



## **SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING**

### **DIRECTORATE**

# **Planning and Placement of Children in Residential Homes, Schools and Private Fostering Agencies**

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# **Policy for the Planning and Placement of Children in Residential Homes, Schools and Private Fostering Agencies**

## **1. Introduction**

The Joint Commissioning Children's Services Operational Panel was established initially as a project jointly funded by the Health Authority, Social Services Directorate and the Local Education Authority. Its objectives were to maximise the agencies joint ability to meet children and young peoples needs via Island based resources and to explore the extent to which participating agencies financial commitment to Residential and Private Fostering arrangements can be reduced on an initial and longer-term basis.

## **2. The Panel**

The panel's membership comprises of Managers from the three agencies, Reviewing Officers from Social Services and the Therapeutic Post based at Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

The panel meets on a bi monthly basis focussing on three discrete user groups:

- a) Those currently in Residential or Fostering placements
- b) Those returned to the Island and subject to inter-agency packages of support
- c) Those perceived to be at risk of requiring Residential or Agency Fostering provision.

## **3. Scope of the Panel**

- 3.1. Develop and oversee the strategy for commissioning integrated Island based resources and packages of care that will work towards maintaining children in their own homes.
- 3.2. Support and promote a needs led approach to service planning.
- 3.3. Secure positive social care, health and educational outcomes for children placed in Residential and Agency Fostering provision by ensuring high quality provision by the full range of providers.
- 3.4. Application of Best Value principles in the purchasing of Agency placements.

- 3.5. Application of a consistent approach to gate-keeping of resources and using common indicators agreed by all Agencies in deciding which children be referred to an Agency placement.

## **Social Services Staff**

### **4. Eligibility Criteria for Agency Placements**

- 4.1. A Core Assessment identifying the child's needs and Plan recommended to address those needs should have been completed. Also a Personal Education Plan should have been completed. Only in exceptional and emergency situations will a child be considered without a Core Assessment and a Personal Education Plan and in these circumstances a Core Assessment and Personal Education Plan and will need to be completed within 35 working days.
- 4.2. It is anticipated that resources on the Isle of Wight can meet the needs of the vast majority of children and young people.
- 4.3. If provision is inadequate to meet the needs of the young person, the Social Worker and Team Manager must discuss and determine if a different combination of service or the creation of a new component to the service will enable local services to meet the need and avoid purchase of mainland provision.
- 4.4. If the needs cannot be met by current resources, it should be specified how needs can be met by the purchase of mainland provision.
- 4.5. The Plan should address what are the anticipated outcomes and over what timescale.
- 4.6. Social Workers should carefully weigh educational considerations and how educational life chances are likely to be affected by placement decisions.
- 4.7. The child meets Tier 4 of the general service criteria (i.e. children who are at risk of or who have had a breakdown in their care arrangements and are facing a dislocated, insecure, unattached childhood / children who have safety needs where services are required to promote their protection / children or young people whose behaviour is unsafe, dangerous to themselves or others or those who

have committed a serious crime) or their needs are so specialised and cannot be met within Island resources.

- 4.8. The Plan has been discussed with the child and the parent / carer and they are in agreement with the Plan.
- 4.9. The Plan has been endorsed by the Placement Panel (Social Services) and / or the Difficult Cases Panel (Local Education Authority)

## **5. Placement Procedure**

- 5.1. The Social Worker should discuss the Plan with the Team Manager and, if approved, the Team Manager should pass Core Assessment with Plan and anticipated outcomes and timescales to Joint Commissioning Children's Service Manager.
- 5.2. The Case will be placed on the Placement Panel Agenda for a single Agency discussion once Social Worker and Team Manager complete Placement Panel referral form. At this stage, responsibility for decision-making, particularly in cases where there is dispute, rests with the Joint Commissioning Children's Service Manager and ultimately with the Head of Children's Services.
- 5.3. If at that point the Agency approves the plans the Joint Commissioning Children's Service Manager will take the case to the Joint Commissioning Operational Panel.
- 5.4. The Operational Panel will consider the case against established eligibility criteria and will also consider whether joint funding arrangements apply.
- 5.5. The Joint Commissioning Children's Service Manager, in conjunction with the Social Worker, will identify an appropriate placement and ensure current inspection report is satisfactory and that placement complies with national standards.
- 5.6. No arrangements for Assessment and introduction should be made until the Joint Commissioning Service Manager has confirmed agreement to the placement.
- 5.7. If the placement has been agreed, the roles and tasks of the various professionals should be defined and co-ordinated by the Social Work Team.

