

## OUT OF AUTHORITY PLACEMENTS - 2016

### PART ONE – GATESHEAD COUNCIL POLICY OUTLINE

#### Policy outline

- Within Part 1 this Policy sets out the Council's aims and Sufficiency Duties.
- Part 2 sets out general information concerning Out of Authority placements, also, the importance of the Care Plan and Notifications prior to the placement of a Child.
- Part 2 also includes a section relating to Children who are placed externally by Gateshead Council, this being on both a planned and emergency basis. Flowcharts are included.
- Part 3 concerns where there is an intent to place Children within the Borough of Gateshead from other Local Authorities.
- Pro-formas are attached to the rear of this Policy as an Appendix to be utilised as necessary. This includes Appendix 1 – Information for External Placements and Appendix 2 Notification Letter and Pro-forma.
- Within Appendix 3 Roles and responsibilities of Workers are explained.
- Within Appendix 4 Regulations & Guidance details are included including Key Terms.
- Appendix 5 details a letter to Local Authorities to be forwarded when a Local Authority is considering placing a Young Person within Gateshead Borough, this letter setting out the facilities and services.

#### Council Aim

Gateshead Council aim to place the majority of its Looked After Children within the borough of Gateshead wherever possible and in line with their best interests with a Council resource. The reason is as follows;

- Children can benefit from being raised in an area with which they identify and feel familiar, therefore having more a sense of belonging.
- There will be improved matching given the knowledge of existing resources, thus contributing to better outcomes.
- Education and health services are less likely to be interrupted.
- Safeguarding will be improved as monitoring will be easier to manage.
- Rehabilitation to the family home, where appropriate, will be less complicated and easier to plan.

## Sufficiency duty and the need for diverse placements

Within this context, in line with statutory guidance, Gateshead plans and reviews resource provision for the anticipated numbers of Children who are to be Looked After. It is recognised that placement within Gateshead for all of its Looked After Children, however, is unlikely to be achieved given the diverse placement needs where placement choice needs to be available to best meet the needs of the Young Person. This is similarly the case for all Local Authorities when placing Looked After Children where there can be resource shortfalls, particularly where there are complex placement needs.

It is accepted, therefore, that for certain Young People there will need to be better placement choice in order for successful outcomes to be achieved. This will, on occasions be best met by placement of the Child outside of their area.

## PART 2 - OUT OF AUTHORITY PLACEMENTS MADE BY GATESHEAD COUNCIL-PROCESS

This concerns the following situations;

- **Gateshead placing Children into a neighbouring authority**
- **Gateshead Placing Children into a distant authority.**

The above instances may include situations whereby;

- an approved Foster Carer by Gateshead Council lives out of the borough (usually in a **neighbouring** authority but not always) with Children from Gateshead placed with them.
- a Child or Young Person from Gateshead is placed with an Independent Foster Carer from an area outside of Gateshead borough, either in a **neighbouring** or **distant** area.
- A Child or Young Person is placed within an out of borough Children's home, either Local Authority or Independent.

There are 2 types of circumstances whereby Young People are placed out of Gateshead, this being on either a **planned** or **emergency** basis. The flowcharts within this section detail the placement expectations regarding both planned and emergency placements. Roles and responsibilities are outlined within Appendix 3 with regard to these requirements. The following general principles, however, should be adhered to with this regard;

- All attempts to place the Young Person safely within the borough of Gateshead should have been carefully explored in the first instance.
- Permission to place with a **neighbouring** authority or with a **distant** authority must be gained at the appropriate level, i.e. in respect of a **distant** placement by the Service Director and in respect of a **neighbouring** placement by the Nominated Officer. This is detailed within the Flowcharts. With regard to residential placements, permission must be obtained via the Service Director through attending the External Placement Panel.
- In the event of a resource being required, attempts must be made in the first instance to find a placement with a **neighbouring** authority and on the approved regional contract list as this increases safeguard.
- Involvement of the area authority where the Young Person is to be placed must commence from the moment a placement is considered a possible option. It is expected, in line with statutory guidance that there will be contact and consultation during the planning and placement stages.

- Information sharing with the proposed Local Authority in which the Child or Young Person may be placed must be undertaken prior to placement in respect of planned placements via undertaking an update of the Care Plan. There must be openness and transparency with this regard with the proposed provider being aware what information is being shared. Should the placement involve a high level of risk, consultation should also involve the Police within the proposed local area of the placement. The criteria of when to notify the Police are as follows:
  - Is a victim of CSE
  - Believed/suspected to be at risk of CSE
  - Suspected/known to be a CSE perpetrator
  - Has past episodes of missing/absent from care or home
  - Has a gang involvement or association
  - Is a trafficked Child
  - Is an unaccompanied asylum seeker

**It should be noted that the criteria for consultation with the Police in respect of a prospective placement must take place also when the above criteria is met with a Gateshead foster carer who lives in either a neighbouring or distance authority.**

- Consultations must always take place with the Young Person and Parents as appropriate and the IRO consulted in planned placements.
- Consultation must always include education and health including any specialist resources to ensure that the needs of the Child or Young Person can be catered for.
- There must be an expectation of scrutiny expected from the area in which the Child or Young Person is to be placed in order to promote safeguard both for the Young Person to be placed and for the Young Person/People already placed. Gateshead Council Staff will supply any necessary information identified as important with this regard.
- As a matter of good practice, in line with requirements, Gateshead as the responsible authority for the Young Person will share any matters of significant concern or risk with Local Authorities where Children are placed both before and during a placement. This is in order that Local Authorities or relevant agencies can ensure that adequate safeguards are in place/put in place for the safety and wellbeing of all Children Looked After.

**Importance of discussing and sharing the Care Plan/ Risk Assessment and Appendix 1 External Placements Information with proposed Local Authority, and also Police (where appropriate-see below)**

- The information listed in Appendix 1 External Placements Information should be discussed in the event that a placement with a **distant** placement is being considered. This must be undertaken when preparing or updating the Care Plan and Risk Assessment and all documents must be forwarded to Local Authorities during the consultation process for their agreement concerning a prospective out of authority **distant** placement.
- In the undertaking/completion of the Care Plan (or its update), Risk Assessment and Appendix 1 External Placements Information, it is important that dialogue with the Local Authority and relevant Agencies takes place.
- Regardless as to whether this relates to a **neighbouring** or to a **distant** Local Authority, the Police must also be notified of a decision to place when any of the following criteria are met:
  - Is a victim of CSE
  - Believed/suspected to be at risk of CSE
  - Suspected/known to be a CSE perpetrator
  - Has past episodes of missing/absent from care or home
  - Has a gang involvement or association
  - Is a trafficked Child
  - Is an unaccompanied asylum seeker

- It must be stressed that the details listed in the checklist should all be contained in adequate detail within the Care Plan in order that the statutory requirements are able to be met and a decision as to whether to place can be arrived at in a timely manner and in the best interests of the Child.
- Note the completed Care Plan, Risk Assessment and Appendix 1 External Placements Information must be sent to the Local Authority **prior** to any decision being made about the suitability of the placement, except in the case of an emergency placement. The Police must also receive this information in the circumstances previously outlined when the criteria is met.
- It is not necessary for the Checklist itself to be forwarded to the Local Authority concerned.
- Note that support services should be included within the Care Plan and this should also detail the need for any specialist services. Discussion and agreement with the area authority will be crucial with this regard.

