

Ortu Home and School

POLICY NO 1



ADMISSION OF YOUNG PERSON/CHILD POLICY

Introduction

The admission of a child and or a young person into care can be a traumatic life event for both the child and their family. It is crucial that the staff involved in placing children in care consider the impact of the process on the child. The effect and a child's response to being placed at the home can be dependent on how this process is managed. If the admission is rushed or not planned with the child's needs and views taken into consideration or with little or no preparation, the child may respond in a distressed and resistant manner. This may negatively impact on the future stability of the placement and deter the child from building trusting relationships with the carers. It is therefore important that social workers and residential care staff dedicate time to plan admissions, involve the child and their family and offer an empathetic and caring manner.

Planning the Admission

Effective care planning and strong working relationships between the staff of the home and the child's social worker are essential to the success of a child's placement. The home manager at Ortu House school will ensure that they and staff engage proactively with the social worker to shape and contribute fully to the various plans for the child's care on an on-going basis.

The Care Plan demonstrates the aims of the placement and how the home will be able to meet these needs.

The home manager will only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. The registered person will refuse to accept a placement of a child in the absence of a comprehensive and up to date plan.

Planned Placements

Where a decision has been made that a child requires a residential placement at Ortu House school, the child's social worker should contact the home manager of the home to discuss the potential planned placement. In making this request, the social worker will be asked to provide information about the child: the type of placement needed, the Care Plan, the date by which the placement is required, the likely length of time the placement is required, any behavioural concerns, the child's placement and family history and the expected level of contact between the child and parents.

The social worker should also outline any risks associated with the placement. It is essential that homes understand what will be required of them before they accept responsibility for a child's placement, to avoid disruption and instability for the child in future and for other children in the home.

Home Manager

The (registered) home manager will take account of the Children's Homes Regulations, 2015, and the home's Statement of Purpose, when accepting a child for admission. The home manager, or senior practitioner in her absence, must undertake an 'Impact Risk Assessment' to assess any impact on the children and young people currently living at the home and what measures will be put in place to manage any identified impact.

If the Impact Risk Assessment determines the impact cannot be addressed, the home manager will inform the social worker and provide a copy of the Impact Risk Assessment. The home manager will challenge, (under regulation (5), any social worker or placements manager who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan, as the expectations that a placement of a child without the necessary information would go ahead (in circumstances other than in an emergency), is inadequate.

Where the impact is assessed as negligible the placement can be agreed and the admission process can be planned.

Placement Planning

Before the child is placed, the child's social worker will liaise with the home manager to provide details of the child's immediate childcare needs and to arrange a Placement Planning Meeting.

Participants will include:

- * The social worker
- * The parent

- * The child/young person (if appropriate)
- * Key residential staff
- * Any other relevant professionals, e.g. a representative from the child's school, from previous residential setting
- * Anyone else considered appropriate who will have a role in the placement.

The purpose of the Placement Planning Meeting is to finalise the Placement Plan as recoded in the Placement Information Record, and the details of the child's needs in the placement including the daily routine and discuss the Care Plan. This will involve a discussion of the child's needs, including their personal history, religious identity, cultural and linguistic background and racial origin, their health and education needs and how these are to be met. It will also include the arrangements for registering the child with local health professionals, (GP, dentist and optician).

The placement Plan should cover the following issues:

- * The type of accommodation to be provided and the address;
- * Where the authority has, or is notified of, child protection concerns relating to the child or the child has gone missing from the placement or from any previous placement, the day-to-day arrangements put in place by the appropriate person of Ortu House school, to keep the child safe;
- * The child's personal history, religious identity, cultural and linguistic background and racial origin;
- * Where the child is a 'Looked after Child,' the respective responsibilities of the Local Authority and parents/anyone to whom parental responsibility has been delegated by the Local Authority for the child's day to day care; the expected duration of the arrangements and the steps to bring the arrangements to an end, including arrangements for the child to return to live with parents/anyone with parental responsibility; where the child is aged 16 or over and agrees to being provided with accommodations under section 20 Children Act 1989, that fact;
- * The circumstances in which it is necessary to obtain in advance the approval for the child to take part in school trips or overnight stays;
- * Arrangements for the financial support of the child during placement.

The meeting also provides an opportunity to ensure that the home manager has a copy of any relevant court order and that full information is shared about any behaviour management issues.

