



## **Children's Safeguarding and Family Help**

### **Corporate Parenting Service**

#### **Statutory CLA reviews practice guidance**

Camden's Children and Learning Directorate uses relational practice as the foundation for all our work. Our integrative relational practice framework is based on our values, and is designed to help achieve the Directorate's purpose: to work with children, families and communities to make a positive, lasting difference to their futures, so they have the best start in life.

We recognise the impact of structural inequalities on the lives of the children and families we work with and as a service we will embrace inclusive, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice based on our values and our mission to champion social justice.

Our practice framework centres on honest and compassionate relationships with those we serve and with each other. It is an expectation that all Directorate policies and procedures are implemented in line with our practice framework, and that any actions within policies and procedures reflect its ethics, values and practice expectations.

### 1 Introduction

This document sets out the local practice and procedures to be followed for statutory CLA reviews and should be read together with the *Looked After Reviews* policy. [Looked After Reviews](#)

The review process is overseen by the child's IRO and details of their wider role can be found in the *Appointment and role of IROs* policy. [Appointment and Role of Independent Reviewing Officers](#)

**It should be noted that significant changes to a child's care plan can only be made at a statutory CLA review unless this is not reasonably practicable.**

### 2 Procedures for reviews

#### 2.1 Date of review

- As soon as social workers receive the outcome "First CLA Review" on MOSAIC after the child has been placed, they should contact the child's allocated IRO to arrange the date. Dates for subsequent reviews should be set at each review meeting.
- If a child is subject to any other plan, for example a child protection plan or an intervention plan provided by YJS, this plan may be reviewed at the same time as the care plan.
- Where a child is subject to a child protection plan, please see the *Discharge of CP plans* policy for details on how both plans will be reviewed together. [discharge-of-child-protection-plans.pdf](#)

#### 2.2 Time and venue

Children should be consulted on the time and venue of the review, but in order to ensure their attendance, avoid disrupting their education and to keep their looked after status confidential, it is recommended that reviews are held outside of school hours either at the placement or CSFH offices.

#### 2.3 Reviews held out of time

- If it is not possible for a CLA review to be held within the statutory timescale, the social worker must report this to the child's IRO and the IRO manager, who may agree to the review being held in 2 parts.

- ***The first part of the review*** must be held before the due date in order to remain within timescales and will involve the social worker meeting with the child's IRO to:
  - review the care plan
  - discuss any concerns regarding the placement
  - agree any urgent action that must be carried out prior to the second part of the review
  - set the date of the second part of the review.
- Any decisions and actions from this part of the meeting must be recorded on the child's MOSAIC case record, and the social worker should begin the updated assessment.
- ***The second part of the review*** will be the formal review meeting itself which should be conducted in the normal manner. However, when recording the review on MOSAIC, social workers and IROs must clearly record that the review has been held in two parts.

### 2.4 Inquorate reviews

- To be quorate, a review must be attended by key people in the child's life; the carer, parent (where appropriate) and the social worker and the child (where appropriate).
- If any of these are unable to attend at the scheduled date, the review cannot go ahead and the social worker should consult with the IRO with a view to either changing the date or arranging the review over 2 meetings to remain within timescales (see 2.3 above).
- Any new review dates should be notified to:
  - all review participants
  - the team manager
  - the CLA service manager
  - the Corporate Parenting Head of Service
  - the IRO service manager.
- If the allocated social worker is unable to attend the review on the day, the team manager should consult with the IRO and every effort made to identify a suitable team member who can attend in the social worker's place.
- If a scheduled review is found to be inquorate on the day, the IRO will go ahead with the meeting but may need to telephone key staff to consult on decisions and obtain views.

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- If the IRO is unavailable on the day, the IRO service manager will make every effort to find a replacement chair or make arrangements for the review to be held over 2 meetings as described in 2.3 above.

### 2.5 Attendance

- Professionals or significant people may be invited to attend reviews if they need to share information with the meeting, but to protect confidentiality, social workers may choose to consult with rather than invite other professionals, or arrange for them to attend part of the review.
- Children over the age of 4 should be encouraged to attend their review meeting. Parents should also be encouraged to attend, but only if this is in the child's best interests.

### 2.6 Invitations

Invitations to reviews should be arranged by the social worker via the MOSAIC meetings episode and the task passed to the Business Support Officer to send out letters. Invitation letters, together with relevant consultation forms, should be sent out at least 2 weeks before the date of the review.

### 2.7 Consultations

As part of the review process, social workers must consult with:

- **the child:** children should complete the CLA consultation form relevant to their age (4-11 and 11+ and 16+) with the help of either their social worker or their foster carer or key worker. [Consultation | Children's Policy & Practice Hub](#)
- **their parents:** parents should be asked to complete their consultation form, but social workers should meet with the parents to go through the form as part of their preparation for the review. The consultation form should be completed even if the parent is not attending.
- **any other significant person, including independent visitors:** any other person whose relationship with the child is important should be consulted and asked to complete the relevant consultation form, even if they will not attend the meeting.
- **the foster carer or residential key worker:** foster carers and residential key workers should be asked to complete their consultation form and may wish to do this with the help of their supervising social worker.

- ***a representative from the child's school:*** the child's teacher or the designated CLA teacher at the child's school should complete the consultation with education form as well as ensuring that the child's PEP has been updated in time for the review.
- ***a relevant health professional;*** a health professional that sees the child regularly, for example a health visitor, GP or school nurse, should be asked to complete the health consultation form.
- ***any other relevant professional providing a service for the child;*** for example, If the child receives services from CAMHS, the person working with the child should be asked to contribute a written report to the review.