### **Notifications prior to the placement of a Child**

The Regulations state that the following must be notified concerning a placement prior to a placement being made. (i.e. in planned placements).

The Child (unless it is inappropriate to do so having regard to their age and understanding).

If the Child is in the care of the responsible authority any person who is allowed contact with under Sec 34 (1) and any person who has contact with the Child by virtue of an order under Sec 34.

If the Child is looked after but is not in the care of the responsible authority ,any person who has contact with them pursuant to an order made under Section 8 – (Residence, Contact and other orders with respect to Children).

Any person who was caring for the Child immediately before the arrangements were made.

The Primary Care Trust.

The registered Medical Practitioner and the Practitioner where Child is to be registered.

The Educational establishment attended by the Child or the person providing education or training.

The Independent Reviewing Officer.

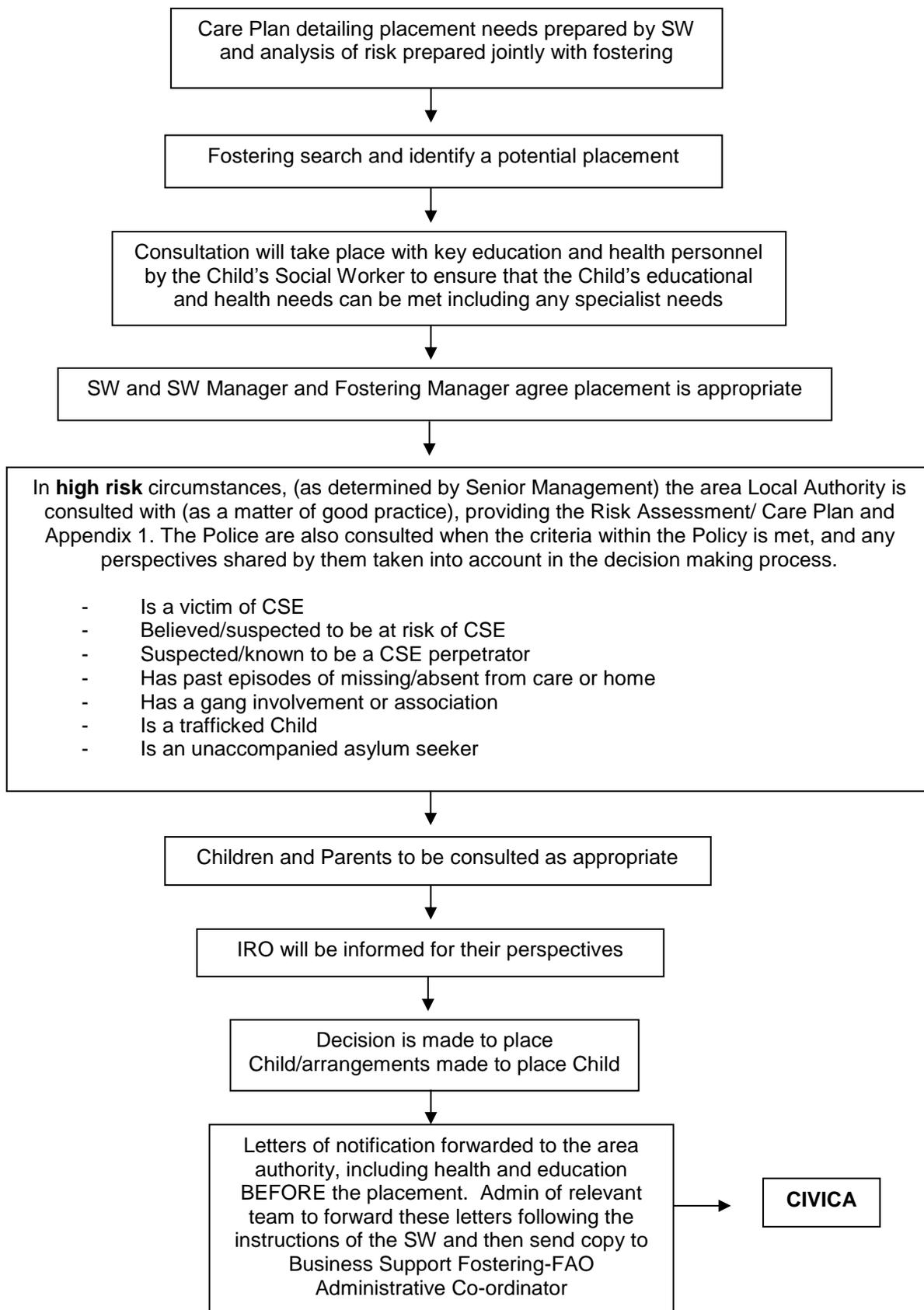
**Note that the Regulations state that the responsible authority may decide not to give notification to any person listed if to do so would put the Child at risk of harm.**

In addition to this list, whilst not required under regulations the Police **must** also be notified when the criteria is met.

**PART 2 (continue) OUT OF AUTHORITY PROCESSES**

**PLANNED EXTERNAL PLACEMENT - PLACING A CHILD WITH A FOSTER CARER, APPROVED BY GATESHEAD COUNCIL WHO LIVES OUT OF THE BOROUGH (USUALLY IN A NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY)**

**FLOWCHART 1**



## FLOWCHART 2

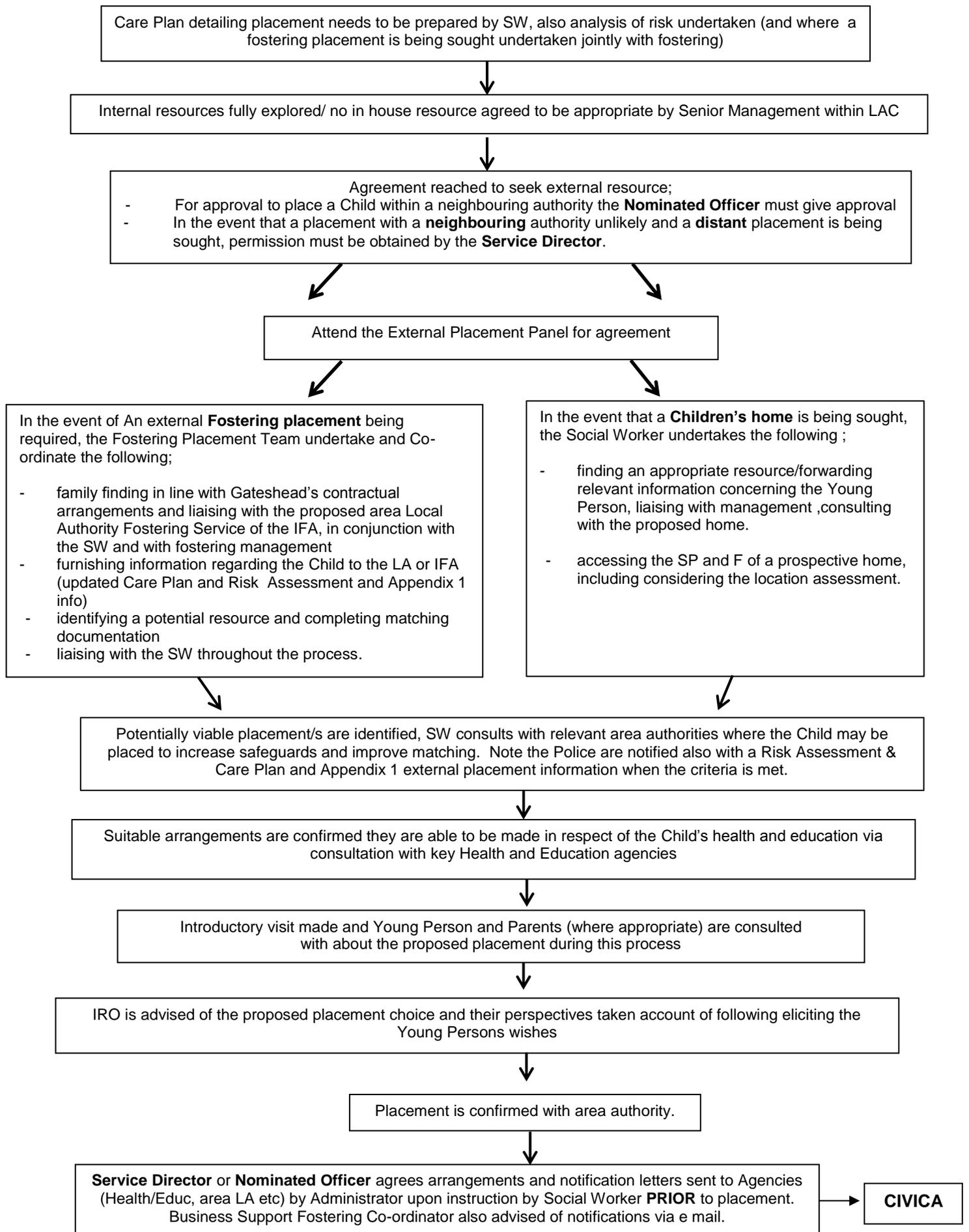
### PLANNED EXTERNAL PLACEMENT-GATESHEAD PLACEMENTS TO A NEIGHBOURING OR DISTANT AUTHORITY WHEN PLACING WITH AN INDEPENDENT FOSTERING AGENCY OR INDEPENDENT CHILDREN'S HOME.