Where-ever possible, the Placement Planning Meetings should be used to plan any introductions to the placement, for example whether arrangements should be made for the child, parents and the social worker to visit the home and/or whether it may be appropriate to have an introductory overnight stay. If this is not possible, arrangements may be made for residential staff to visit the child and parents; or for information about the home to be sent to the child and/or parents. For example, about routines in the home, bedtimes, meals visitors, pocket money, school, privacy and the overall expectations in relation to the child's behaviour within the home.

If it is not possible to hold a Placement Planning Meeting before the placement, because of the urgency of the placement, it must take place within 72 hours of the placement.

The child's social worker will complete and arrange for the circulation of the Care Plan and Placement plan/Placement Information Record to the child, parents and residential staff or within 72 hours of placement. At the time of the placement, the residential staff must also be given any additional information about details of the child's day to day needs which may not be covered by the Placement Information Record, but are important to ensure that the home is in the best possible position to help the child settle in the new placement. For example, any particular fears at night-time or other emotional needs.

The child's social worker must provide the child with written information about the looked after service, including information on using the authority's complaints procedure.

The social worker should ensure that any children's guide and other information about the home that is available for the child is also obtained and given to him/her.

In all cases, the child should be accompanied to the home by the social worker and helped to settle in. Suitable luggage should be used and a child's belongings should never be transported in bin bags.

Admission Process

The social worker must pass all information to the home manager or senior practitioner. This must include:

- * Accurate details of the reason for the referral to Ortu House school and what are seen as the aims of the placement
- * Information regarding the child's history
- * Clear understanding of the future plans for the child
- * Placement Information Record, Care Plan, if available
- * Risk Assessment of any known risks
- * Information, regarding any involvement with other agencies; is the child open to Outreach, YOS or Health Professionals

A pre-placement meeting must be held to discuss and agree roles and responsibilities, which agencies are completing which tasks so all parties are clear on how the child's needs are to be met and who has responsibility for different tasks. Ortu House school on its own will not be able to meet all of the child's needs and all planning must identify other agencies involved or to become involved.

The home manager will inform the staff team of the planned admission and share the information with them. A link-worker will be allocated who should arrange with the social worker to meet the child's family to provide information regarding the home, a copy of the Statement of Purpose, welcome pack and general information about the day to day activity of the home.

The home manager will advise and prepare the other children for the introduction of the new resident and, where possible, identify a child who could assist and support the child to settle in.

The child should always be informed of the plan and prepared for the admission, where possible this should include visits to the home to allow the child, their family and staff to become familiar with each other and begin to form working relationships.

A date for admission must be agreed by the home manager, Placements manager and social worker.

The date of the Placement Agreement, (72 hour Planning Meeting), must be agreed by the home manager and social worker.

Notification of Placement

The child's social worker will update the child's electronic record with the details of the placement.

Notification of the placement will also be sent by the child's social worker to the LAC nurse, the child's school and the child's GP.

The child's social worker will notify all family members consulted and involved in the decision-making process of the placement.

The child's social worker must also notify the allocated Independent Reviewing Officer or, if this is the first placement, the Independent Review Team of the placement. This notification will trigger the appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer, if this is the first placement and the setting up of arrangement for a Looked After Review.

These notifications must be made in writing, advising of the placement decision and the name and address of the children's home where the child is to be placed.

The notifications should, therefore, be before the start of the placement or within 5 working days.

The child's social worker should also notify – preferably in writing, but it may be verbally – all those involved in the day to day arrangements for the child, including school and any health professionals or YOT worker actively involved with the child.

The home will ensure the child is registered with a GP, dentist and optician, either retaining practises known to him or her, or in the area where the child is placed.

In relation to a first looked after placement it will also be necessary for the social worker to liaise with the Designated Nurse for Looked After children to arrange a Health Care Assessment. The social worker must arrange for the completion of Personal Education Plan, PEP.

For any new school placement, every effort should be made to enable the child to remain at the same school unless there are reasons which would be detrimental to his or her well-being.

Admission and Pre-admission visits

Before admission the home manager will ensure the following:

