



Children's Safeguarding and Family Help Connecting Families (Adolescent Triage) Panel Terms of Reference

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 Description and purpose of Panel

The purpose of the Panel is to consider the best service to meet the needs of adolescents known to Children's Safeguarding and Family Help where there is a risk of family breakdown or where the young person is looked after but reunification is their permanence plan.

The Panel will look at all available service provision both within the Children and Learning Directorate and externally and decide on the most appropriate services for the young person and their family that will best support the young person to remain or return home.

2 Cases to be presented to the Panel

- Young people referred to the Panel should be aged 12 or over.
- Practitioners should refer in the following circumstances:
 - where there is a risk of young people coming into care due to family breakdown
 - where parents or young people are requesting section 20 accommodation
 - where the lead professional feels that there is risk of the young person coming into care before they are 18 if current relationship issues remain unresolved
 - where social workers need support to reunify a child home.
- Cases can be referred from any team who is working with the family including the Youth Justice Service, the Children and Young People's Disability Service, the Children Looked After Service, the Child in Need Service or Early Help Service.

3 Panel principles

- The welfare of the young person is paramount.
- The Panel's focus is to ensure young people remain living with their birth family or within their extended family network where possible and consistent with their welfare.
- The conduct of the Panel and the decision-making process will be underpinned by our Relational Practice framework.
- The Panel will identify the right service for each family at the right time to avoid overwhelming families with large professional networks and creating a burden of appointments.

4 Panel membership

- Nana Bonsu - Director of Relational Practice (Chair)
- Grace Gillman – Team manager, Connecting Families (or Emmanuel Umeh in her absence)
- Patricia Williams - Connecting Families Service Manager (Chair in Director's absence)
- Annelise Goodsir/Will Banjo - Catch 22 Mediation
- Rachel James and Ellie Still - Systemic Family Therapy service
- Patricia Pemberton – Whole Families Service
- Rob O'Grady – Youth Participation/FGC service
- Bryony Smith – Exploitation and Missing team
- Tim Cosh – Head of Integrated Youth Services
- Elaine Dunning – Parenting Programmes/Early Help

Membership may be increased to include professionals from other internal teams and external agencies where specialist knowledge is needed depending on the presenting issues of each case.

Where a Panel member is unable to attend, they should ensure another person from their team or service can attend in their place.

5 Frequency and conduct of Panel meetings

- The Panel will meet weekly on Monday morning following the Legal Gateway Panel meeting and will be administered by the designated service co-ordinator. Cases will be presented to the Panel by the social worker supported by their manager. Each case will have a maximum 15/20 minute slot for discussion and decision-making.
- Generally, the Panel will hear a limited number of cases (about 3 cases each session). Where there are more referrals than can be heard, the Connecting Families team manager and service manager will select the most urgent for presentation.
- Panel members will ensure that they read the referral form prior to the Panel meeting and identify any questions they may have.

6 Referral and documentation

Referral should be made to the Panel via the referral form available on the MOSAIC workflow. The referral should include a statement from the lead professional giving details of the family history, social care involvement, and capturing the current circumstances and why they are bringing the case for consultation.

All referrals should be completed in consultation with line managers and authorised by service managers. **Referrals must reach the Panel administrator by 3pm on the Thursday prior to the Monday Panel meeting** to enable Panel members to read the contents. Referrals that are not received by that time will not be put forward to be heard.

All referrals will be reviewed in advance by the Connecting Families Team Manager or Service Manager to prioritise the most urgent cases. Referrals that are not listed for discussion will be added to the Panel waiting list to be discussed the following week.

7 Panel decisions and outcomes

Panel will decide on the best course of action that may improve outcomes for the young person and their family; these may be:

- Connecting Families to proceed to engagement and exploration with the young person
- The family is signposted to other service provision
- Connecting Families agree to work with the young person but the case will need to go on a waiting list due to capacity
- The Panel provides advice for the lead professional, and no further action taken.

If a case does not proceed to work with Connecting Families team, lead professionals may want to refer the cases back to the Panel in the future if there is a substantial change or escalation in circumstances.

8 Quality Assurance and governance

- The Quality Assurance Board is responsible for the governance and oversight of the Panel operations and will lead in developing best practice and responding to emerging themes and trends.
- The terms of reference for the Panel will be reviewed will be reviewed by the Connecting Families Team Manager and Service Manager after 6 months, and thereafter on a yearly basis in order to consider its continued effectiveness and to measure the impact of the Panel on positive outcomes for the young people referred.