

Title	Children in Care Placement Forum
--------------	---

Author	Ellis Rivers
Team	Pathways Through Care
Date Written	31.3.09
Date due for review	1.4.10
Date agreed by CfMT (if new policy)	

LAC Placement Forum

Ref:		Author: Ellis Rivers
Effective from:	1.4.09	Approved by:
Review Date :	1.4.2010	
Team: Pathways		Date: 31.3.09

1. Purpose of Placement Forum

The LAC Placement Forum aims to :-

- Ensure the best use of available resources to keep the child in the community and out of the care system.
- Safeguard the welfare of each child and those on the threshold of the care system
- Ensure full consideration of all alternatives to the child being looked after by the Local Authority.
- Ensure full consideration of all alternatives to residential care (internal and external) and high cost external placements for young people already looked after.
- Maintain and review consistent thresholds for resource allocation.
- Identify multi-agency issues requiring referral for a joint placement.
- Monitor recommendations and actions.

2. Membership of Placement Forum

- 1 group manager to chair the Forum. Cover to be provided by a group manager or Assistant Director (Children & Families)
- Family Placement Team Manager
- Manager of Mallard's Residential Unit.
- Manager of Education and Well Being Service
- Manager of Pathways Through Care Team

3. Referral to the LAC Placement Forum

All children in need of or likely to need a placement (full time or relief care) will normally be presented to the Placement Forum prior to the placement being made. All children who are placed in an emergency will be presented to the next scheduled panel meeting. This included all children and young people already Looked After where there are plans for placement moves (apart from those which will be considered by Slough Borough Council's Fostering or Adoption panels).

Placement Forum Process

- a. Team manager to make the decision to request a placement
- b. Social Worker to complete the Family Placement Service Placement Referral Form.
- c. Social Worker to take a copy of the Placement Referral Form and give to the Family Placement officer, who will then begin the placement search.

- d. Social Worker to complete the LAC Placement Forum Referral Form, copy to the Forum administrator and request a hearing at the next available Forum. (The Forum meets weekly every Wednesday at 2:00pm)
- e. The Forum Administrator will book the case into the Forum.
- f. Forum Administrator to complete the first section of the LAC Placement Decision Summary sheet with the child's basic information and the details of the decisions made at the Forum.
- g. Forum Administrator to prepare an agenda and circulate available paperwork for each meeting by the end of the Monday before the meeting. A standard Agenda will include:
 - Written Vacancies report (fostering and residential)
 - Identification of cases needing referral for discussion Education Panel (weekly).
 - Written activity report, including numbers accommodated/discharge, placement moves, court proceedings and related changes in legal status from LAC RO/P&P. (monthly)
 - LAC placement information report (update location of all LAC) – monthly.
- h. In addition to the agenda, the Placement Forum members will receive the Placement Referral Form. Additional information regarding care planning, placement options and/or placement costs can be requested.

4. Attendance at the LAC Placement Forum

The social worker's supervisor (Assistant Team Manager - ATM) must attend the Forum. If the ATM is not available then the Team Manager must attend.

5. Out of Borough Placements Authorisation

- a. The Placement Officer must complete the out of Borough Authorisation form for all requests for an out of borough placement.
- b. All requests for authorisation for out of borough placements will need to be accompanied by recent supporting documents including –
 - Core Assessment
 - LAC Review Report
 - LAC Placement Forum Decision Sheet
 - Placement options
 - List of Placement searches
- c. All requests for out of borough placements must be presented to the Placement Forum for an 'in principal' recommendation or the next available Forum where placement is made in an emergency.
- d. The Chair will present the case for an out of borough placement to the Assistant Director, Children & Families for authorisation. No introductions of children or their families to out of borough placements are to take place until the written agreement of the Assistant Director, Children & Families has been received.
- e. The Group Manager will inform the social worker and the AMT of the Assistant Director's decision.

6. Case Monitoring

- Cases may be booked for the LAC Placement Forum so the Forum can be updated on certain cases
- The social worker and ATM must attend these Forum meetings also.
- An evaluation of cases presented to the Forum is to be held every 6 months.

7. Forum Administration

- The Forum Administrator will type the Forum decision on the LAC Placement Forum Decision Summary form.
- A copy of this Decision Summary form must be sent to the child's social worker and the ATM and placed on the child's file.
- The Forum Chair must discuss urgent cases with the relevant team manager to outline concerns.

8. LAC Placement Panel meeting Minutes

- Minutes of the Forum recommendations must be recorded
- Forum discussions/recommendations will be recorded on the standard case specific sheet
- General minutes will be recorded in the correct minutes format.

9. Recording/reporting of Forum Information

A copy of the LAC Placement Forum Decision Sheet will be placed on ICS and on the client file by the social worker. The Forum Chair will bring urgent issues to the attention of the Assistant Director and will highlight general issues requiring management action as part of their routine quarterly Quality Assurance report to the Children's Management Team.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by Group Manager, Services for Children & Young People in Care on a yearly basis on the date specified on page 1 of this policy, or more frequently to address changes in legislation.