\* **Note** that this also includes placement within the provision of a Voluntary Organisation, or a placement with a Local Authority Children's Home or a Local Authority approved Foster Carer from another Local Authority, however, placements within Local Authority provision is less likely due to their own placement demands.

\***NOTE** Statutory Guidance 2014 states that approval of the **Service Director (Director of Children's Services)** or **Nominated Officer** is not required where the placement is with the Parent/a Connected Person or a Foster Carer approved by Gateshead Council.

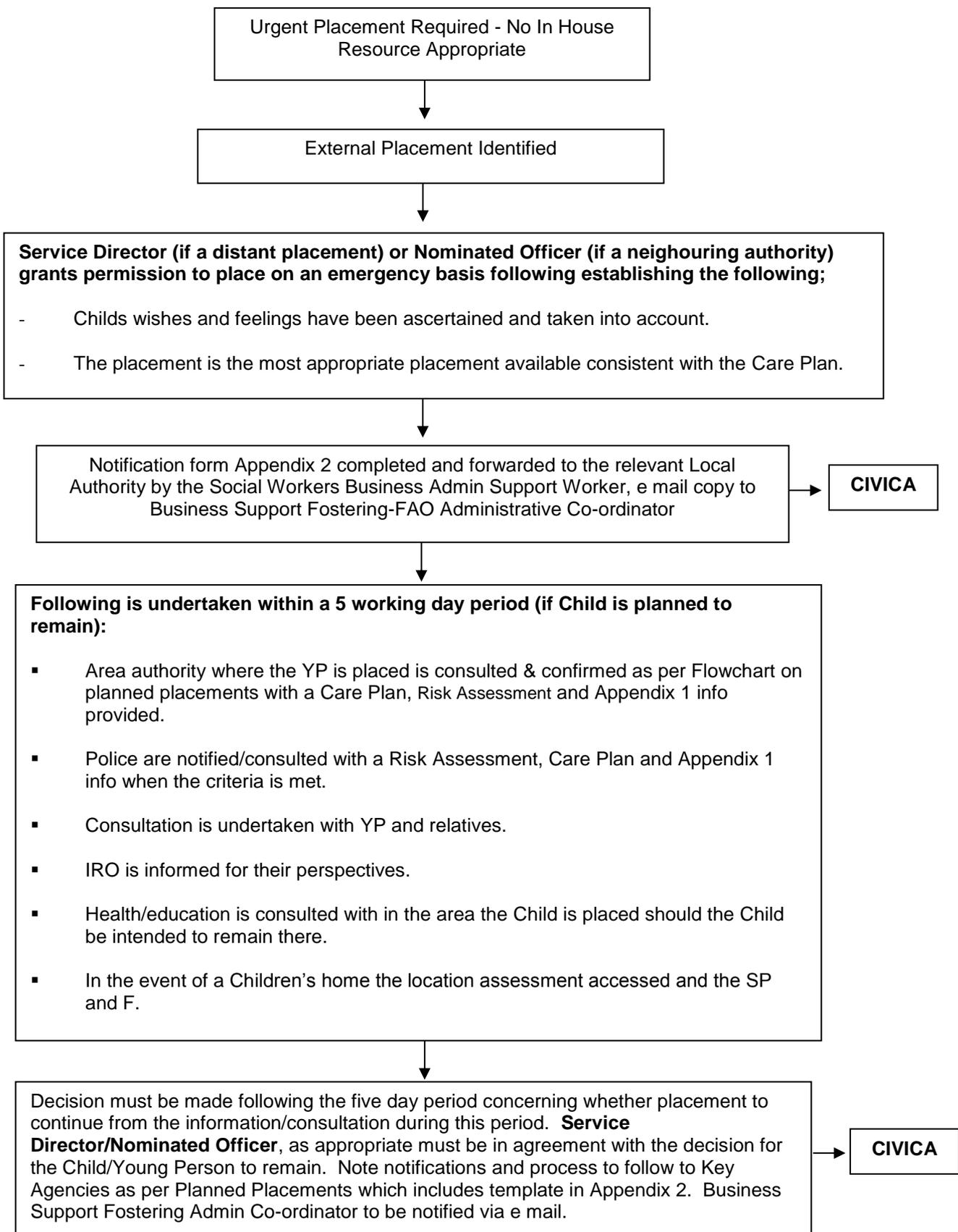
See following page for flowchart.

**FLOW CHART 2 : PRIOR TO PLANNED EXTERNAL (DISTANT OR NEIGHBOURING) PLACEMENT;**



**FLOWCHART 3 GATESHEAD COUNCIL'S EMERGENCY OUT OF AUTHORITY PLACEMENT FLOWCHART**

**\*NOTE** Statutory Guidance 2014 states that approval of the **Service Director (Director of Children's services)** or **Nominated Officer** is not required where the placement is with the Parent/a Connected Person or a Foster Carer approved by Gateshead Council.