- * The home manager will ensure that a member of staff is allocated to introduce the child to the home, staff, and children. The home will maintain a sensitive, caring approach to endeavour to develop good relationships.
- * Admission to a home can be an anxious time for the child and his/her family and Ortu House school staff will make each child feel welcome, offer refreshments and make should the bedroom is warm, clean and dry.
- * Efforts will be made to ensure that privacy for a child and their family is upheld, according to risk assessments.
- * The child will be given some age-appropriate information about the aims of the placement and future plans for them (this will include education and career's pathways). Staff will make every effort to communicate with the child to assess their wishes and feelings about the placement, their future and any other significant matters;
- * The child will be given an appropriate amount of information including 'house rules' and health and safety procedures;
- * Staff will try to find out what the child's interests are, what they like to do and enjoy including leisure activities;
- * Children will be encouraged to bring favourite possessions and Staff will protect the personal belongings of the child and record and secure any items of value that they have;
- * The home will have a fire drill on the first day of admission of the child;
- * On admission a detailed plan of day-to-day arrangements for the child will be put into place as agreed at the pre-admission meeting;
- * The child will be informed of any medical health checks needed and an explanation of what is involved to reassure them
- * The child will be welcomed into Ortu House school which is prepared: their room will be clean and tidy and have toiletries, towels and a welcome box. The menu will include food choices that they have made and there will be activities planned that they are looking forward to taking part in.

9. Practice checklist

Prior to admission:

- * Check that all relevant people have been informed about the admission (e.g. school);
- * Ensure that home staff have all the information they require to support the child and their family effectively during admission and residence;
- * Ensure that existing residents have been prepared for the new admission as far as possible in advance as possible;
- * Ensure that the child and, if appropriate, their family are invited to at least one pre-admission visit;
- * Ensure that identified risks have been assessed and a written risk assessment completed stating what control measures staff at the home or other services will undertake to reduce risks.

10 Emergency Placements

During office hours, if an emergency placement is requested, this should be done through the home manager and the Registered Individual. The Home manager or senior practitioner must undertake an Impact Risk Assessment to assess any impact on the children and young people currently living at the home and what measures will be put in place to manage this identified impact. If the Impact Risk Assessment determines that the impact cannot be addresses or managed the placement cannot be made.

The home manager and/or Registered Individual must verify any emergency placement before it is made. Social Workers must accompany all admissions to Ortu House school will all relevant signed documents, including the Placement information Record and Risk Assessment. No child will be admitted without these.

In all cases the social worker must visit the child the next working day.

The social worker and home manger must agree the date for the 72hour Planning Meeting.

11. Admission tasks

- * All relevant documentation and information which has been forwarded to the home prior to admission must be checked and stored in a new individual file. This should include risk assessments of previous placements if available.
- * Children and their families should receive a copy of the Ortu House school Statement of Purpose, the Complaints Guides and the young people's Welcome Pack.
- * Staff must enter the child into the Admission Book, including information about the child's legal status;
- * The young person and his/her family will be shown around the home, including key rooms and Fire exits;
- * Personal belongings and items of value will be recoded and stored securely;
- * Any medication will be accurately recorded and stored correctly;
- * Staff will check the diary for the date of the 72 hour meeting and ensure parents are informed of it;
- * Staff will contact the social worker or family to bring any forgotten items that the child requests.

12. Support and Monitoring of Placements

The child's social worker must visit the child in the placement within one week of placement.

Where there are concerns in relation to the progress of the placement, consideration will be given to seeking additional resources to assist the placement, Where there are any changes to the child's placement and/or legal status during the placement the home staff will request the child's social worker to update the child's electronic records.

The home manager will request a Care Planning meeting to consider a review of the child's Care Plan where:

- * The child is, or has been, persistently absent for the placement;
- * The home or Local Authority are concerned that the child is at risk of harm; or,
- * The child so requests, unless the Independent Reviewing Officer considers that the Review is not justified.

Appendix 1

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLACEMENTS OF CHILDREN
(GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2013**

**NOTIFICATION OF PLACEMENT OR CHANGE OF PLACEMENT
OF LOOKED AFTER CHILD**

TO:		(Authority)
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Name of Child:	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Name & address of Parent/Person with Parental Responsibility:	

On Child Protection Register:	
On Children with Disabilities Register:	
Child's Legal Status:	
If child is subject to Care Order, to which authority:	

Placing Authority:	
Name, address and Telephone Number of Social Worker:	
Name, address and Telephone Number of the IRO:	
Has the young person a SEN statement and if so details of the local authority that maintains the statement.	
Out of Hours service contact:	
Placed with (establishment/ Foster care/organisation:	
Name, address and telephone Number of placement:	

If your authority has local knowledge of the placement which it would be appropriate to share with the placing authority, please contact the social worker named above.

Date of Commencement of placement:	
Date of Termination of placement:	
Reason for termination:	
Have arrangements been made for another authority /person/organisation to supervise or carry out the functions in relation to a placement on the behalf of the local authority	
If yes, with which authority /person/organisation have these arrangements been made:	

The contact details of the funding Panel	
Written approval from the Funding Panel before the placement goes ahead	