

# **Medway Council Children's Services Case Transfer Process 2015**

**For Children's Advice & Duty Service, Child In  
Need & Child Protection, LAC & Care Proceedings  
and 0-25 Disabled Person's Service**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Signed off by:</b>
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1.3	09.09.15	Jayne Morrell	CSCMT on 09.09.15

## **1. Introduction**

This document sets out the arrangements for transfer of case responsibility between service areas in Medway Children's Services, together with a summary of the standards required and management responsibilities to be met before cases can be transferred.

## **2. Transfer Points**

Children's Advice & Duty Service (CADS) will inform the Child In Need & Child Protection Service (CIN & CP), and Looked after Children and Care Proceedings Services (LAC & Proceedings) at the earliest opportunity of all cases requiring transfer.

Weekly transfer meetings will take place between the three service areas, attended by Operations Managers, to ensure there is no delay in transferring cases to prevent potential drift and 'bottle neck' of casework.

A record will be kept of all cases discussed with agreed transfer dates noted.

Cases will be transferred at the following points:

**2.1** Child Protection cases will transfer at the first Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), where the child or young person is made subject to a Protection Plan. CADS will ensure that the case is ready for transfer at the ICPC. The CIN & CP receiving social worker or Social Work Manager will attend the ICPC and the first core group will take place following the case conference.

**2.2** Looked after children held by CADS with a S20 status (where care proceedings are not anticipated) will be transferred at the first statutory review directly to the LAC & Proceedings Service. CADS will ensure that the case is ready for transfer at the first review. Receiving social worker or Social Work Manager from LAC & Proceedings will attend the LAC Review.

**2.3** Looked after children held by the 0-25 disabled children service with a S20 status (where there is no safeguarding concern and the child has become looked after as part of their care package) will be transferred at either the first or second statutory review to the LAC and Proceedings Service. This will be determined on an individual basis, depending on the complexity of the situation and likely duration of the placement. Receiving social worker or Social Work Manager from LAC & Proceedings will attend the LAC Review

**2.4** Cases presented at Legal Gateway meeting by CADS where the outcome is Pre-proceedings will be transferred at the first pre-proceedings meeting to CIN and CP Service. If the outcome of Legal Gateway is to issue Care Proceedings the case will be transferred at the initial court hearing to LAC & Proceedings Service.

**2.5** Children who are subject of Child Protection plans within the CIN & CP Service who become the subject of Care Proceedings will be transferred from the first Court hearing to the LAC and Proceedings Service. Receiving social worker or Social Work Manager should attend the Court hearing. CIN & CP Service will maintain case responsibility for children who become subject of Pre-proceedings whilst CP Planning is also in place.

**2.6** Child in Need cases will transfer from CADS or LAC & Proceedings at the point of the initial Child in Need meeting. CIN & CP Service will ensure the identified social worker or Social Work Manager attends first Child in Need meeting.

**2.7** Where children are subject to existing Supervision Orders they will remain in their current team to provide continuity.

### **3. Manager Responsibilities**

All designated managers for the three service areas will identify cases for transfer on a weekly basis for discussion at the weekly transfer meeting to be held on a Monday. The purpose of the weekly transfer meeting is to provide an early identification to receiving service areas, of children who have been assessed as requiring a plan of social care intervention. Operations Managers will attend the transfer meeting for each of the service areas.

Details of cases identified for transfer will be provided to Operations Managers by midday Thursday and they will circulate to each other by end of day on Friday.

Operations Managers for CIN & CP Service and LAC & Proceedings Service will meet with their Social Work Managers on Monday to identify social workers to receive the work identified to transfer to their service areas. The names of receiving social workers **must** be shared at the transfer meeting.

The identified receiving social worker or their Social Work Manager will attend the agreed transfer point – i.e. CIN Meeting, ICPC, LAC Review, Pre-proceedings Meeting, or Court Hearing.

It is the responsibility of the case responsible Social Worker Manager to ensure cases are ready for transfer and all transfer standards have been met. Prior to the agreed transfer point (e.g. ICPC, LAC Review etc) all cases will be audited, using the transfer audit tool, and signed off by the case responsible Social Work Manager. A copy of the file audit will be sent to the receiving Social Work Manager.

**3.1 Cases will not transfer unless the case record is fit for purpose. Please see below for transfer standards.**

**3.2** Receiving Social Work Managers will ensure the transferring case audit is checked and agreed within 48 hours of receipt and any deficits referred back to the relevant team before they are accepted. The receiving manager must re-allocate the case on the date agreed. If the case is not allocated within 48 hours the outgoing manager can allocate to the new manager and worker with a case note placed on the record and an alert sent. Once accepted, **cases are not to be transferred back.** Issues need to be resolved via the Social Work Managers in the first instance, if not resolved, the escalation policy is to be followed.

**3.3** Upon cases reaching agreed and appropriate transfer points and a satisfactory file audit being completed, all cases will transfer directly to the receiving social worker and Social Work Manager.

**3.4** Case responsibility will remain with the team transferring the case until re-allocated to the receiving social worker.

**3.5** Capacity issues within the receiving service are **not** a reason for cases not transferring.

## **4. File Standards before transfers can be agreed**

The following minimum file standards are required when transferring a case to and from any team:

### **4.1 For all cases**

- There is an up to date Child and Family Assessment
- There is an up to date SMART plan, including safeguarding arrangements and contingency arrangements.
- There is evidence that the Child or Young Person's wishes, feelings and views have been sought and incorporated into the planning.