### PART 3 - OUT OF AUTHORITY PLACEMENTS WITHIN GATESHEAD COUNCIL

#### a) Placements into Gateshead from **neighbouring** authorities

- The Nominated Officer will receive notifications from **neighbouring** Authorities that Children have been placed within Gateshead borough. This may include independent or voluntary provision as well as other Local Authority provision. This will also include placements on both a planned and emergency basis.
- Where, on the basis of the information received, or on the basis of knowledge of the provision where the Child has been placed there are known concerns, the Nominated Officer will contact the responsible authority to share the concerns. In so doing they may contact other agencies within the borough, if this is in the Child's or other Children's best interests, particularly where there are safeguarding concerns. This may involve discussions with the Police when the following criteria is met:
  - Is a victim of CSE
  - Believed/suspected to be at risk of CSE
  - Suspected/known to be a CSE perpetrator
  - Has past episodes of missing/absent from care or home
  - Has a gang involvement or association
  - Is a trafficked Child
  - Is an unaccompanied asylum seeker
- In the event that these concerns are unable to be resolved, for instance via an effective risk management strategy the Nominated Officer will consult with the Service Director for an assessment as to whether their intervention at Director level would be appropriate.
- The Nominated Officer will oversee the notifications of Children placed from external authorities into the Borough, identifying any trends or areas requiring intervention, liaising appropriately with the relevant agencies, particularly where there are identified safeguarding concerns or the Police where the criteria is met, as previously outlined.
- In the event of a notification regarding a Child placed externally within Gateshead where there has been a serious occurrence, the Nominated Officer will consider the information forwarded and take any action promptly considered to be necessary in terms of liaising with the responsible authority, relevant agency such as the police, health, education etc. in order to secure safeguards.
- The Nominated Officer will oversee the register of Young People who are placed external to their Local Authority and reside within Gateshead Council, either residential or fostering, this register being maintained by the Business Support Fostering Administrative Co-ordinator.

#### b) Placements into Gateshead from **distant** authorities

- The Service Director (Director of Children's Services) will receive all notifications of Children intended to be placed or placed within Gateshead borough from a **distant** authority. This will include notifications on both a planned and emergency basis.
- The Service Director will consider the information supplied in line with statutory guidance and respond to this, consulting as appropriate with all relevant external agencies as well as their own Head of Looked After Services for their knowledge of the intended provision.

They will consult also with the Police, as appropriate, i.e. where the following criteria is met in respect of where a Child;

- Is a victim of CSE
  - Believed/suspected to be at risk of CSE
  - Suspected/known to be a CSE perpetrator
  - Has past episodes of missing/absent from care or home
  - Has a gang involvement or association
  - Is a trafficked Child
  - Is an unaccompanied asylum seeker
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- The Service Director will consider the safeguard and welfare of Children within the borough of Gateshead as well as whether the individual needs of the Child can be met by the proposed placement in forming their view on whether the placement is a viable option.
  
  - In certain instances this may involve the Service Director liaising with the Service Director of the placing authority where there are known significant concerns or the Police.

## Appendix 1

### EXTERNAL PLACEMENTS INFORMATION

**Note;** To be completed whilst undertaking the Care Plan and Risk Assessment for a **distant** placement or when there is increased risk within a **neighbouring** authority placement, this will always involve circumstances when the criteria for consulting the Police is met. (see Out of Authority Policy)

<b>Placing Authority;</b>			
<b>Full Name and any names Also Known As;</b>			
<b>Gender;</b>		<b>D.O.B.;</b>	
		<b>Legal Status;</b>	
<b>Social Worker &amp; Contact Details;</b>			
<b>Emergency Details for home authority;</b>			
<b>IRO details;</b>			
<b>School name/address (both old and planned new school);</b>			
<b>GP details (previous and new if known);</b>			
<b>Type of Care (fostering, residential);</b>			
<b>Date placement started/due to start/change/end;</b>			
<b>New placement/change or end of placement (tick as appropriate);</b>			
<b>Number of previous placements outlining reasons for the Child leaving earlier placements;</b>			
<b>Details of the assessment of the Child's needs including;</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any particular <b>needs</b> or <b>risks</b> to the Child</li> <li>- services required such as SEN, disability, Youth Offending, mental health needs etc.</li> </ul> Note Care Plan and Risk Assessment must be shared			

<b>Child's wishes and feelings concerning the placement;</b>	
<b>Why the placement is considered suitable;</b>	
<b>Duration of the placement(emergency/short-term/long term/permanent).if it is not possible to assess the intended duration of the placement-reasons for this and when the information will be available;</b>	
<b>Arrangements for contact;</b>	
<b>Carer contact details;</b>	
<b>Details of who will be responsible for implementing plans for the Child's day to day care (the placement plan) including details of arrangements for delegating responsibilities to the Child's carers);</b>	
<b>Details of any plans to offer the Child Leaving Care support (as an "eligible Child") during the anticipated duration of the placement;</b>	
<b>Details of plans to meet the Child's educational needs-information about the school the Child is expected to attend; details of plans for supporting the Child if a school has not been identified;</b>	

**Information about plans to meet the Child's health needs, e.g. where the Child requires secondary health care (including mental health and other specialist health care), including details about the CCG acting as "responsible commissioner";**

**Details of any youth justice order that would need to be overseen by youth justice services in the area authority;**

**Contingency arrangements if the plan to support the Child in the current placement does not succeed;**

## Appendix 2

### EXTERNAL PLACEMENTS – NOTIFICATION LETTER



My Ref:  
Your Ref:

Date:

Dear Director

#### **Notification under Arrangements for Placement of Children (General) Regulation 1991**

As required by the above Regulations, I am sending you details of a Child whose circumstances have changed. In line with new protocol, please see attached information/paperwork regarding [INSERT CHILD'S NAME] which will be shared with both the Local Authority & the Police. ( i.e. the Police in high risk cases where the criteria has been met)

Please note completed relevant sections of form attached and amend your records accordingly.

If you have a query, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours faithfully

Elaine Devaney  
Service Manager  
Social Work – Children and Families

**Appendix 2 (continued)**

**GATESHEAD COUNCIL EXTERNAL PLACEMENT NOTIFICATION ( IN LINE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS)**

**GUIDANCE FOR STAFF IN COMPLETION**

- Section A – Child’s information-To be completed in ALL circumstances
- Section B – New Placement- To be completed whenever a new placement is being made, along with Section A
- Section C – To be completed whenever a placement has been terminated, along with Section A
- Section D – To be completed in the event of a discharge from Local Authority care along with Section A and Section C.

**SECTION A**

**CHILDS KEY INFORMATION INCLUDING RELEVANT CONTACT DETAILS  
(NOTE; to be completed in ALL circumstances)**

<b>Name of Child;</b>		<b>Gender;</b>		<b>Date of birth;</b>	
<b>ID Number;</b>		<b>Unique Pupil Number;</b>		<b>Legal Status;</b>	

<b>Child Protection Plan;</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Protected placement;</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Disability Register;</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
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<b>Name of Parents or Person with Responsibility;</b>		<b>Address and telephone number;</b>	
<b>Name of Child’s Social Worker;</b>		<b>Address and telephone number;</b> <b>Emergency out of hours contact number;</b>	
<b>Name of Team Manager;</b>		<b>Address and telephone number;</b>	

## SECTION B

### NEW PLACEMENT DETAILS

(NOTE; In line with statutory guidance & regulation, to be completed when a NEW placement is made, also Section A)

Placing/Responsible Authority;	Gateshead Council
Name of Authority where Child is to be placed;	
Type of Placement i.e. Foster carer or Residential N.B. State whether this is an independent, voluntary or Local Authority placement	
Placed with; (name of Carer to be inserted/in the event of a Children's home the name of the Registered Manager) If a Connected Person please state this.	
Expected Length of Placement; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency</li> <li>• Time limited</li> <li>• Respite</li> <li>• Permanent</li> <li>• Long term</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
DATE CHILD IS TO BE PLACED;	

