parent/s then the Team Leader and Social Worker should consult the Threshold Document to establish which services meet the current needs.

The child or young person will have been classed as a Child in Need once they ceased to be looked after by the Local Authority, but this does not make them automatically eligible for allocation with a Family Support & Safeguarding Team or Early Help service. If a child does not meet the threshold for Tier 4 or Tier 3 services then Through Care will step down to a Tier 2 or Universal service.

When the threshold has been established the Through Care Team Leader should arrange a meeting to take place between themselves, the allocated Through Care SW, a Team Leader from Early Help or a Locality Service and the proposed new SW or EH worker.

1. The meeting should occur within two weeks of this contact. Meeting actions will be recorded on a case note in MOSAIC by the relevant TCT practitioner/ manager.
2. Before the meeting the Through Care Service or Team Leader will ensure that the transfer checklist has been completed and that the Case File is up to date.
3. The Single Assessment should relate to the recent months since the Care Order has been discharged. The SAF should be dated within the last 6 months but may well need to be more recent to reflect the relevant changes.
4. At this meeting a handover visit will be arranged for within two weeks of the meeting date.
5. If the transfer is to a Family Support & Safeguarding Team then after the handover visit the Through Care Team, Service or Team Leader will change the MOSAIC key worker/Team details.
6. If the transfer is to Early Help then following the visit the Through Care Team Leader will trigger the step down to Early Help & Prevention.

In the event of sickness or absence by the TL or SW for either the meeting or the visit then another TL/SW will step in for their colleague. This will avoid drift or delay for the child/ren and will mean that the allocated SW can confidently prepare the child/ren for the change of SW and team.

Transfer to EH&P, CwD workers (re managing small care packages/ direct payments)

If the Service or Team Leader within a Tier 4 service has agreed that a referral to Early Help and Prevention should be part of a families plan, they will in the first instance discuss this themselves or request that the allocated Social Worker discuss the proposed plan of intervention with the management of the relevant Early Help and Prevention - Children With Disabilities Team.

Where there is appropriate consent and an agreed need for Early Help and Prevention - Children with Disabilities intervention, the allocated Social Worker will ensure that they have discussed the plan with the family and professionals contributing to the plan. They will then complete the relevant steps on Mosaic to close the family to their service. The family's basic information will need to be current with all relevant markers / registrations completed. The closure will need to reflect the plan that has been agreed with the family and the Early Help and Prevention - Children with Disabilities service and be signed off by the relevant Team Leader.

If a resource need has been identified, this will need to be agreed at resource panel with the relevant financial approvals in place prior to transfer.

At point of closure an Early Help Assessment is generated and sent to the Early Help and Prevention - Children with Disabilities Team. A lead professional will be allocated in a

multiagency allocations meeting. A handover between the previous Social Worker and the newly allocated Lead professional will then be arranged. This should be a joint visit to the family where ever possible.

TCT 1 - TCT 2

A Personal Advisor is allocated at age 16 to allow for a smooth transition. At point of transfer the checklist should be completed. The Social Worker from TCT1 will make a goodbye visit and at age 18 the TL in TCT1 will arrange for the transfer to be completed on MOSAIC . There will be a final LAC review and the Pathway Plan updated for this. In month prior to turning 18 the SW will send the PA and TL the case summary and transfer checklist and arrange a transfer meeting

Transfers between FS&S teams

When cases are initially allocated it is the responsibility of the MASH to check the family postcode and allocate to the correct FS&S Team. On receiving the case the FS&S team should check addresses and assure themselves the case has been allocated to correct Locality. If it is found case has been allocated to wrong Locality the correct FS&S team should be identified and case transferred immediately, prior to assessment and allocation.

There will then be occasions that Families move within the City or children move. Any family/ child that move to another area of the City need to be in permeant accommodation before transfer can be considered. Any transfer will need to:

- Family Support & Safeguarding Service who hold the case notify the team for transfer.
- Transfer Checklist (attached - Appendix A) completed by FS&S, Service or Team Leader - prior to transfer meeting
- A transfer meeting will take place between the relevant FS&S teams, A Manager and Social Worker, from the original team and a Manager and Social Worker, if identified, for the FS&S team being transferred to.
- Within 2 weeks of this meeting, there will have been a joint visit to child, carer and relevant family members (as identified at transfer meeting) by current FS&S Social Worker and the newly allocated Social Worker.
- After the handover visit the FS&S Service or Team Leader, who have transferred the case, will change the MOSAIC key worker/Team details.

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February 2022

Signed off at SMT: 16th March 2022

Review Due: February 2024