

Shropshire
Children's Social
Work and
Safeguarding
Case
Management and
Transfer Protocol

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1) Compass

Compass are responsible for the management of all new initial concerns contacts and referrals.

Compass will manage all **NEW initial contacts/concerns and referrals** until the completion of a decision which confirms the next step whether this be to progress to a social work assessment or move to progress targeted early help intervention or closure.

Compass are responsible for holding all **strategy discussions / meetings** where the case is not already an open case to the service. Compass admin will be responsible for the recording and distribution of minutes to all participants of strategy meetings and discussions.

In the referral decision, Compass are responsible for identifying any specific issues that have been identified in the history or the referral that needs to be addressed within the assessment. This will guide the Assessment Team Manager as to allocation.

Compass are responsible for ensuring that **all referrers are notified of the outcome of the referral** and where this is to move to a social work assessment or targeted early help plan of notifying the referrer and the family of the social worker or lead professional.

Compass are responsible for liaising with EDT to ensure that all the appropriate records are completed in the system. Where EDT have undertaken a strategy discussion Compass will undertake a review strategy discussion on the next working day to progress the case as necessary. Where a review is not undertaken the next working day a record of the reason for this will be made and any immediate issues will be managed pending the multi-agency review via the strategy discussion taking place.

Where an initial contact concern is received regarding an open case, this will be notified to the responsible team for management and decision.

See appendix A – internal management of initial contacts FPOC – Compass / Open cases

See appendix B – internal management of initial contacts FPOC – Compass - DCT

2) Assessment Teams

Where a decision in Compass is made that a child might be a child in need, including Homeless presentations and or a Section 47 enquiry is required the case will be transferred to an assessment team.

The assessment team are responsible for completion of the social work assessment and any S47 enquiry required on cases coming from Compass.

The assessment Team Manager will ensure that the social work assessment is proportionate to the needs of the case and will identify the timescale for completion and if necessary interim review. IN allocating the cases the manager will outline the key issues, within the referral and within the known history of the case, that need to be addressed within the assessment.

Social work assessments will be allocated primarily on a geographical basis to the North or the South of Shropshire. However, the responsible Service Manager in Compass will have discretion to allocate to either team taking into account peaks in demand during any specific period.

Assessment team social workers are responsible for:

- Contacting all relevant agencies that are involved and/or have relevant information for the social work assessment during the assessment.
- Undertaking visits to the child within a maximum period of seven working days of the social work assessment being allocated or within an earlier timescale if specified within any strategy document or referral decision made by Compass manager.
- Completing the assessment in the maximum timescale of 45 working days.
- Completing a chronology on the case.
- Making any written applications to court and court attendance where any child is in need of emergency legal action to promote their welfare or protect them from harm.
- Will be responsible for primary statements and/or initial applications required during or following the assessment where the evidence of the assessing social worker is required.
- The referral, identification and placement of any child where it is identified during the assessment that the child needs to be a child in care.
- Completion of the PALAC and associated authorisations.
- Undertaking and completing the Section 47 enquiry and report to case conference if ICPC required.
- Notifying the parents and all relevant professionals of the outcome of the assessment using the appropriate paperwork which will include confirming the name of the responsible social work team if the case is to remain open for intervention
- Sharing the assessment as a written report with the parent and young person where this is age appropriate.
- The consideration of any siblings and the need for individual assessment of those siblings within the assessment of the subject child. Parenting capacity and family functioning issues should outline any transferable risks or protective factors to siblings to evidence the rationale for the decisions.
- **Review Strategy Discussions/meetings held by the Assessment Team** - The assessment team social worker is responsible for undertaking any review strategy discussions that have been identified as required from the initial strategy discussion held in Compass and will therefore be responsible for the record and distribution of minutes of any such meeting.

Transferring cases between services

Good practice is the timely handover of good quality information that has been obtained within the assessment. This can in some cases be supported by a joint visit to the child and parents by the case holding team to the receiving team but this is not essential and joint home visits should not delay the process of transfer.