### CHILDS PLACEMENT NEEDS ARRANGEMENTS

(NOTE; In line with statutory guidance & regulation, to be completed when a NEW placement is made, also Section A)

## HEALTH

G. P. details including Name, address, Postcode and Tel Number;	
Are current G.P. and health arrangements to continue?	YES/NO
If not detail new health arrangements;	
Detail any specialist health care needs including any therapeutic needs and how these will be facilitated;	

## EDUCATION

Current School address, Tel No: & Designated Teacher:	
Are current education arrangements to continue?	
If not detail new education arrangements;	
Does the Child have a PEP or arrangements to undertake this:	YES/NO
Detail any special educational needs and if so how will these be met;	

## CONTACT

Specify the contact arrangements including who contact will be with and the transport and supervision arrangements;	
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## YOUTH OFFENDING NEEDS (to be completed as appropriate)

Details of any Youth Offending orders to be overseen and the arrangements in place;	
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Additional Contacts	Name	Telephone Number
Senior Manager (LAC) / or equivalent		
LAC Nurse or equivalent		
Virtual School Head / or equivalent		
Safeguarding Manager		
YOS Contact		

## SECTION C

### TERMINATION OF PLACEMENT

(NOTE; In line with statutory guidance & regulation, to be completed when a placement has ended. In the event of that a new out of authority has commenced both Sections B & C will require completion.

Date of termination of the placement;	
Reason for termination;	
Type of placement which has ended; Connected Person / Foster Carer LA / Foster Carer IFA/ Residential / Placement with Parent etc	
Protected placement;	YES/NO
Legal status including any changes;	
Name and address of Carer/establishment previously caring for Child before placement was terminated	
New address including postcode;	
Telephone contact details of new placement;	
Explain whether new address is another placement, return home, foster carer, residential, etc;	

## SECTION D

### DISCHARGE FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY CARE

(note; In line with statutory guidance & regulation to be completed when a Child placed Out of Authority has been discharged from Care. In such circumstances Sections A and C would also be completed.

Date Child moved;	
Reason Child discharged;	
Name and address of Carer/establishment previously caring for Child before placement was terminated	
Type of placement which has ended; Connected Person / Foster Carer LA / Foster Carer IFA/ Residential / Placement with Parent etc	
New address including postcode;	
Name of person responsible at new address, where applicable;	

Relevant telephone contact details where Child/Young Person now living;	
Legal status including any changes; e.g. Placement Arrangement Order, Special Guardianship Order, move home, independent living	
Type of living arrangement, such as whether this is return home, independent living etc;	

## Appendix 3

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES-EXTERNAL PLACEMENTS

#### Social Worker and line Management responsibilities;

(note that this relates to the Referral and Assessment team, Safeguarding Team, Looked After Team, Children's Disability Team and the Fostering Team)

- Preparing a Needs Assessment/Care Plan concerning the Child.
- Undertaking a Risk Assessment concerning the Child; this to be undertaken jointly with fostering when a foster placement is required.
- Seeking permission from the **Service Director** or **Nominated Officer** to consider an external placement.
- When an external placement is being requested;
  - Seeking permission of the placements panel, preparing the necessary reports for this purpose including the necessary finance agreement
  - Searching for an appropriate resource with the assistance of contracts who may hold a provider list.
  - When residential provision is being sought, ensuring the Statement of Purpose and Function is accessed and a location assessment along with any implications for the Child in order to inform a decision
  - Checking whether there are any concerns identified within the last Ofsted report in the event of any identified prospective placement
  - Whilst seeking a placement, checking with the Local Authority at the early stages whether they have any useful information which may assist in deciding whether the placement is suitable
- Completing Appendix 1 External Placements Information when a **distant** placement is being considered or in instances of higher risk in **neighbouring** placements as the Care Plan is being prepared/updated. (i.e. This information ensures that Care Plan contains relevant details as required by statutory guidance, also )
- Ensuring Local Authorities including Health and Education (including Police as appropriate when criteria is met) are consulted with when a placement is being considered and that Care Plan and Risk Assessment and Appendix 1 External Placements information is shared appropriately (see flowcharts) and the new provider. Police to be consulted with and furnished with information also when the following criteria is met;
  - Is a victim of CSE
  - Believed/suspected to be at risk of CSE
  - Suspected/known to be a CSE perpetrator
  - Has past episodes of missing/absent from care or home
  - Has a gang involvement or association
  - Is a trafficked Child
  - Is an unaccompanied asylum seeker
- Ensuring the relevant tier of Senior Management is consulted (**Service Director** or **Nominated Officer** - SEE FLOWCHARTS) for their agreement to the specific placement once this has been identified and ensuring they are kept informed of progress whilst a placement is being sought.

- Ensuring that Children have been consulted with in respect of planned placements and that their feelings and perspectives are taken account of; similarly Parents views are taken account of (as appropriate). The IRO's views must also be elicited. Where there has been an emergency placement, however, this must be undertaken retrospectively within the 5 day statutory timescale but the Child's wishes and feelings must be taken into account also in any emergency.
- Ensuring that the support plan, detailed within the Care Plan, contains accessing the services required to meet the Child's needs and provides adequate safeguards and monitoring of the placement.
- Undertaking introductory visits (in respect of planned placements).
- Ensuring that all statutory documentation is supplied within timescales in line with admission policies and that statutory Care Planning meetings can commence.
- Liaise with Administrative Support so that relevant notifications and reports are forwarded as required prior to the placement.
- In the event of a serious event or a notifications, ensure the area Local Authority concerned is informed in writing of the notification including key Agencies which will include relevant consultation
- Ensuring any feedback concerning the performance of the Provider is shared with them as part of the review, support plan and monitoring process. In respect of a residential home, any concerns should also be shared with Contracts and in respect of a fostering matter with the Fostering Manager. Any concerns should be sent via email and should be forwarded promptly. It should be noted that the Head of Looked After Services should be copied into emails as well as the Administrative Co-ordinator within the Fostering Team and Contracts, as both have responsibilities within this area. This is important in the interests of safeguard.
- Ensuring the IRO is kept updated with any intended placement moves/ placement moves

**Note that Line Management will supervise the effective undertaking of the above duties.**

**Supervising Social Worker and Fostering Management responsibilities;**

- Undertaking Risk Assessments along with the SW.
- Liaising with the SW throughout the process reaching an agreement concerning an appropriate placement and providing any information requested for the External Placements Panel
- Liaising with LA' s with regard to their approved list of Fostering Providers in order to find a suitable resource.
- Furnishing information to other LA's when an approach is made concerning the approved list of fostering providers within the Borough of Gateshead and sharing any known information concerning Providers in the interests of safeguarding Children.
- Family finding from the approved list of contractors including accessing and reading form F's.
- Forwarding information concerning the Child and the Risk Assessment to Providers for their consideration for a placement (via Admin).
- Checking whether there are any concerns from any previous placements with the provider via the Administrative Co-ordinator for IFA placements, keeping Fostering Management informed in respect of any issues brought to their attention.

