



Children's Safeguarding and Family Help

Corporate Parenting Service

Out of borough placements practice guidance

Out of borough placements

1 Introduction and purpose of policy

This document sets out the procedures to be followed by social workers when placing children out of borough and should be read together with the *Out of area placements* policy. [Out of Area Placements](#)

2 Procedures

- It is Camden's policy that where possible and as far as is consistent with the child's needs, looked after children will be placed with a Camden approved foster carer or in a residential setting either in Camden or in a neighbouring borough so that they are able to benefit from links with local services.
- Where this is not possible, Camden's Resource team will look to place children with foster carers or a residential setting within the Greater London area so that the child is placed within 20 miles of the borough.
- Social workers must consult with the receiving local authority and request information about the area that may have a bearing on the suitability of the placement in terms of the child's needs and safety before going ahead with any out of borough placement.
- Social workers may request assistance from a receiving local authority in monitoring placements that are at a distance from Camden, but Camden cannot delegate its duties as set out in the Care Planning, placement and Case Review Regulations to another authority.
- Social workers must obtain the relevant consent for an out of borough placement before the placement can take effect. See the *Out of area placements* policy for details.
- If the child is to be placed at a distance from Camden for safeguarding reasons, this must be agreed by the CLA service manager prior to the request for placement and information relating to the risks included on the "*Request for placement*" record.
- If the child is to be placed outside of Greater London, the consent of the Director must be obtained first.

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- It is the responsibility of the allocated social worker and the IRO to obtain the child and parent's views on the proposed placement and to discuss this with the service manager prior to a decision being made.
- All decisions on placements out of borough, and the reasons for any decision, should be recorded in the *Consultation* case note type on the child's MOSAIC record.
- Social workers should link with the Business Support Service (BSS) about sending out notifications and obtaining contact details of services in the receiving borough via the local authority.
- Social workers in the Resources team should also contact the relevant person in the host authority to make enquiries about the area and any risks that the placement may pose to the child.
- It is important that information sent giving notice of an out of borough placement provides brief details of the child's needs and the overall plan for their care, including permanence. This is to ensure that the host authority is able to ensure the child's needs are met locally.

To notify a Local Authority of a child placed in their borough:

- The social worker should liaise with the Resources Team regarding finding a suitable placement.
- The social worker should complete the *Statutory Notification of New placement Form* and the placement episode on MOSAIC recording that the child is placed out of borough and task the episode to CLA Business Support officer, attaching the form.
- The CLA Business Support officer should send out a notification letter attaching the completed form which should give brief details of the child's care plan.

3 Planning for placement

- The Resource team should look into the standard of care that the placement can offer, requesting any relevant information from residential settings such as copies of their statement of purpose, safeguarding policies and the outcome of recent Ofsted inspections. Camden will only place children and young people with providers and in establishments with a good and outstanding Ofsted rating.
- It is imperative that any known safeguarding risks relating to the child, for example running away or risk of extra-familial harm and exploitation, are taken into

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consideration when choosing placements and discussed at the placement agreement meeting, with any agreed actions for keeping the child safe recorded in the placement plan.

- The social worker or Resource team worker should contact the host local authority and Integrated Health Board to discuss the placement and the child's needs. This discussion should also enable any agreement on which services will be provided locally and which services Camden will continue to provide and whether the host authority will assist Camden in monitoring the placement.
- Issues to be covered in the consultation with the home local authority or health authority include:
 - basic information about the child including legal status
 - their placement history
 - details of their care plan and expected duration of the placement
 - details of contact arrangements
 - details of the care providers carrying out day to day care and what decisions have been delegated to them
 - contingency arrangements in the event of placement breakdown
 - the child's needs and what local services are needed to meet these needs.
- The information gathered should be passed to the Corporate Parenting Head of Service or Director when a decision is being made about a placement.
- In general, where a child is placed within the Greater London area, there should be no need to delegate any tasks to a host authority because the Camden social workers will visit placements regularly and effectively monitor the child's welfare.
- Where a child is placed out of the Greater London area and social workers have concerns about the child's welfare in placement, the host local authority may be requested to carry out some monitoring of the placement on Camden's behalf.
- This must be negotiated at team manager level and a note made on the child's MOSAIC case record of what has been agreed. However, the allocated social workers must carry out statutory CLA visits at the frequency set by care planning regulations.

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4 Promoting education

- It is Camden's policy to make every effort to keep children at their current school even if they are being placed out of borough if it is in their best interest and it is practical for them to travel to the school daily. In these circumstances, the council may agree to provide support for travel costs.
- Otherwise, the allocated social worker is responsible for choosing a child's school and working jointly with foster carers and key workers to make applications for school places and taking advice on school provision from the virtual school head.
- Social workers must ensure that pre-school children have access to their early years entitlement and contact the Early Years service of the host authority to arrange nursery placements.
- Social workers should consult with the admissions team and the Virtual School Head in the host authority for advice on seeking school places and access to extra support. Camden's Virtual School Head must be informed of any child and young person placed out of borough who needs to change school. Social workers can ask for advice and assistance from the head of Camden's virtual school when seeking school places, and the head must be made aware of any difficulties in obtaining a suitable school place.
- If a child is to be placed in a residential unit offering an educational provision, the Resource team is responsible for ensuring that the school has a good or outstanding Ofsted rating and the education offered is of a high enough standard. This should be done in consultation with the virtual school head.
- There is an expectation that school places are found before any proposed out of borough placement is agreed and that formal notification is given to host local authority, followed by a discussion with the host authority relating to the child's needs and how these can be met.

5 Special Educational Needs

- SEND services should be provided by the local authority where the child resides.