2a) Cases Transferring to Case Management from the Assessment Team

On completion of the assessment if the case is to transfer to a case management team the assessing social worker should complete a short transfer summary that identifies key issues, meetings and any agreements with regards to contact or confidentiality that have been identified within the assessment.

The Assessment Team Manager will alert the responsible Case Management team manager to cases in their area as soon as possible in order that a worker can be identified.

The assessment social worker is responsible for drawing up a child's plan on completion of the assessment where the case is to transfer to a case management team as CIN/CP/LAC. This draft plan will be ratified at the following multi agency meetings:

- **CIN – Core Group meeting held within seven working days of the assessment being completed**
- **CP – At the Initial Child Protection Conference**
- **LAC – At the post placement meeting (maximum 5 working days)**

Responsibility for arranging these meeting rests with the assessment teams. Case responsibility will change at the above meetings in all cases.

2b) Case closing or stepping down to Targeted Early Help from Assessment Teams

If following assessment the case is to close with NFA then the rational for this will be recorded in the analysis section and managers decision. No separate closure summary will be required. The recorded rational should enable any future referral and or assessment to identify and take into account the history of assessment/decision making.

If following assessment the case is to step down to targeted early help the assessment social worker will liaise with the appropriate targeted early help manager who can then be responsible for making arrangements for a step down meeting to be held where the lead professional and targeted early help plan will be agreed. A copy of the SWA will be made available to the Early Help manager. The assessment team social worker MUST attend this meeting.

It will be the responsibility for the Assessment Team Managers to agree any recommendation for step down within the authorisation of the Social Work Assessment.

Fortnightly meetings will be held between Assessment Team Managers and Compass FSW to identify the cases stepping down where additional support is required or where the Lead Professional may not have been identified. This is to ensure there is a clear targeted early help plan and lead professional identified. The FSW can then be responsible for responsible for making arrangements for a step down meeting to be held where the lead professional and targeted early help plan will be agreed. A copy of the SWA will be made available to the FSW.

The FSW will create the ECINS case on the ECINS system and the assessment Social Worker should close involvement to social care as soon as the ECINS case has been created, all ongoing case recording will be completed via ECINS and the case closed to the Carefirst system'

Please refer to detailed guidance in the step down process.

3) Case Management Teams

Case management teams are responsible for the delivery of the social work intervention against the identified child's plan. This can be a child in need plan, a child protection plan or a child's care plan.

3a) Receiving Child Protection Cases from Assessment Teams

The case management team social worker should attend ICPC and case responsibility will transfer at this meeting.

The CM SW will then be responsible for holding a core group meeting post conference. This must be held within 10 days of the initial child protection conference at the latest.

Where a child has been made the subject of a child protection plan for more than 9 months the case management team manager is responsible for liaising with the service manager to have a recorded decision as to the need for a legal planning meeting.

3b) Receiving Child in Care cases from Assessment Teams

The case management social worker will assume case responsibility for any child in care from the point of placement and will be responsible for the post placement review to be held within 5 working days and the first LAC review to be held within 28 days.

3c) Children on Remand

Children who are remanded into secure placements by the courts giving them a looked after child status will be transferred into the Case Management teams for assessment and care planning. Case management teams will take responsibility from the point of notification and as such will be responsible for the social work assessment

3d) Receiving Children in Need cases from Assessment Teams

Case management social workers will be responsible for arranging a core group meeting to take place within 10 days of receiving a child in need case from the assessment teams. At the point of transfer the assessment team social worker will have been responsible for ensuring all relevant partner agencies are identified.

3e) Care Proceedings

Case management social workers are responsible for applications and statements within the care proceedings process including pre proceedings.

Where a child is looked after and has a care plan for permanency with a LAC status, i.e. long term foster care, long term residential care, placement with parents then the case will transfer to the LAC permanency team following the LAC review where this permanency plan is agreed as a single track plan and the child is in placement.

The case management team are responsible for referring cases to the adoption team where the care plan for the child is adoption.

Where a case has been through care proceedings and the outcome is SGO or care arrangement order (i.e NON LAC) the case will not transfer to the LAC permanency team and the case management team will see the case through to the point of closure to the service.