- Checking that all mandatory checks are in date and that the last FC review is available.
- In the event that there are concerns or issues raised from any of the above or from the checklist used within the Fostering Service, seeking further clarification such as asking for an additional review or a written statement. Management liaison and supervision is imperative throughout this process.
- In the event of placement choice having dialogue with the SW and Management to ensure the best match.
- In the event of risks posed, consulting with the SW and Management to agree management strategies and ensure that the placement is feasible and can provide adequate safeguards before it is deemed suitable.
- Checking that the views of the Child and where appropriate have been elicited during the process.
- In emergencies where either the **Service Director** or **Nominated Officer** has approved the external placement, advising the relevant Officer of the most suitable placement option for their agreement. They should explain how this will meet the needs of the Young Person and how any risks will be managed including how support will be afforded to the placement.
- Advising/Assisting in the arrangement of introductions before the final decision is made (in planned placements).
- Ensuring that the Business Support Fostering Administrator Coordinator who has responsibility for co-ordinating IFA placements is kept informed of developments throughout the process, however, the written formal notification to the Co-ordinator must come from the SW.
- Initiating the process where there has been an emergency and where there is intent for the Child to remain.

**Note that Line Management will supervise the undertaking of the above duties.**

**Director of Children’s Services Responsibilities;**

- To give written permission to the Nominated Officer in line with statutory guidance concerning their duties.
- To reach a decision concerning whether to seek a placement in a **distant** authority.
- To ensure that in such circumstances where a placement has been identified within a **distant** authority, that it is the most appropriate placement and that it can provide adequate safeguards and support/monitoring, including educational and health provision.
- To consider any concerns brought by the Nominated Officer relating to a Child placed in a **neighbouring** authority.
- To ensure that the Police, Education, Health and Local Authorities have been consulted with prior to a **distant** placement and act upon any concerns to ensure that any proposed placement is suitable.
- To oversee the responsibilities of the **Nominated Officer** as detailed below.
- To monitor that Looked After Children’s needs are being met who are placed by Gateshead in **distant** placements and that they continue to have adequate safeguards in place.

## **Nominated Officer Responsibilities;**

- In respect of both planned and emergency placements, to decide upon requests for Gateshead Looked After Young People to be placed within a **neighbouring** Local Authority in the event that there is no suitable in house resource and where this will involve a care related placement which is not an approved Foster Carer from Gateshead Council. This will also include gaining financial approval.
- To decide upon and give agreement to the suitability of **neighbouring** placements once a placement has been identified.
- To draw specific circumstances to the **Service Director** where there are identified concerns concerning proposed placements.
- To consult with the Local Authority of a **neighbouring** authority, and in high risk cases where the criteria is met the Police, as necessary, when considering placing or having a Gateshead Young Person placed in that area.
- To consult with the Police within Gateshead, as required, in the interests of Young People who are Looked After. The circumstances will include the following;
  - When it is proposed to place a Young Person within Gateshead borough by another Local Authority, where high levels of risk are identified, in line with the criteria for Police consultation, taking account of the Young Person's information including their Risk Assessment. This must happen prior to any Young Person moving to the placement.
  - When circumstances, depending upon their Risk Assessment change and risks increase.
- To receive consultation and notifications from **distant** and **neighbouring** authorities of a proposal to place a Child, consulting with relevant agencies and the Service Director as appropriate to enable the responsible authority to reach an informed view.
- To ensure that there is a system in place for undertaking the following;
  - Collating Care plans and written reports concerning prospective placements of Young People from both **distant** and **neighbouring** authorities.
  - Ensuring there is a system in place to notify that a Child is being/has been placed.
  - Ensuring that any broader issues relating to the safeguard of Children placed within Gateshead from external authorities has a multi-agency approach including perspectives from Health, the Police, Education etc.
  - Ensuring there is a system in place relating to receiving and acting upon Notifications of serious occurrences concerning Looked After Children who are placed from external Local Authorities and reside within the borough of Gateshead Council, consulting with the Police when the criteria is met.
  - Ensuring there is a system in place for informing/notifying Local Authorities of serious occurrences relating to a Gateshead Young Person who is placed within another Local Authority along with consultation with relevant Agencies, including the Police where the criteria is met. This will also include circumstances where there has not been any notifications but levels of risk have increased.
- Ensuring that the monitoring of placements made to external Local Authorities by Gateshead Council is undertaken safely and that audit supports this process.

## **Administrative Responsibilities;**

- To support the work of the Social Work Teams
  - Looked After
  - Referral and Assessment
  - Children's Disability
  - Fostering teams by undertaking the following;
  - Providing administrative support by forwarding information e.g. templates/ Risk Assessments, Care Plans and Appendix 1 External Placements Information to the relevant proposed provision or Local Authority/ Agency /Police upon request by the Social Worker when an external placement is being requested.
  - When a placement has been agreed, however, the responsible Child's Social Worker administrative team for placing the Child will forward notification letters of placement **prior** to the Child being placed (in a planned placement).
  - Following a request from the Child's Social Worker, their administrative team will share the report concerning the Care Plan i.e. **distant** authority. Note that in a **neighbouring** Local Authority, information concerning the needs of the Child will be forwarded as a minimum although the Care Plan should be updated/completed and follow shortly thereafter.
  - Sending notifications to health, education, Police and the Local Authority of any Child to be placed within its boundary.
  - Prompting Social Worker to ensure notifications are being progressed/advising management in the event of problems.
  - Receiving written communications from these agencies and ensuring that they are collated
  - Once information has been collated and the placement has been made, notification will be made via e mail to the Business Support Fostering Team Administrator of any fostering placements made in any **neighbouring** or **distant** authority so that this information can be collated on a broader level.
  - To forward notifications of serious occurrences to Local Authorities where a Gateshead Young Person is placed and other appropriate Agencies as directed by Social Workers and Management.

## **Additional Business Support Fostering Administrative Coordinator responsibilities;**

- Note the **Fostering Service** has a broader remit within this area by ;
  - Collating ALL notifications, fostering and residential, both from within Gateshead Council to external Local Authorities and Young People placed within Gateshead from other Local Authorities within the borough. This is in order to maintain an up to date register which is a legal requirement. This relates to both **neighbouring** and **distant** placements.
  - Logging any notifications of serious occurrences of Young People placed externally by Gateshead or Young People placed within Gateshead should they come to the notice of Gateshead Council and ensuring these have been sighted by management of the Fostering Service or the Head of Looked After Services.
  - Logging placement admissions and discharges from Care both by Gateshead and into Gateshead from other Local Authorities.
  - Receiving notifications from Children's Homes and Independent Fostering Services in terms of an admission or discharge from their provision.

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- Alerting the management in the event of any non-compliance with the Protocol/Policy.

**Note** the aforementioned will be undertaken by the Business Support Administrative Co-ordinator within the Fostering Service. This collation of this information is for monitoring purposes and it also ensures that the register of Children who are placed within Gateshead is kept up to date.

**The Business Support Manager/s will oversee that this area is running effectively and provide support within this area.**

#### **Independent Review Officer Responsibilities;**

- The IRO will be consulted with prior to the final decision to place the Child to enable them to discuss the proposed arrangements with the Child and their Parents (as appropriate ) and ensure that the Child's wishes and feelings have been taken into account in the decision making process. This relates to both **neighbouring** and **distant** placements.
- In the event of an emergency admission, whether **distant** or **neighbouring**, the IRO will be informed following the admission. If it is intended that the Young Person will remain within the placement, the IRO will undertake the aforementioned duties promptly and feed these back to the Social Worker so that this can be taken account of in the decision making process.
- In their daily duties, the IRO should ensure that elements of safeguard and support as identified within the Care Plan are of a good standard including the monitoring of the placement, also ensuring that the Police have been consulted when there is high level of risk and the criteria met.
- In the course of their duties, where the IRO becomes aware of significant concerns relating to a Child who is placed within Gateshead externally, in either a **distant** or a **neighbouring** placement and where there are safeguarding concerns, they should draw this to the attention of the **Service Director** or the **Nominated Officer** so that these concerns can be acted upon.