- 5.8. The Social Worker will visit prior to placement to ensure placement is appropriate and that the education facilities are appropriate. In cases of doubt, advice can be sought from the Education co-ordinator. 'Securing an Educational Placement is one of the main criteria which must be used in identifying a suitable care placement' (Paragraph 10.3 Education Protects Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care, DfEE & DOH).
- 5.9. In the case of an emergency placement, an education placement must be secured within a maximum time limit of 20 school days. (Paragraph 10.5 Education Protects Guidance). Social Workers will need to clearly record the reasons for any delay in providing education and seek advice from the Education Co-ordinator.
- 5.10. Arrangements will be made for the child and the parent / carer to visit the placement prior to the date of placement.
- 5.11. In accordance with Arrangements For Placements of Children (General) Regulations 1991 the Social Worker must notify the Local Authority of the area where the child has been placed of the child's placement including name, date of birth, placement address, date of placement, legal status, child protection register status, placing Authority, Social Worker name and contact details. (See Appendix 1).
- 5.12. Social Worker to visit the placement within 1 week of placement and thereafter, adhering to statutory visiting requirements i.e. no less than 6 weekly.
- 5.13. The child should be seen within his / her current placement no less than 3 monthly.
- 5.14. The Joint Commissioning Children's Service Manager in accordance with the South East Region 'Contract Toolkit' will deal with all funding and contractual arrangements and payment of invoices.
- 5.15. Social Worker visits should address.
  - The Quality checklist, which adheres to the Children's Homes, National Minimum Standards, Care Standards Act 2000. Children's and parents / carers views must be sought and recorded. (See Appendix 2).

- Any concerns about quality and how these will be addressed.
- 5.16. Any concerns about the placement including details of child protection concerns, whether substantiated or not, must be forwarded to the Joint Commissioning Children's Service Manager who will notify the Care Standards Commission and partner agencies as appropriate.
- 5.17. If an allegation is received that suggests a child may be at risk of significant harm, child protection procedures must be followed, a strategy discussion held and the Duty Social Work Team covering child protection for the area where the Residential Home is located should be notified immediately.
- 5.18. Statutory Reviews must address whether the placement remains necessary to address the child's needs, whether identified outcomes are being achieved and whether alternative local provision can now be explored. The child's wishes and feelings must be taken into full consideration. The appointment of an independent advocate should be explored.
- 5.19. The Team Manager is responsible for ensuring compliance with procedures under current supervision and file audit arrangements. Any significant breach of procedures must be brought to the attention of the responsible Service Manager for that team.

## **Health Staff**

### **6. Introduction and Background**

- 6.1. The Island Health economy spends approximately £2 million per year on special placements for children and adults with mental health and learning disabilities (including £4 million with the Regional Secure Unit).
- 6.2. While occasionally necessary for patients to receive services from a specialist mainland provider, there is a generally held view that for most people services, particularly of a long term nature, should be provided as close to their home and community as possible and mainland long term provision should only be considered as a last resort and only when an effective and focused intervention can be achieved.

- 6.3. 'Eligibility criteria for Continuing National Health Service Health Care' is a joint agreement and full reference must be made to this document for children in need of continuing care services.
- 6.4. It aims to improve fairness, equity and consistency of access to continuing care for service users across Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Authority area.
- 6.5. Continuing care is a general term that describes the care that people need over an extended period of time as a result of disability, accident or illness to address physical and / or mental health needs.
- 6.6. Category 1 describes a package of care arranged and funded solely by the National Health Service. (Section 6.0 Eligibility Criteria).
- 6.7. Category 2 describes a package of care that involves services from both the National Health Service and a Local Authority. (Section 7.0 Eligibility Criteria).

**7. Panel Process for Approval of Health Funded Special Placements**

- 7.1. This process should be used for all single and joint health- funded placements for children.
- 7.2. The Joint Commissioning Operational Panel will consider and approve all joint funded children's placements
- 7.3. The primary aim should be to consider how the Island services could prevent Island residents having to receive long-term services away from their families and networks (i.e. off the Island).
- 7.4. To achieve this and before a mainland placement is requested, the following must be in place :
  - A comprehensive assessment must be completed in accordance with the Assessment Framework for Children. (Page15).
  - It is essential that competent, appropriately qualified staff with expertise in the relevant care group undertake the assessment.
  - In undertaking the assessment agencies should consider at the earliest opportunity whether the

patient / service user might need, or benefit from the assistance of an advocate, interpreter or translator, or specific communication equipment, during the assessment process.