- At least monthly Management oversight is recorded
- Relevant casework processes are evident and recorded
- There are no outstanding or incomplete tasks or episodes (checked and confirmed by Social Work Manager)
- There is evidence that the family are aware of the proposed transfer
- Detailed but succinct transfer summary which identifies tasks with agreed timescales and relevant professionals with contact details
- Up to date Chronology

**In addition:**

**4.2 For Child Protection Plans**

- Strategy Discussion and S.47 record completed
- Report for Conference

**4.3 For LAC cases:**

- Placement and Information Record
- 72 hour planning meeting
- Up to date statutory visits
- Initial and any review Health Assessments have taken place or are booked
- PEPs where possible. Where this is not possible a date should have been identified for the initial PEP meeting providing that this is not prevented by the child becoming looked after during school holidays.
- Up to date LAC Care Plan on file, including Pathway Plan if appropriate
- Details of the placement
- Evidence that case has been presented at Access to Resources Panel
- Child's Legal Status is recorded

**4.4 For those where Pre-proceedings has commenced**

- Evidence that case has been presented to Legal Gateway Meeting
- Copies of Letter Before Proceedings and evidence of delivery to parents or others with parental responsibility

#### **4.5 For those where Legal Proceedings have commenced**

- Evidence that case has been presented to Legal Gateway Meeting
- Relevant statement and legal care/supervision plans along with court chronology
- Court Orders
- As above for LAC if child is also looked after by the local authority

### **5. Handover process**

#### **5.1 Child Protection**

- CIN & CP Service will ensure that there is a representative attending the Initial Child Protection Conference. This will be the receiving social worker or Social Work Manager.
- CIN & CP social worker or Social Work Manager will chair the first core group meeting following the ICPC, arrange for notes to be taken and record the detailed child protection plan (NB Plans and recording will be SMART and relate to those factors that need to change in order that a CP Planning is no longer necessary – See template)
- Transferring and receiving social workers will undertake a joint handover visit to the family (including seeing the children) prior to ICPC. A case discussion should also take place between social workers.

#### **5.2 Child in Need**

- CIN & CP Service will ensure that there is a representative attending the Child In Need meeting. This will be the receiving social worker or Social Work Manager.
- Transferring social worker will chair the Child In Need meeting and agree the outline plan but this will be recorded by the CIN & CP receiving social worker or Social Work Manager.
- Transferring and receiving social workers will undertake a joint handover visit to the family (including seeing the children) prior to Child In Need meeting. A case discussion should also take place between social workers.

### **5.3 Proceedings/Pre-proceedings**

- The receiving service will ensure that there is a representative attending the Legal Gateway meeting (pending sufficient prior notification) and appropriate subsequent meetings or court hearings. This should be the receiving social worker or their Social Work Manager
- Transferring and receiving social workers will undertake a joint hand over visit to the family, carers and child(ren) prior to PLO meeting or court hearing. A case discussion will also take place between social workers.

### **5.4 S.20 Looked After Children.**

- LAC & Proceedings will ensure that there is a representative at the first LAC Review where pre-proceedings or care proceedings are not planned. This should be the receiving social worker or their Social Work Manager
- Transferring and receiving social workers will undertake a joint hand over visit to the family, carers and child(ren) prior to LAC Review. A case discussion will also take place between social workers.

### **5.5 Children who are remanded into local authority care under LASPO Act 2012.**

- These children will be referred via CADS for a Child & Family Assessment and LAC procedures to be commenced. Case will be transferred as per transfer protocol for Looked after Children.

### **5.6 Children whose adoption placement/SGO placement has broken down.**

- These children will be referred via CADS for a Child & Family Assessment. The assessment will identify appropriate planning for the child and case responsibility will transfer as per transfer protocol.

### **5.7 Children who are 16/17 years old and who present as homeless**

- These children will be referred via CADS for a Child & Family Assessment under the JHA process. The assessment will identify appropriate planning for the child and case responsibility will transfer as per transfer protocol.

### **5.8 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People**

- These children will be referred via CADS for a Child & Family Assessment, which will include an assessment of age. Should these cases become LAC they will be transferred as per transfer protocol for Looked after Children.

## **6. 0–25 Disabled Person Service**

Children and young people with a disability will be assessed by the 0-25 Service in order to consider their needs and ensure additional support is provided where this is identified and appropriate.

If there are additional support needs identified for other family members, including siblings, which is in relation to living in a household with a child who has a disability, this support will be provided or accessed via the 0-25 service.

Where there are safeguarding concerns or welfare needs in relation to any child residing in the household a contact will be made to CADS. This includes S.47 investigations in relation to the child with the disability. The lead social worker will be from Children's Social Care service with the social worker from 0-25 co-working the case to provide specialist advice regarding disability.

If the outcome of a Child & Family assessment in relation to the siblings of a disabled child identifies unmet needs that require a CIN or CP Plan, the transfer process as outlined above will be followed.

If a disabled child becomes Looked After as a result of their care package, case responsibility will transfer to LAC & Proceedings in line with transfer process as outlined in 2.3 above.