#### **Commissioning Service Responsibilities;**

- The Commissioning Service will ensure that the approved list of Providers, both residential and fostering is kept up to date.
- In the event of any concerns which have been notified regarding the provision, the Commissioning Service will advise relevant Staff so that placement with the provision can be reviewed.
- They will continuously review the quality of the Services provided by the provider agencies in line with Gateshead Council's Procedures, taking into account outcomes for Young People.
- They will maintain an up to date list of external placements from Gateshead Council, both **neighbouring** and **distant**.
- Ensuring quality assurance with regard to this area of work including adherence to Policy and process; timescales and quality of information/ systems developed by Gateshead Council with regard to this area of work.

## Appendix 4

### EXTERNAL PLACEMENTS MADE BY GATESHEAD COUNCIL

#### REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE

The Following Regulations and Guidance contain details relating to Out of Authority Placements

- Arrangements of Placement Regulations 1991
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Statutory Guidance March 2010
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Statutory Regulations March 2010
- Children's Homes and Looked After Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 and Children's Homes Regulations 2015.
- Supplement to the Children Act 1989. Volume 2 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2014

**It should be noted that this Policy complies with the legislation and guidance detailed above.**

**It should be noted that this Policy also reflects good practice guidance regarding Out of Area Children in Care Notifications in England from the ADCS. This relates to consulting with the Police in circumstances of high risk. The criteria when this should be undertaken is explained within the Policy.**

#### Key Terms

**Appropriate person** - is defined in Regulation 2 of the Care Planning Regulations 2010.

**Area authority** - The local authority for the area in which the Child is placed or is to be placed where this is different from the responsible authority.

**Connected person** - Regulation 24 of the Care Planning Regulations defines a connected person as a relative, friend or other person connected with the Child.

**Distant placement** - Regulation 11(5) as amended defines a **distant** placement as meaning " a placement outside the area of the responsible authority and not within the area of any adjoining local authority". **Distant** placements must be approved by the responsible authority's Service Director.

**Nominated Officer** - A senior officer of the responsible authority; nominated in writing by the Service Director, for the purposes of approving placement decisions made under the Care Planning Regulations.

**Placement Provider** - A Foster Carer; registered person for a Children's home; or the person responsible for the Child's accommodation where they are placed in other arrangements. Connected persons may also be placement providers, as are Parents, if the Child is placed under Part 4 , Chapter 1 of the care Planning Regulations.

**Placement out of the authorities area** - A placement out of the authority's 's area is one that is a placement in foster care, a Children's home, or in "other arrangements" located outside the boundary of the responsible authority. An Out of authority placement may be in an adjoining local authority's area or it may be a "**distant** placement".

**Responsible authority** - The local authority which looks after the Child.

## Appendix 5



Dear Director of Children's Services

**RE: SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PLACED IN GATESHEAD BY OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

Gateshead Council would like to notify you about the resources and facilities available to looked after children and young people who may be placed in Gateshead by your local authority.

This letter sets out the process to notify us if you are intending to place a looked after child or young person in Gateshead or when their placement arrangements change.

Information about a range of services for looked after children including our Virtual School for Children in Care and about accessing universal services and contact details for our Children in Care Council.

Please disseminate this information to relevant professionals within your Children's Service. We hope that this information will help your professional staff to understand and access the diverse universal services that are available to children and young people residing in Gateshead. It would be helpful if you also share this letter with your foster carers based in Gateshead so they are aware of the services available to children and young people.

**NOTIFICATIONS**

All notifications of looked after children placed in Gateshead should be sent through secure email to the Fostering Business Admin team on [FosteringAdminTeam@gateshead.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:FosteringAdminTeam@gateshead.gcsx.gov.uk).

Gateshead Council requires the relevant information about children and young people placed by other authorities to be provided on the form attached in Appendix A. Changes of address and notifications of looked after children leaving Gateshead should also be sent using the same process so we can update our records. Please ensure that notifications highlight any particular risks or vulnerabilities to assist the professional network within Gateshead to respond effectively to any issues that may arise. We may ask you to send a Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment so that we have a detailed understanding of the child's vulnerabilities. Gateshead will expect authorities to make necessary arrangements to undertake return interviews for their young in the event of any missing episodes. Gateshead will request these interviews are sent to the Gateshead through the email address above in a timely manner so that appropriate information is shared.

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## **REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT TEAM**

This team is a first point of contact for referrals to children's social care services for children who are in need of protection or support to live safely within their family. The social workers in referral and assessment carry out brief and more in-depth assessments of children who have been referred for services. A referral to the team can be made by anyone, including families, members of the public, or professionals such as GPs, health visitors etc. A duty system is in operation; referrers should call 0191 433 2653 or send a written referral to the address below.

The duty worker will ask for some information and may signpost to other services that can help or undertake an assessment to determine what support or interventions are needed.

For emergencies; outside office hours the contact number is (0191) 4770844.

## **ADVOCACY SERVICES**

Advocacy services for children and young people in Gateshead which are provided by the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS). The service provides:

- Advocacy for looked after children (referral by social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer, parent/carer or child/young person themselves)
- Advocacy for care leavers (referral by social worker, parent/carer or young person themselves)
- Advocacy for children and young people wishing to make a complaint (when a complaint is made the Complaints department will make a referral to the service)
- Advocacy for children and young people (aged 5+) subject to Child Protection proceedings (the child's social worker makes the referral as soon as a date for the child protection conference has been agreed)

Contact; telephone 0191 433 2647, [rights@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:rights@gateshead.gov.uk)

## **CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL, ONE VOICE**

The Children in Care Council meet once a month to ensure that the voice of looked after children and young people in Gateshead is heard. The group discuss the issues that might affect young people in care, to improve services for them and ensure that looked after young people have a voice and influence in any decisions that might affect them.

There are also other opportunities to attend events and meetings locally and across the country to ensure that the views of looked after children and young people are heard.

Contact ; Children in Care Council please contact Gateshead children's rights officer or email [pledge@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:pledge@gateshead.gov.uk) telephone 0191 433 2647.

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## CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Gateshead has children's centres located across the area offering families of 0-5 year olds a variety of services which are free to access. The main purpose of a children's centre is to provide support for parents, carers and their under 5's so that all children can be happy, healthy and achieve great things in life.

Services offered from centres do vary, but will include:

- Information about early years childcare in the centre or nearby
- Family support services
- Information, advice and support including parenting classes
- Easy access to child and family health services
- Stay and play sessions, messy play, Dad's groups, rhyme time sessions

More information about our children's centres can be found [www.Gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.Gateshead.gov.uk)

## EARLY YEARS SERVICES

Gateshead has information on its website [www.Gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.Gateshead.gov.uk):

- Parent and Toddler Groups
- Activities and leisure groups for 0 to 19 year olds
- National and local support services for health, education, financial, legal and family issues
- Schools and Education

Looked after children aged 2, 3 or 4 are entitled to 15 hours free childcare in:

- Day Nurseries or pre-schools eligible to claim the free entitlement
- Independent schools
- Local authority maintained nurseries within primary schools

Contact; [fis@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:fis@gateshead.gov.uk) telephone 0191 433 5118

## EDUCATION

Looked after and adopted children have priority in school admissions. Gateshead Schools Admission Service is based at the Dryden Centre in Gateshead. This service co-ordinates the admission process for children starting school for the first time and also the primary to secondary transfer process. The Service also deals with requests for transfer and will provide advice about admission appeals and the formal exclusion process. Their contact email is: [school.admissions@Gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@Gateshead.gov.uk)

The Virtual School Head teacher works collaboratively with respective colleagues in other local authorities and will support any school regarding looked after children and Young People on their roll who may be placed in Gateshead by another local

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authority. The Virtual School also supports adopted children and young people where support is requested by parents.