- The assessment will need to address what services have been in place to meet the needs of the service user, what has been successful in the past, what has changed and why current services can no longer adequately meet the needs. (It will be expected that all local services have been exhausted, including inpatient services).
- Written evidence of the proposed treatment / service plan should include timescales and contingency plans if the service breaks down.
- Consideration and documented evidence at the time of admission of the plan on discharge / return to the island, including any staff skill issues that need to be addressed.
- The full costings of the placement and quality standards required of the placement.
- The Key Worker / Health Co-ordinator, either a social care or health professional in conjunction with appropriate members of the multi-disciplinary team will determine the frequency of the review / reassessment process in the light of the individual condition. However for Looked After Children Statutory Review arrangements will apply.
- When unexpected changes occur in the condition a reassessment / review can be requested by the patient / service user / relative / carer or a health or social care professional.

7.5. The request will then be considered by the Commissioning and Service Development Manager who, if she / he is in agreement, will take responsibility for ensuring the request is forwarded to the Joint Commissioning Panel. The Panel will :

- Consider local options and care packages.
- Determine suitability of proposed placement and any alternatives.
- Ensure that the outcomes expected are identified.

- Ensure that review procedures are identified.
  - Ensure that the costings are available and any funding splits are clearly identified.
- 7.6. Using this process there should not be the need for many, if any, emergency placement decisions.
- 7.7. For further clarification, reference may be made to the Isle of Wight Primary Care Trust, Special placements, Mental Health & Learning Disability Clinical Governance Committee, 'Approval process for Health-Funded Special placements & Packages of Care'.

## **Education Staff**

### **8. Placement Procedure**

- 8.1. All requests for an agency placement must be based on the child's statement and therefore schools and Local Education Authority staff in all cases should follow the Isle of Wight Council Statementing Process in the Code of Practice.
- 8.2. The Statementing Panel meets every 2 weeks and has responsibility for annual Statement Reviews, statements and all children requiring additional resources.
- 8.3. For a child without a statement the referral form for a statutory assessment must be completed.
- 8.4. The Joint Commissioning Strategic Panel will consider all joint funded placements.
- 8.5. Any concerns regarding the quality of care provided must be fully discussed with the Senior Education Officer for children with special needs, parents and, if applicable the Social Worker.

- 8.6. In arranging the placement of a child or entering in to a joint funding arrangement, it is the responsibility of the Local Education Authority to identify a Key Worker responsible for overseeing the placement and ensuring effective joint working with partner agencies.

**Mary Brimson**  
**Service Manager**  
**Joint Commissioning and Looked after Children**

Revised 17.06.03

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# APPENDIX ONE

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 1991

### Notification of Placement or Change of Placement of a Looked After Child

**To:** **Authority**

This is to inform you of arrangements to place a child looked after by the Isle of Wight Local Authority, in your area. The details as required by the regulations are as follows :

<b>Child / Young Person's Name</b>			
<b>Date of Birth</b>			
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Please Circle</b>
<b>Name &amp; Address (of Parent or Person (s) with Parental Responsibility)</b>			
<b>On the Child Protection Register</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Please Circle</b>
<b>On the Children's Disability Register</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Please Circle</b>
<b>Child / Young Person's Legal Status</b>			
<b>Subject to a Care Order to the Isle of Wight</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Please Circle</b>
<b>Child / Young Person's allocated Social Worker</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Telephone Number</b>			
<b>Out of Hours Service Telephone Number</b>	<b>01983 821105</b>		

**PLEASE COMPLETE FURTHER DETAILS OVERLEAF**

<b>Name &amp; Address of Establishment / Foster Carer / Organisation</b>	
<b>Child / Young Person placed with</b>	
<b>Telephone Number</b>	

<b>DETAILS OF PLACEMENT</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>END DATE</b>	<b>REASON FOR TERMINATION</b>

**Arrangements made for another Authority / Person / Organisation to carry out the functions in relation to this placement on behalf of the Local Authority :**

**YES            NO            (Please Circle)**

**If YES, please give details :**

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