Section 7 and S37 request will be allocated to the Case Management team for completion. To support workloads and timely responses to courts some S7 requests, on cases with no recent history can be completed by the Assessment team as agreed by the Front door Service Manager

3f) Managing receiving in Child Protection Conferences

Where Shropshire local authority receive a notification of a child on a child protection plan placed in our area the case management team will be responsible for arranging and attending that receiving in (review child protection) conference.

Purpose of this child protection conference is to ascertain whether we believe the threshold for child protection is met within Shropshire local authority. This conference should be held within 15 working days of the receipt. It is essential that upon receipt of the notification the team manager establishes that the family have a clear and intended long term residence in this area (this will include confirming any known family connections) as well as clarifying whether there are any legal proceedings including pre proceedings already active within the home local authority and if so to seek legal advice on the appropriateness of us assuming case responsibility.

The assessment team social worker is not responsible for completing a new social work assessment in these cases. The home local authority should be completing an updated social work assessment for the receiving in conference. The Shropshire case management social worker will however need to complete checks with local school, health and any other relevant agencies that will help inform the conference as to the level of risk now that the family have moved to this authority.

The home authority's assessment should be registered in Carestore and Carefirst updated to reflect a current social work assessment having been completed.

3g) Dynamic Assessments

The case management social worker is responsible for updating the social work assessment on an annual basis as minimum.

Case management social workers are responsible for completing any additional risk assessment tools including neglect, domestic abuse, CSE, self harm as these will inform ongoing dynamic assessment of risk and need.

The case management social worker is responsible for all child protection case conference reviews and looked after child reviews and will update assessments and children plans in line with the statutory review processes.

3h) New assessments on open case management cases

As outlined above when completing our first social work assessment, consideration as to risk and need of siblings of the subject child must be identified and rationale confirmed for whether or not siblings of the subject child require an independent assessment or not and this decision is based on parenting capacity and family functioning and transferable risks and protective factors that have been identified in relation to the subject child.

Where assessments are updated by the case management team this issue must be reviewed in each updated assessment and where it is identified that a separate assessment is required this will be the responsibility of the existing case management team social worker.

Where a case is open on a subject who subsequently becomes pregnant and as such consideration needs to be given as to whether an assessment on the unborn baby is required or not. This needs to be recorded clearly within a supervision and as a management decision in Carefirst. Where the outcome is that an assessment is required, a separate social worker within the same team will be identified to complete this separate assessment. This is to ensure the unborn child has independent social worker from their parents own allocated social worker should any conflict of interest arise. However, there will be some cases where it is agreed that the assessment of the unborn can be undertaken by the parents allocated social worker if this is in the interests of the young adult and unborn and rationale needs to be identified where this decision is made. This might be for example where there is a likelihood that the assessment will result in an early help plan and engagement of the parent and the established relationship between them and their social worker would help complete a good quality and timely assessment of the unborn. In such cases consideration would also be given to a student social worker or AYSE undertaking the assessment overseen by the allocated worker.

3i) Closing cases to Case Management Teams

On completion of an intervention where the case is to close, the case management social worker is responsible for completing the closure summary. This should ensure that any key interventions and outcomes are identified as are any next step plans with regards to early help.

Case management social worker is responsible for ensuring that all professionals, parents and the young person are notified in writing of the case closure and any next steps that have been agreed.

It will be the responsibility for the Case Management Team Managers to agree any recommendation for step down within the authorisation of the case closure.

Monthly meetings will be held between Case Management Team Managers and Compass FSW to identify the cases stepping down where additional support is required to ensure there is a clear targeted early help plan and lead professional identified. A copy of the SWA closure summary will be made available to the FSW.

The FSW will create the Ecins profile and the assessment Social Worker should close involvement to social care as soon as the ECINS profile has been created, all ongoing case recording will be completed via ECINS and the case closed to the carefirst system'

3J) Re-referral accepted for social work assessments.

