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**Brighter
Futures for
Children**

Children Looked After placed in the Reading area by another Local Authority

SUMMARY

This procedure details the internal process to follow when a child looked after is placed in the Reading area by another local authority.

OWNER

Roselind Moodley, Service Manager, CLA and Care Leavers

VERSION

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Brighter Futures for Children is the Directorate of Children's Services at Reading Borough Council

Civic Offices, Bridge Street,
Reading RG1 2LU

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Statutory duties

Local authorities in England deliver a range of statutory and non-statutory services for children. In Reading these statutory children's service care functions and duties are undertaken by Brighter Futures for Children, which is the Directorate of Children's Services within Reading Borough Council.

Introduction

The [Care Planning, Placement and Case Review statutory guidance](#) and the associated [regulations](#) updated in 2013, outline duties on local authorities to notify other local authorities if they place a child in care within their area. Further information can be found in the [Legislation](#) section of this document.

It also requires children's homes to notify their host local authority when a child is placed with them by another authority. Where a child who is not in care is placed in a health or education placement for three months or more, or with that intention, the placing authority or organisation also has a duty to notify the host local authority prior to placement or as soon as practicable thereafter.

The host local authority, supported by relevant agencies in both the host and home authority, must ensure that education and health partners are provided with information about placements of children in care into/out of their area.

Brighter Futures for Children and other local authorities are required to consult and share information before placing children in distant placements (out of authority/out of borough) and the Director of Children's Services must approve these placements.

The general duties of Brighter Futures for Children and local authorities towards children looked after under [Section 22 of the Children Act 1989](#) apply to all placements, including those that are out of authority.

Definitions

The following definitions apply:

- **'Placing or Responsible authority'** is the local authority where the child or young person previously lived or still usually resides and who is responsible for them
- **'Host local authority'** is the local authority to which the child or young person has been placed, has recently moved to or where the child actually is at the time an incident occurs.

A **'distant placement'** - [regulation 11\(5\) as amended by the Children's Homes and Looked after Children \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) defines a distant placement as:

"at a distance" means outside the area of the responsible authority and not within the area of any adjoining local authority.". Distant placements must be approved by the responsible authority's Director of Children's Services.

Overview

If a local authority intends to place a child or young person in the Reading area (or has already placed a child in an emergency), the placing local authority should notify Brighter Futures for Children as soon as possible.

Brighter Futures for Children need to be aware of any risks or vulnerabilities for the child or the placement so that relevant services can respond effectively to any issues that may arise.

Other local authorities, if placing in the Reading area need to notify us by completing the children looked after notification form ([appendix one](#)) and send it to CSPOA@reading.gov.uk.

It is important that any changes to the child's placement or circumstances should be sent to the same email address.

This information is available on our website for other local authorities: [Out of Area Children in Care Notifications England](#)

Our internal process


Notifications of placements made, or to be made, within the Reading area by another local authority

1. Local authority sends a notification along with the completed child looked after notification form to Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA), using the following email address: CSPOA@reading.gov.uk
2. CSPoA will check the postcode where the child/young person is living, to make sure the postcode is within the Reading borough boundary. Once confirmed the address is in the Reading area, an acknowledgement email/letter to responsible authority
 - An easy way to find which local authority area a child or young person is to be placed in is to use the following link:

Find your local council: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

3. On receipt of a completed notification form from a placing authority CSPoA will make sure that all relevant details are obtained as described below and are placed on Mosaic within two working days of receiving the fully completed notification form, creating a case record for the child/young person. **N.B. If the required information is not fully received then the form will be returned to the placing provider.** To record a child/young person from another local authority in our area, the CSPoA will create a record on Mosaic and in the 'Classes' record 'Other Local Authority Client'. A warning note to say which local authority and the contact details of the placing authority social worker will also be added.
4. As good practice, CSPoA will make sure that the notification form is sent to the relevant teams in Brighter Futures for Children using the group email OLAnotification@reading.gov.uk, and any other service they may be accessing or corresponding within their placing authority.

****There may be times where colleagues or teams change, knowing this, the placements team and/or business process lead will update the OLA notification email distribution list accordingly. If other colleagues or teams also become aware of changes, they should contact placements or business process lead to make sure the correct contacts are added to the OLA notification email and old addresses removed.**



The OLA notification group email includes the following:

- the virtual school
- the children looked after team
- Reviewing, conferencing & LADO business support
- Childrens placements team
- School admissions (If the child is of school age)

Other contacts:

The contacts below cannot be added to internal email distribution lists, for this reason, when CSPoA send out the initial email to the above contacts via OLAnotification@reading.gov.uk, the placements team and/or business process lead will forward the email to:

- **CLA nurse:** Sharon.Hickson@berkshire.nhs.uk
- **Thames Valley Police:** MASHBerks@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

To note:

Police: We should notify Thames Valley Police when a child is being placed in our area, to assist in the safeguarding of some of the most vulnerable children in the care system. The link for the criteria can be found here: [Police Force Contacts](#)

5. Business support in CSPoA who receive the local authority notification will send the information received (including the completed notification form) to children's placements inbox - childrens.placements@reading.gov.uk
6. If teams across the service other than CSPoA receive notification that a child looked after has been placed in the Reading area by another local authority then they will forward the notification on to CSPOA@reading.gov.uk to make sure the procedure for ensuring that the child's details are recorded correctly on Mosaic is followed.
 - If a notification form has not been previously received, CSPoA will contact the placing authority to request completion of the form.

