

**Areas of Decision
Making and
Responsibility in
Child in Need,
Child Protection and
Cared for Children**

June 2022

POLICY INFORMATION SHEET	
Service Area	Children's Social Care
Date effective from	June 2022
Responsible Officer	Laura Knights
Date of Reviews	June 2023
Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory (all staff must adhere to guidance) • Optional (Procedures and practice can vary between teams) 	Mandatory
Target Audience	All Children ~Social Care Staff
Date of CSMT/EPLT Decision	June 2022
Related Document (s)	
Superseded Documents	
Equality Impact Assessment	

Introduction

This scheme of delegation should be read in conjunction with all relevant policies and procedures.

Designated Managers are managers who have delegated authority to approve certain decisions and/or give consent in certain circumstances. There will be other circumstances in which designated managers must be notified of events. In all cases, authorisation and/or consent should be sought directly from the officer identified below as having the delegated authority, e.g. where consent is needed for blood tests on a looked after child, the responsible Team Manager should refer directly to the Service Manager. Similarly notification should be made directly to the officer identified below as the individual to be notified. In addition, other managers in the line management chain should be informed, for example by copying them in to correspondence.

Any emails should be distinct and the subject line should state clearly that the message concerns an authorisation, request for consent or a notification.

Any additional paperwork required by procedures must be made available.

Unless stated otherwise, references to Service Manager & Team Manager are to those managers responsible for the child, i.e. the social worker's line managers although in their absence another manager of the same level can substitute.

General principles:

- In any situations shown as requiring consent or authorisation, these must be secured prior to any action.
- In all cases, designated officers can only authorise expenditure within the limits of the usual budget delegation framework and any temporary financial controls.
- The Press Office must be notified of circumstances thought likely to attract public/media attention. The purpose is to forewarn the press office & to prepare for any media enquiries

The tables indicate the minimum level of delegation, e.g. if it is indicated that a Team Manager can make the decision, then this is Team Manager or above.

Where there is a cross (X) in two boxes e.g. attendance at meetings; this indicates that both should attend.

1. CiN / CP	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Notification of Child Death/Serious Incident			X	X	X
Allocation of Referrals		X			
Decision to close Contacts and Referrals		X			
Management of S.47 Investigations		X			
CP Strategy Meeting		X			
Professional Abuse Procedures (Must Notify) (LADO)		X	X	X	
Monitoring of Stat Visits (Local Performance Indicator)		X			
Endorsement (counter signing)					
CP Case Conference Report		X			
CP review Reports		X			
CiN Meetings		X			
Private Foster Arrangements		X	X		
Decision to proceed to child protection conference		X			
Attempted suicide of a child receiving services		X	X	X	X
Recommendation to CP conference to discontinue a CP plan		X			
Appropriate allocation of work		X			
Involvement or suspected involvement in prostitution or sexual exploitation of a looked after child or a child subject to a child protection or child in need plan		X	X	x	X

2. Court	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Decision to initiate proceedings (planned-legal Gateway)			X	x	
Decision for a Child or Young Person to come into care in an emergency (ie sec 20, PPO, immediate issue)				x	x
Placement in Secure under 72 hours rule				X	x
Endorsement of:					
Final Court Care Plan (needs Counter Signatory)		X	X		
Viability statements / parenting assessments /fostering assessments		X			
Other Reports e.g. S.37 & S.7		X			
Secure Order Applications				X	X
Statements	X	X			
SGO Plans		X			

Approval of Resources Within Proceedings	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
e.g. Specialised Assessments			x		
Therapy			x		
Attendance at Legal Meetings	x	x			
Chair Legal Gateway Meeting			X		
Chair of Legal Advice Meetings		X			
Pre – Proceedings Meetings	X	X			

With other LA's (as needed)	X	X			
Secure Reviews	X	X	x		
3. Allowances	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Child Arrangement Order				X	
Adoption				X	
Special Guardianship				X	
Misc. e.g. Legal Costs			X		

4. Cared for Children	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Decision to Accommodate			X	X	x
Agreement to <u>search</u> for an agency placement			x	X	
Agreement to the placement of a cared for child with an agency provider				X	
Approval: - Nominated Person (Reg. 24)				X	
Placement with Parents				X	
Consents: Medical anaesthetic				X	
Medical – Other			X		
Holidays/Trips			X		
Separation of Siblings			X		
Misc. e.g. Press Coverage				X	X
Passport Approval				x	x

Cared for Children (cont..)	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Agreement to place a cared for child at a distance (placed in a local authority not immediately bordering Sefton)				x	X
Decision to turn off life support of a child subject to a Care Order					X
Serious illness or serious accident sustained by a looked after child, including attempted suicide		X	X	X	X
Sexual health services, including contraception & termination for a child subject to care order aged under 13 years				X	
Serious offence committed by a looked after child Allegation of a serious offence committed by a looked after child		X	X	X	X
Decision to bring criminal charges against a looked after child (e.g. criminal damage in a residential establishment or foster home, assault on staff)				X	X
Abduction or attempted abduction of looked after child		X	X	X	X
Formally acknowledging & recording that statutory requirements have not been met, with reasons e.g. frequency of visits.		x			

5. Attendance at Meetings	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Missing from Home Procedures (refer to Pan Merseyside MFH Protocol)		X			
Strategy Meetings/ review meetings	X	X			
Disruption Meetings (attendance)	X	X			
Matching Meetings (non comp f/c)	X	X			
Agency Decision Maker				X	
Agency decision maker (fostering)			X		
Care Planning Meetings	X				
First & Final Care Planning		X			
Pathway Plans	X	X			
Transition to Adult Services	X	X			
ICPC / Review Conference	X				
Core Groups	X				
Step down meetings	X				
LGP	X				
Fostering	X	X			

6. Financial Approval Levels	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
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Please see Children's Social Care scheme of delegation (specifically financial delegations)

7. Human Resources	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD	DCS
Decision to suspend				X	X
Annual leave - over 3 weeks continuously				X	
Carry over more than 5 days leave at the end of the leave year.				X	
Leave in exceptional circumstances				X	
Vacancy release			X		
Who can provide formal references for staff?		X	Authorised by X		
Initiate Capability Procedure – Whoever is line manager					

8. Key Miscellaneous Tasks	SW	Team Manager	Service Manager	AD
Complaints – Stage 1 – Resolution		X		
Complaints – Stage 2 – Resolution			X	X

Freedom of Information Requests			x	
File Audits	x	x	x	x
Supervision		x	x	x
MAPPA Level 2 meetings attendance		x		
MAPPA Level 3 meetings attendance			x	
MARAC meeting attendance		x		
Act as guarantor for tenancies			x	x
Signing of formal reports to the Lead Member/ Cabinet/ any elected members/ Ombudsman etc.				x
Signing of any correspondence with local/ national elected members, Ombudsman, Children's Commissioner, etc.				x

SW = Social Worker, AD = Assistant Director, DCS – Director of Children's Services