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- If a child becomes looked after by Camden and already has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, but is placed out of borough, Camden remains responsible for maintaining the plan but may request help from the host authority.
- Social workers should contact the local SEND service to negotiate what the child will be offered by way of support under the local offer. This must be negotiated with the host authority when the SEN statement is transferred once the placement starts.
- If the special educational needs are assessed by the new school in the host authority, then the host authority is responsible for carrying out assessments and putting in services to support an EHC plan.

6 Promoting health

- Social workers must ensure the following tasks are carried out whenever a child is placed out of borough:
 - notifications are sent to the Integrated Health Board (IHB) covering the host authority area
 - the foster carer or key worker ensures the child is registered with relevant local health practitioners, ie: health visitor, GP, dentist, optician
 - clear agreement is made with the host IHB and Camden's health authority regarding provision of primary and secondary care services, particularly around CAMHS provision
 - arrangements are made for the transfer of all medical records and parent-held health records or appointment cards
 - CLA reviews monitor the impact of the health plan and any issues that may impact on health outcomes for the child as a result of them being placed out of borough, for example accessing services, ability to attend health appointments in Camden.
- The IHB for Camden will be automatically notified of placements by the BSS. However, if the child is being placed in another borough, the BSS officer must send a formal notification to the relevant IHB where they will be living.
- The IHB in Camden is responsible for providing primary and secondary health services for any looked after child placed in Camden. Where a child is placed out of Camden, the local IHB where the child lives will be responsible for providing primary health services but Camden will be responsible for the payment of secondary health services such as CAMHS.

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- It is an expectation that all children placed within the Greater London area will continue to come to the Crowndale Centre for a statutory health assessment to be carried out by Camden's medical officer.
- If the child lives outside Greater London, Camden's policy is that health assessments are carried out by the local CLA health team because of their specialist expertise in the health of CLA; social workers will need to link with the BSS to get contact details and arrange payment of any charges.

7 CLA with YJS involvement

- Where a young person is accommodated out of the borough and is known to Camden YJS, the team will continue to provide a full service as Camden continues to be the young person's corporate parent and YJS must remain involved.
- Some functions may be delegated to local YJS services in a care-taking capacity if the young person lives at some distance from Camden and this makes it difficult to manage the case or if the young person would be at risk if they returned to Camden.

8 Monitoring placements

- Social workers and IROs should be mindful of the difficulties of monitoring placements out of the Greater London area and the child's increased vulnerability as a result of this.
- Foster carers and key workers must be made clear of the specific events and circumstances that must be reported to the social worker and consideration should be given to a more frequent review regime including more frequent placement visits where there are high levels of concern.
- IROs in particular must ensure that the child and their parents where appropriate are fully consulted and have an opportunity to give their views on the placement arrangements and to participate in reviews.
- Where appropriate, IROs should not hesitate to question the use or continuation of an out of borough placement for a child where it is clearly not in the child's best interest and is increasing the risk of harm. The statutory CLA review and mid-review meeting should be used as a forum to thoroughly debate the issue and the IRO should ensure that such debate and any agreed actions are recorded.

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- Any concerning incidents or concerns raised about an out of borough placement by carers, keyworkers, the host authority or the local professional network must automatically trigger a response from CSFH. Social workers should consult with the CLA manager and the child's IRO to decide on the most appropriate action and bring forward the CLA review where appropriate.
- Where there are child protection concerns, the social worker should consult with a Child Protection IRO to decide whether a child protection referral needs to be made to the host local authority in line with *Working together to safeguard children*.
- If the host authority decides on action under child protection procedures, the social worker must co-operate fully, attending any strategy meetings and case conferences and contributing to the section 47 enquiry.
- All children who are looked after by Camden will be subject to Camden's missing children protocol regardless of where they are placed. CLA social workers and Resource team social workers must ensure that out of borough foster carers and residential units have a copy of the protocol and are aware of their role and responsibility should the child go missing from placement.

13 Children from other boroughs placed in Camden

The following procedures set out how Camden will implement the *Notifications from other local authorities* policy. [Notifications from Other Local Authorities/Placement...](#)

The procedures set out the actions Camden will take when another local authority places a child in Camden:

- The Business Support Services will have responsibility for ensuring there is a central record of out of borough placements. The BSS will be the single point of contact for authorities placing children in Camden and will receive all notifications of out of borough placements. The BSS will also ensure that a MOSAIC record is created for every placement.
- Camden's virtual school for CLA will keep a record of all CLA from other boroughs that are placed in and attending school in Camden and will track the child's progress, ensure they have a school place and that their PEP is being implemented.
- Camden's CLA health team can carry out statutory health assessments and provide health advice to placing boroughs where this is requested and funded.

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- The Resource team will liaise with and provide advice to placing authorities.
- The following services will be copied into any notifications as each service is likely to have a role in providing services for CLA:
 - Schools admissions
 - Schools inclusion
 - SEND services
 - CLA virtual school
 - CLA health services
 - Early years services
 - Youth Justice Service.
- These services will also be expected to inform the BSS of any out of borough placements that have not been formally notified to Camden but that come to their attention.

Information about CLA placed in Camden by other boroughs will be recorded on MOSAIC:

- Staff in the BSS will ensure that a MOSAIC record for the child is set up once notifications are received containing general information about the child, their carer, their school and GP.
- All Camden staff that come into contact with the child or the placing authority should record information on the case notes of the child's MOSAIC record. This includes:
 - any discussions with the placing authority regarding placing the child in Camden
 - any concerns or allegations or missing episodes notified to the MASH team or EDT
 - details of any child protection procedures taken by the assessment team
 - details of work carried out by individual services in Camden, including the virtual school, YJS or SEND
 - any discussion with the placing authority regarding school places or early years provision.