Where arrangements have been made for Brighter Futures for Children to undertake the duties of the placing authority; what those arrangements are and the name of the person within the home and host authority with whom they were agreed should be clearly recorded on the child's Mosaic file.

Reporting

The children's placement team will review all children placed within the Reading area monthly through a data summary sheet which can be extracted from Mosaic. This will then be compared to data recorded from information received from CSPoA to ensure information is accurate and up to date.

This report will also be sent out to the relevant teams automatically via the data and performance teams reporting system.

The relevant teams are:

- the virtual school



- the children looked after team
- Reviewing, conferencing & LADO business support
- Childrens placements team

Review of placements in the Reading area, using the reporting

An annual audit will be undertaken by the children's placement team, who will make contact with all local authorities (likely via email) to ask if they have any children or young people placed in our area but have not notified us. This way, we can be sure that children and young people placed in our area are safeguarded and receiving the relevant services available to them and to make sure our Mosaic system is up to date and accurate.

The team will make contact with other local authorities who have placed in our area and notified us, to make sure that the children/young people are still placed in the Reading area.



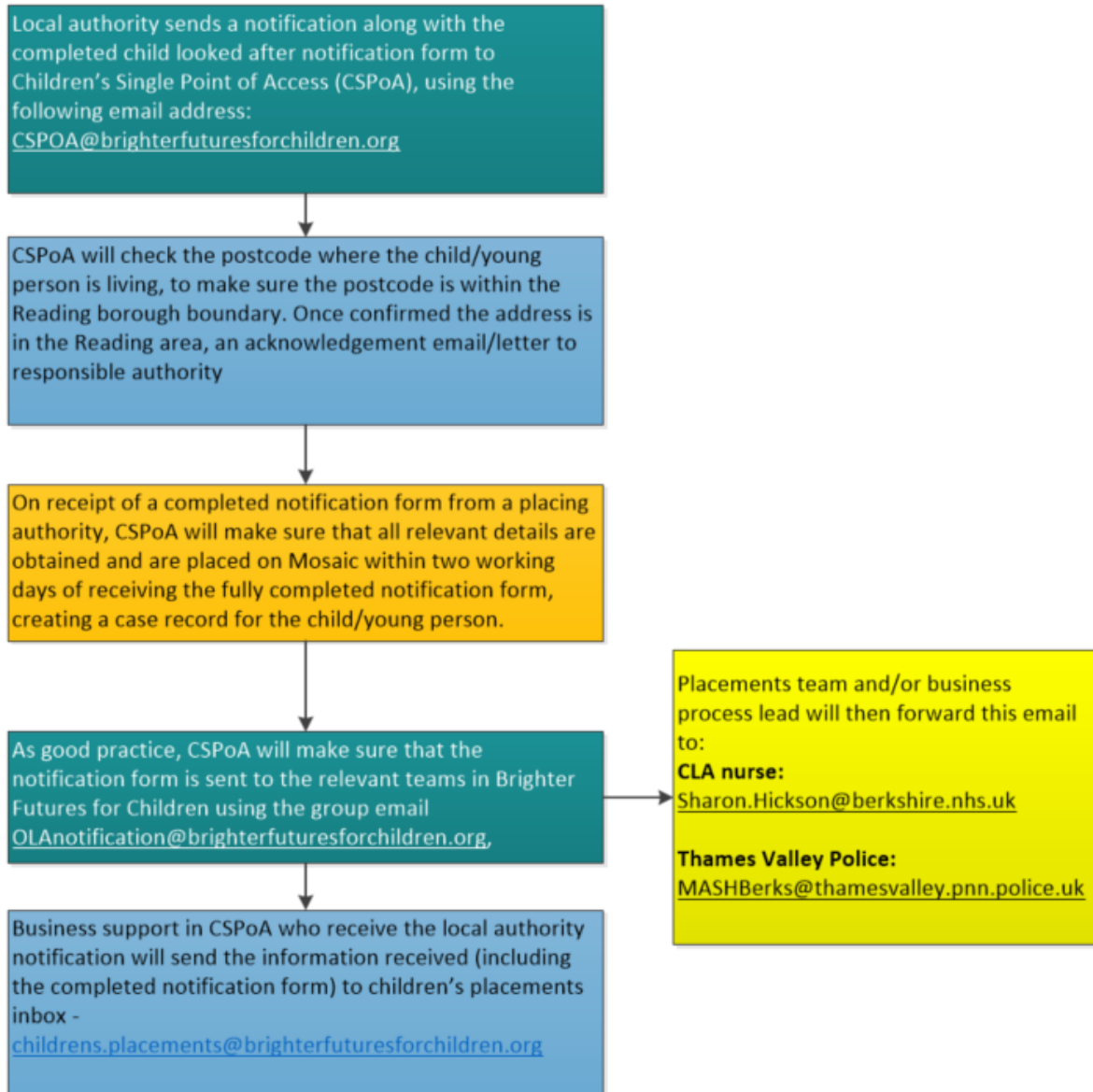
Appendices

Appendix one – Children looked after notification form



| CHILD / YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS | |
|---|--|
| Name of Child / Young Person (plus any aliases): | |
| Date of Birth: | |
| Gender: | |
| Name of placing authority: | |
| Social worker: | |
| Social worker's telephone no: | |
| Out of Hours Service: | |
| Name & address of parent / person(s) with Parental Responsibility: | |
| Legal status: | |
| On Child Protection plan? | |
| On Children with Disabilities Register? | |
| Name of IRO: | |
| PLACEMENT DETAILS | |
| Is this a new placement, a change, or end of placement: | |
| Placed with (residential home / foster carer / organisation): | |
| Address: | |
| Date of commencement / change / termination of placement: | |
| Has this placement been contracted to provide any specialist services? | |
| New school attending: | |
| Previous school: | |
| New GP details: | |
| Previous GP: | |
| Are there any particular needs or risks to the child Brighter Futures for Children need to be aware of? (e.g. SEN, disability, YOS, CSE, outstanding health appointments) | |

Appendix two – CSPoA flowchart: Receiving a notification



Appendix three - Legislation

[The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations Volume 2: care planning, placement and case review](#)

Placements out of the authority's area

3.30 Under the Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013, local authorities are required to consult and share information before placing children in distant placements and the Director of Children's Services (DCS) must approve of these placements. These changes reinforce local authorities' responsibilities as corporate parents for looked-after children to provide high quality care and support.

3.31 There will be circumstances where a distant placement will be the most suitable for a child, such as where the child concerned has complex treatment needs that cannot be met by services within the area of the responsible authority. There will also be children who require an out of authority placement to ensure they can be

