

# **CCSW Multi-agency Support and Challenge Panel for Child Protection and Children in Need plans**

## **1. What is the purpose?**

The purpose of the Multi-Agency Support and Challenge Panel in Camden is to scrutinise individual child protection plans and children in need plans where progress has been limited despite the plan having been in place for an extended period of time. This will provide multi-agency input into stuck cases, for cases where children are subject of repeat plans and cases with complexity requiring reflection.

In this context, the following should be considered for discussion at the panel:

- Cases where children have been subject of children in need plans for over 1 year.
- Cases where a decision has been made to continue the child protection plan at the third review but are neither escalating nor thought to be 'on track'.
- Cases that have returned to child protection planning within two years of a previous child protection plan ceasing and are not escalating, though the concerns are similar.
- Cases where the multi-agency network would appreciate time to think and reflect together regarding progress, next steps and/or complexity for children in need or child protection.

The purpose is not to remove children from children in need or child protection plans but to ensure that only children who need a plan have one and that plans have an impact.

## **2. What is the process?**

Cases should be identified by the involved Children's Safeguarding and Social Work (CSSW) team. The involved Child Protection chairs may also recommend cases to the team or panel.

When a case has been identified, then the involved CSSW team should email Victoria Murin ([victoria.murin@camden.gov.uk](mailto:victoria.murin@camden.gov.uk)) to book a slot on the next panel date. The most recent CP or CIN assessment/plan and chronology will be shared with the panel members.

The panel will convene on a six weekly basis.

Cases will be presented to the panel by the relevant CSSW social work team, child protection chair and core group members.

The panel will then facilitate a reflective discussion on the dilemma(s) that have been presented with an agenda adapted from the following queries:

- What has led to this child / these children becoming subject to a child protection or children in need plan?
- What is preventing the plan progressing to reduce the risk of significant harm sufficiently?
- What remains to be achieved?
- Are core group or network meetings effective?

- Could the case be managed with a child in need plan or some other framework, such as Early Help support?
- Have the child protection chair and the CSSW team manager met between conferences to look at the progress of the plan?
- Are there concerns about the input from any agency? Are the right agencies involved?
- What are the key learning points from the case and what general key themes emerge?

### **3. Who sits on the panel?**

Panel members will be senior managers from key safeguarding agencies:

- Children's Safeguarding and Social Work including Legal
- Police
- Education
- Health
- Camden Safety Net
- CAMHS
- Housing
- YOS (where appropriate)

Panel members are at a senior level because they will be best placed to address any blocks to the implementation of the plan and to identify any additional resources, which may make the plan more effective. Additionally, senior managers will have the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive understanding and oversight of the complexities of operational work.

The panel will be chaired by the Head of Service from the CSSW Quality Assurance Unit.

The panel will be under the auspices of the Camden Safeguarding Child Partnership and will report regularly to their Quality Assurance Subgroup.

Panel members will:

- demonstrate a 'no blame' approach in the context of mutual ownership and responsibility for managing risks;
- treat front line professionals with respect and value their professional input; and
- make recommendations that will be listened to and taken seriously by the CSSW social work team, child protection chair and the core group, though decisions about whether the plan should continue, or cease can only be made at a child protection conference.