All consultation forms are available from the Business Support Officer. Completed consultation forms should be returned to the social worker who should pass them on to the IRO at least 2 days before the review.

### 2.8 Supporting children and parents to participate

- Social workers should meet with children and parents at least 2 days prior to the review in order to help them prepare. This should involve:
  - explaining the purpose of the review, who will be at the review and why and how the review will be conducted
  - exploring how they can best take part in the review process in order to make their views known
  - explaining to children that although their wishes will be taken in to account, they will only be acted on if it is thought to be in their best interests.
- Parents/carers (if attending) should receive a copy of the social work report prior to the review, as should the child/young person in a form that is appropriate to their age, and they should have time to digest this prior to the review meeting.
- Social workers should ensure that they provide help for parents to attend reviews, for example providing financial assistance with travel costs.
- Children and parents should be encouraged and enabled to participate fully in the review process especially if they will not be attending the actual review meeting.
- Social workers may consider appointing an advocate for the child or finding alternative methods of them to put across their views to the review. Social workers may also wish to discuss with parents whether they need anyone to attend with them to support them during the meeting.

### 3 Exclusion from reviews

- Although it is Camden's policy that parents should be encouraged to attend their child's review meeting, there may be exceptional cases where it is felt that it is not in the child's best interests for them to attend the whole meeting or to attend at the same time as the child.
- Exclusions may be considered where:
  - a child strongly objects to their parent's attendance and the social worker and IRO believes the objection is reasonable
  - there is evidence to suggest that the parent's presence at the review would prejudice the child's welfare
  - there is evidence that the parent's presence would seriously hinder the review process due to their behaviour, for example threats of violence, or incapacitation through intoxication or mental health problems
  - there are conflicts between family members that the child should not witness.
- In these cases, the social worker should consult with the IRO to discuss the matter and decide on excluding parents or making alternative arrangements for separate attendance at the review. When deciding, a balance must be struck between the parent's right to be involved in the review process and the need to safeguard the child and progress the review meeting.
- Where a parent is to be excluded from all or part of the review meeting, the IRO should write to the parents to:
  - explain why the decision has been taken
  - notify them of any arrangements for them to participate in the review process by separate attendance
  - detail how long the exclusion will take effect and how it will be reviewed
  - explain how they will receive feedback from the review meeting if they are unable to attend
  - offer to meet them in order to explain the decision if this is appropriate
  - provide a copy of Camden's complaints procedure.
- Decisions to exclude a parent should also be notified to the manager of the IRO service and the CLA service manager and Corporate Parenting Head of Service and a record of decisions on exclusion recorded on MOSAIC by the IRO as a consultation.

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- Exclusions should be time-limited and regularly reviewed. The social worker and team manager should consult with the IRO manager to review the reasons for excluding the parents from the review meeting. If parents raise the issue of exclusion, this will be passed on to the IRO manager to be dealt with.
- If an incident happens during a review meeting that either adversely affects the child or severely disrupts the meeting, the IRO may either end the meeting or exclude the parent immediately.
- Following this, the IRO should write to the parents notifying them of why they took this decision and what further action may be taken and consult with the social worker and the manager of the IRO service to decide on whether an exclusion needs to be put in place.

### 4 Documents for the review meeting

The social worker must complete the *social work report for CLA review* and send the completed record to their manager via the task on MOSAIC for authorisation. The team manager should then pass the social work report on to the IRO.

Social workers must ensure that the following documents are completed and up to date and passed to the IRO at least 3 working days before the date of the review:

- the social work report for CLA review
- the PEP
- the Health plan and review health assessment
- completed consultation forms
- any other report provided for the review.

### 5 Procedures following the meeting

- The IRO and social worker should meet with the child and their parents, where appropriate, to discuss the outcomes of the review and to ensure that they fully understand what decisions have been reached and why. This is particularly important where there has been a significant change in the child's overall care plan. The IRO should also give the child and parents a user satisfaction form for completion.
- The IRO should complete the chairs monitoring form immediately after the conference and the *Chairs report* and the *CLA care plan* within 5 working days of the review being held. The report should include a short record of the discussions held in the review meeting, including:

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- how the care plan is meeting the child's needs
  - the views of all those involved in the review process
  - any changes needed to the plan
  - a list of decisions made by the review meeting
  - any tasks to be carried out, by whom and within what timescales.
- The *Chairs report* and the *CLA care plan* should both be sent to the CLA service manager via the task on MOSAIC for authorisation and to agree resources. Once the authorised review record is returned, the IRO should forward the documents to the Business Support Officer for immediate distribution.
- The IRO is responsible for deciding on who should receive a copy of the records, and care should be taken regarding distribution of minutes to parents who did not attend the review or who were only present for part of the meeting.

## 6 Mid-review meeting

- Where reviews are being held at a frequency of 6 months, a mid-review meeting should take place between the social worker, team manager and the child's IRO to monitor the implementation of decisions and recommendations made at the previous review meeting.
- The date for the meeting will be set at the statutory CLA review to take place within 3 months. The social worker should prepare a report for the IRO on progress and any issues that may have arisen. The issues should be discussed and agreed in supervision and a short, written report sent to the IRO prior to the meeting.
- The outcome and decisions of a mid-review meeting should be recorded by the IRO as a consultation on the relevant case note and an alert added for the social worker and manager.