The role of the Early Help SW in Compass is to offer support and advice to Lead Professionals in the delivery of a Targeted Early Help plans. Where a re-referral is received on an open TEH (and where that referral does not meet the threshold for a S47 strategy discussion) a EHSW will be assigned to work with the LP and ensure the offer of early help has been consistently and effectively provided to the family before accepting a new referral for assessment. Where a new SWA is required this will be completed by the Assessment team who will ensure, where possible, they discuss the case with the last allocated worker to support additional understanding of the previous assessment and or intervention.

4) LAC Permanency Team

Transferring cases between services

Good practice is the timely handover of good quality information that has been obtained within the assessment. This can in some cases be supported by a joint visit to the child and parents by the case holding team to the receiving team but this is not essential and joint home visits should not delay the process of transfer.

4a) Transfer from Case Management

The LAC permanency team will take cases from case management at the point of permanency decision as a single plan for a child in care where the permanency plan gives the child a looked after status

- Long Term Fostering/Residential
- Placement with Parents

Where a supervision order is made to the local authority the case will transfer to the LAC permanency team who will be responsible for monitoring the supervision order period.

The LAC permanency team worker will be invited to attend the LAC review before planned case transfer.

4b) Receiving cases from Compass/Assessment Teams

- **UASC**

The LAC permanency team will take cases from Compass where the child has been identified as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child and the LAC permanency team will undertake the assessment and care planning process in these cases to minimise the need for change of social workers in the child's journey from referral to care planning.

- **Relinquished babies**

Where the assessment team complete an assessment which identifies a relinquished baby, on completion of the assessment this case will be transferred to the LAC permanency team for progression of the permanency plan (adoption).

4c) Closing Cases or Transferring cases to Leaving Care Team

LAC permanency team will hold case responsibility for any children in their services until the child is aged 18 and is no longer a looked after child.

The LAC permanency team will refer to the leaving care services when the young person is 17 years of age (earlier where there are specific complex needs) in order that the leaving care team can appoint a personal advisor to work alongside the social worker to ensure smooth transition from care planning to pathway planning.

On completion of a case the LAC permanency social workers are responsible for completing either the case transfer document or the case closure document which will identify key issues and outcomes achieved for the child during the intervention as well as details of any next steps agreed and named persons such as a personal advisor and lead professional where the case has stepped down to targeted early help.

A LAC permanency social worker is responsible for notifying in writing to the parent, the young person and all professionals the decision with regards to closure and next steps.

4d) Closing cases with no further social work service.

On completion of an intervention where the case is to close, the LAC permanency social worker is responsible for completing the closure summary. This should ensure that any key interventions and outcomes are identified as are any next step plans with regards to early help.

The LAC social worker is responsible for ensuring that all professionals, parents and the young person are notified in writing of the case closure and any next steps that have been agreed.

It will be the responsibility for the Team Manager to agree any recommendation for step down within the authorisation of the case closure.

5) Disabled Children's Team (DCT)

The disabled children's team is a county wide specialist service for children with disabilities. The DCT team will work alongside Compass to manage all initial contacts of concern and referrals relating to children with disability.

The Disabled Children's Team will hold case responsibility for any family case where the primary child in need or at risk is the child with a disability. Otherwise the case will be held by case management and DCT will support and advise in relation to the needs of the disabled child.

DCT team will keep cases until the child is 18 years of age with transfer points being to

- adult social care services
- leaving care services

6) Leaving Care Team

Leaving care is a county wide specialist service for Young People leaving the care system.

The leaving care team are responsible for all former relevant and qualifying children and will ensure each has an allocated personal advisor who will be responsible for the pathway plan, education, training, health and accommodation for Young People within the leaving care statutory framework.

6a) Receiving cases from the LAC Permanency Team/DCT

The leaving care team will receive a transfer summary from the LAC permanency team and DCT when a young person is 17 years of age (earlier in cases with significant complexities) in order that they can appoint a personal advisor who will co-work the case for a 12 month period to ensure high quality information exchange and smooth transition from care planning, child in need EHCP planning and or pathway planning.

See appendix C for Service Team Responsibilities and Transfer chart.

7) Private Fostering

Please see Appendix D for the Management and worker responsibilities regarding private fostering cases.