

# GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS WHEN A CHILD BECOMES LOOKED AFTER

We hope that this information sheet will help you to get a better understanding of Looked After Reviews including what happens at the review meetings, where they take place, who can attend and what part you can play in it.

## WHAT IS A LOOKED AFTER CHILD REVIEW?

A Looked After Child review meeting is held to talk about your child or if you are a carer the child you are looking after, and their progress. The review brings together those people who are involved in your child's life or the child you are looking after and is an opportunity to:-

- Review your child's care plan - the document which sets out how your child will be cared for while they are looked after.
- Discuss your child's progress in placement
- Make plans for the future.
- To enable you to give your views about the plans for your child or the child you care for and to take part in the decisions for their future.

## WHAT IS MY CHILD'S CARE PLAN?

All children who are looked after must have a Care Plan that is reviewed within their looked after review meeting.

It is a document that details your child's needs and how they are to be met. This will include where they live, contact with family and friends, their cultural, religious, health, educational and leisure needs. A copy of your child's Care Plan will be given to you, their carer and your child (dependent on their age).



## HOW OFTEN DO REVIEW MEETINGS HAPPEN?

The first review must be held within four weeks of the date on which your child begins to be a looked after child. If your child remains looked after, there must be a second review no more than three months after that. Then reviews have to be held at least every six months or more often if necessary.

## WHO WILL BE AT THE REVIEW MEETINGS?

Key people in your child's life will come to the review either as a single meeting or it can be held as a series of meetings.

Those people who may attend the review is;

- Your child
- You as the child's parents
- Their carers
- Their Teacher
- Other people who are important in your child's life

## WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER?

An Independent Reviewing Officer is an experienced Social Worker who is employed by Worcestershire County Council.

They are often referred to as IROs

It is their role to chair the review meeting and to see that everyone is treated fairly in the meeting and that all the important issues are talked about. He or she will also take an independent look at what is happening for your child.

## WHERE ARE THE REVIEW MEETINGS HELD?

Reviews are usually held in the carers homes, school or office settings, where ever your child feels most comfortable to attend and participate in their meeting.

## WHAT HAPPENS AT MY CHILD'S REVIEW MEETING?

In the review meetings, we talk about what everyone can do to make sure your child is safe, well and happy and that your child's care plan is working and your child supported in all areas of their lives.

The meeting will look at any changes in your child's life and talk about each part of the care plan and will decide whether it needs to change and check that any actions agreed at previous meetings have been achieved.

After the looked after review meeting you will receive a written report to confirm what was decided in the meeting and what will happen next and by when.

You should receive the report no later than 20 working days after the review.

Your child's social worker will update the care plan to include recommendations from the meeting.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU CAN'T ATTEND YOUR CHILD'S REVIEW?

If you are unable to attend the review, please let the social worker know how you would like your wishes and feelings to be shared in the meeting there may be exceptions where meetings can be held as a series of meetings to enable you to be part of the looked after review process your contribution is very valuable.

If you have any questions about the looked after review meetings for your child please make contact with your child's social worker or independent reviewing Officer.

