



LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE CHILDREN'S TRUST

PERMANENCE TRACKING PANEL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Introduction

The Government's recent publication "An Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay" (14 March 2012) has increased the profile of adoption. The action plan makes a number of proposals designed to tackle delay and improve outcomes for children. One part of the adoption action plan considers best evidence regarding case management tracking.

Dr. Elaine Farmer's study, "An investigation of family finding and matching in adoption" Bristol University (2010), suggests that the use of formal monitoring and systems to track the cases of children in need in complex cases has a positive impact on reducing the time it takes to find families.

The fieldwork that was undertaken as part of the government's adoption action plan supports this finding. The following terms of reference are based on a model of best practice and propose a case management tracking system that promotes swifter high quality decision making to tackle delay and improve outcomes for children.

Panel members

Head of Service CLAFH (Chair)
Adoption & Fostering Service Manager (Vice Chair)
Adoption Team Manager (Coram Partnership)
Head of Service/Service Manager CRC's
Legal Services Representative
Service Manager Independent Reviewing Officers
Virtual Head Teacher or Rep
CLAFH Nurse
CAMHS

Panel Purpose

- To focus on the child's journey by placing a greater focus on reducing delay and improving outcomes and achieving a permanent arrangement for their care
- To provide an overview and scrutiny function in respect of;
 - Care planning and decision making
 - Placement planning and resource management

- Legal planning and court strategy
- Coordination of partnership support
- To monitor the progress of all relevant care/permanency plans
- To bring challenge and support to the care/permanency planning process
- To take a proactive multi agency approach to problem solving to address any risk of drift and delay
- To promote a whole system approach across all relevant parts of the Trust

Panel Focus

- To monitor all “early alerts” for;
 - Children subject to a legal planning meeting and when pre-proceedings preparation work is underway in accordance with the Public Law Outline
 - Pre-birth / risk assessment and planning for unborn and new born babies for whom a concurrent placement may be appropriate

Within 4 weeks of a child coming into care but after the first Child Care Review where the initial plan is made the social worker will be invited to PTP to present the plan

- To monitor all children subject to on-going public care proceedings where reunification is not possible / recommended
- To monitor care and permanence plans for all new children looked after at the point of their 2nd statutory Review
- To monitor all children awaiting a permanent alternative placement eg; adoption, special guardianship or long term fostering until such time that these arrangements are finalised
- To consider any unresolved issue raised by a Panel member or key Stakeholder that has, or is likely to, hamper the permanence planning process for children who are looked after
- To refer to appropriate team to undertake permanency work including adoption and fostering
- To provide information about process and procedures for children looked after that are required by partner agencies and the plans for liaison and transfer between services.

Assessments of Family and Friends placements

Viability assessments for these placements must be signed off by the managing director of L.B Redbridge or his deputy prior one day after the placement is made.

They will then be allocated for a full assessment within the fostering service.

Once a full assessment is completed these will be presented to the PTP who will undertake the scrutiny and approval process of these placements as required.

This will not replace any of the other arrangements for CRB or assessment that should continue as usual and be presented at PTP.

Panel Process

- The Panel will convene twice a month or more often if necessary in order to maintain an overview and focus on relevant children looked after at every stage of their journey
- The Panel Administrator will circulate the agenda 3 working days before the Panel
- Any additional matters that Panel members or key Stakeholders wish to add to the agenda need to be sent to the Panel Administrator 3 working days before Panel
- Children are presented to Panel by the relevant Team Manager and / or allocated Social Worker who are required to address all relevant issues of the case including the detail of the care plan, legal status, time scales, specific action to secure permanency and highlight any actual or potential risk of drift or delay
- A written record of the Panel discussion for each child will be prepared by the Panel Administrator and will be uploaded onto Protocol (electronic record). The record will include the following;
 - Notes of Discussion.
 - Confirmation of the care plan and legal status
 - Agreed decisions and recommended action
- The Panel Administrator will maintain an up to date Tracking Template providing an audit trail of the key care / permanency planning milestones and dates for each relevant CLAFH
- The Panel will work to resolve any issues that are presented in order to progress cases as quickly as possible and within the agreed time frame
- The Panel may also decide to escalate outstanding and unresolved

concerns to the Managing Director if it is considered that plans for a child are not being progressed satisfactorily and that collective efforts to date have not had the desired effect. The Managing Director will be briefed by the Panel Chair and asked to intervene.