

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE, SCOPE, STATUS & RELATIONSHIPS

PURPOSE & SCOPE

- 1.1.1 This manual replaces the existing paper based 'Practice Handbook'.
- 1.1.2 It is intended to offer the certainty and confidence staff need in fulfilling the Isle of Wight's (IOW's) statutory duties and powers with respect to children and families.
- 1.1.3 The contents reflect relevant current legislation, government statutory guidance and expectations, (where relevant national standards), the Isle of Wight's policy commitments and accepted best practice.

STATUS & RELATIONSHIPS

- 1.1.4 The following paragraphs differentiate the terms policy, procedures and guidance which are sometimes used interchangeably, but which within this manual, have the following specific meanings.

Policy

- 1.1.5 Policy statements articulate:
 - Shared beliefs or values
 - Organisational intentions and commitments
 - Priorities
- 1.1.6 The Directorate's current 'statements of values, policies and priorities' have informed, though not been reproduced in, this document.

Procedures

- 1.1.7 Procedures indicate what must or may be done in specified circumstances and define the limits of professional discretion.
- 1.1.8 Procedures have the status of instructions and any failure to comply with them should always be accompanied by an explanation.
- 1.1.9 Any supplementary procedures developed by teams must be consistent with these procedures.

Guidance

- 1.1.10 Guidance provides contextual information or addresses the question of 'why' specified actions may be required.
- 1.1.11 This manual has included guidance only to the extent that it is required to understand a procedure and facilitate day to day practice.

1.2 LAYOUT & HOW TO USE THE MANUAL

LAYOUT

- 1.2.1 In addition to this introduction, this manual has 9 modules (2 -10 inclusive) which provide procedures for professional social work functions undertaken by one or more teams or sections.
- 1.2.2 Module 11 offers the processes involved in seeking and responding to legal advice.

HOW TO USE THE MANUAL

- 1.2.3 For those accessing these procedures on-line, hyper-text links have been provided so that:
 - Highlighting a topic within the contents pages, and keying 'control + left click will switch the reader to the relevant paragraph
 - 'Highlighting cross-references within the text identified as 'see....' and keying 'control + left click will switch the reader to the relevant other site

1.3 UPDATING PROCESS

- 1.3.1 The footers of modules contain confirmation of the month and year the procedures were issued as well as indicating the manager who is accountable for updating those procedures and the month and year by which s/he will do so.
- 1.3.2 Any queries relating to the procedure in each module should be referred to the manager thus identified.