effectively safeguarded. Such placements will require effective planning, engagement and information sharing with the services likely to be responsible for meeting the child's needs in the future.

3.32 The general duties of local authorities towards looked-after children under Section 22 of the Children Act apply to all placements, including those that are out of authority. There are however a number of specific factors that must be taken into account when decisions are made to place the child out of the area of the responsible authority, but still within England and Wales [**regulations 11 and 12**].

The process for placing out of the authority's area

3.33 Under the amended regulations a decision to place a child outside the area of the responsible authority must be approved by a nominated officer, or, if that placement is a distant one, by the DCS [**regulation 11 (1)(a) or (b)**]. The requirement to obtain the approval of the nominated officer, or DCS for distant placements, does not apply where the placement is with the parent, a connected person or a foster carer approved by the responsible authority [**regulation 11(4)**].

3.34 Regulation 11(2)(d)(ii), as amended, requires the responsible authority to consult with the area authority when they are considering making a distant placement, in good time to enable a thorough assessment of appropriateness.¹ Annex 4 suggests information that might be discussed when a responsible authority consults the area authority about plans to place a child in a distant placement. This does not mean the area authority has a veto over the responsible authority's placement decisions.

3.35 The child's personal Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) must be consulted before any final decision is made about making an out of authority placement, whether distant or not, to enable the IRO to discuss the proposed arrangements with the child. The child's wishes and feelings should be taken into account, and where appropriate the child's relatives or parents should be consulted.

3.36 Where a responsible authority is considering a placement in a children's home it should take into account the information in the home's Statement of Purpose. It should ask for a copy of the home's location assessment which should include details of the home's safeguarding arrangements, including any measures taken by the home to manage safeguarding concerns arising from the neighbourhood where the home is located.²

3.37 In making a judgement about the suitability of an out of authority placement for a child, the responsible authority should assess the arrangements which it will need to put in place to enable the child to access services such as primary and secondary health care.

3.38 Where the child will require specialist health services such as CAMHS, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) (local health board in Wales) that commissions secondary healthcare in the area authority should be consulted, so the responsible authority can establish whether the placement is appropriate and able to meet the child's needs.³ The designated nurse for looked-after children in the area authority will also be a valuable source of advice and information.

3.39 Similarly, the Virtual School Head for looked-after children in the area authority, (Looked After Children Education Co-ordinators (LACE) in Wales) should be able to advise about access to school support. For children vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, children's services in the area authority will be an important source of intelligence and information about local arrangements for safeguarding children.

3.40 The responsible authority must also make sure that the appropriate persons and services in the area