Each school in Gateshead has a Designated Teacher for looked after children and young people to promote the educational achievement of looked after children and young people who are on the school roll.

For more information, please contact the REALAC Virtual School team on (0191) 433 8523.

All schools, academies and colleges work in partnership and have a collective responsibility to ensure that all young people have access to the best possible learning opportunities so that they can attain good education outcomes.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

All children and young people living in Gateshead will have access to universal health services.

Children and young people aged 5-16 years can call in and see their School Nurse at their school. School Nurses support children, young people to improve. The service is provided by qualified nurses and support staff who are experienced in working with children and young people. School Nurses can help with many different health and emotional issues.

The health needs of looked after children and young people in Gateshead are monitored by our designated doctor and nurse who have a strategic and operational role in overseeing the health of all looked after children placed by Gateshead Council. The Gateshead LAC & YP Health Team can be contacted at (0191) 283 4566.

## **SEXUAL HEALTH**

Confidential sexual health service for young people which offers:

- follow up and signposting to other services you may need
- sexual health support and advice - contact Trinity Square Health Centre on (0191) 2831586

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROJECT**

Platform is a service for young people who need help with substance misuse.

Platform can help by:

- Supporting young people aged 18 and under who are using drugs and/or alcohol

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- Providing confidential one-to-one support sessions
- Meeting you at a convenient place
- Giving advice and information on drugs and alcohol and other helpful organisations
- Providing services for pregnant young women who are using drugs and/or alcohol
- Helping you get access to medical support
- Advising you on how to live healthier
- Helping young people understand the risks of taking drugs and alcohol
- Supporting young people and act on your behalf when talking to school/college/family
- Helping your family understand how they can help you
- Helping you access other support services

Platform contact: (0191) 460 10354 [www.platformgateshead.org.uk](http://www.platformgateshead.org.uk).

#### **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH**

Children and Young People Service (CYPS) provides assessment and treatment for serious mental health disturbances and their associated risks. Workers will consider how serious the mental health concerns are, how long they have been going on, and how much they affect the rest of the person's life.

Professionals can make a referral to child and adolescent mental health services using the Single Point of Access referral form which can be found at:

Prior to routine referral, referrers should agree funding from the placing authority's Clinical Commissioning Group. This will need to be confirmed before intervention can commence. If the mental health need is an emergency or urgent, CYPS will assess and meet immediate need and agree funding retrospectively; any further intervention will require confirmation of funding.

#### **INDEPENDENT VISITORS**

Independent Visitors are adult volunteers who provide independent, one to one support to Looked After young people in Gateshead.

Young people who are in care often experience a lot of disruption in their lives. An Independent Visitor is someone who can be a consistent figure in their lives, when there is no-one in their family who is able to take this role. An Independent Visitor is there to befriend a young person, offering them consistency, support, advice and encouragement throughout the time they are in care and often beyond this time. All those participating in the scheme take part on a voluntary basis.

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## **MISSING, SEXUALLY EXPLOITED AND TRAFFICKED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Gateshead Safeguarding Children Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that there is a coordinated, multi-agency response to the issues of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Missing, Exploited and Trafficked children and young people. Gateshead Safeguarding Board has a strategy in place and action plan, delivered by the Missing, Sexually Exploited and Trafficked group (MSET) sub group. The sub-group ensures a co-ordinated response to concerns or incidents of sexual exploitation, including identifying patterns, trends and areas where children and young people are at risk in Gateshead. This group is overseen by the Missing, Sexually Exploited and Trafficked group (MSET) strategic multi agency group. Gateshead has a dedicated police Missing Children Coordinator. All children who are reported as missing in Gateshead will have a Missing Return Interview (MRI) completed within 72 hours of returning home or to care as directed by national guidance.

The MSET group will share intelligence, map where the children at risk in Hampshire are, look for evidence of any organised or group exploitation and collectively take action to ensure that those children identified as being at risk, have plans and support put in place to address the concerns. For those at risk, Police and Children's Service will take all necessary steps to intervene and protect.

Any child who repeatedly goes missing should be considered as at possible risk of CSE and the necessary steps taken. If a child from another authority goes missing in Gateshead the responsibility to address this remains with the placing authority.

Information of our local safeguarding processes can be accessed by the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Board website at [www.gateshead.gov.uk/lscb/home.aspx](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/lscb/home.aspx)

## **SAFEGUARDING**

If a child you have placed in our area makes an allegation against a professional in Gateshead then the placing social work team should notify the Gateshead LADO. Contact

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY TEAM**

Where a looked after child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (or an Education Health and Care Plan from September 2014 onwards) the Special Educational Needs and Disability Team will coordinate the formal assessment process and maintain the Statement on behalf of the placing authority.

We also have a wide range of services available to provide help and support to children, their families and carers, schools and other professionals to ensure that all children and young people get the best education:

- Coordinate assessment for families and planning for services to meet their needs.

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- The Parent Partnership Service (PPS) provided by Action for Children is there to help all parents of children with Special Educational Needs. PPS supports parents and carers with free, impartial advice and information about their child's Special Educational Need (SEN).
- The Educational Psychology Service carry out work related to the development, learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties of children and young people.

Contact the SENIT Business Support Team on (0191) 433 3626 or [senteam@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:senteam@gateshead.gov.uk).

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Where a looked after child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an EHCP the Special Educational Needs Service will maintain the Statement/EHCP on behalf of the placing authority.

### **SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN**

Disabled Children works with Our Parent Forum and other voluntary groups and organisations to support and promote opportunities for all disabled children and their families in Gateshead.

Contact the Network of Children with Disabilities on (0191) 433 3619.

### **YOUTH OFFENDING**

Gateshead Youth Offending Team (YOT) works with young people aged 10 to 18 to prevent offending and re-offending. We work jointly with our partners to deal effectively with the causes of offending, to improve outcomes for young people and help them live crime free lives, as well as meet specific needs such as substance misuse, restorative justice, parenting programmes and accommodation support. We are committed to protecting the public by balancing the needs of children and young people with the rights of victims and the wider community.

This multi-agency approach allows the YOT to be responsive to local needs, and work with the services and plans of other agencies in Gateshead to address youth crime. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deliver programmes and projects that reduce offending by directly confronting young people who offend with the underlying causes of crime.

The Youth Offending Team can be contacted on 0191 433 4584

### **YOUTH SERVICES**

Youth Services such as Connexions and Gateshead Youth Council provide children and young people aged 11-18 with a diverse range of educational positive activities, accredited learning programmes, specialist facilities and mentoring support. Youth workers offer an educational service that means young people gain nationally

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recognised awards and qualifications; improve life, social and vocational skills; get personal support to strengthen protective factors.

Contact Connexions on (0191) 433 2785

Yours sincerely,

David Bunce  
Strategic Director  
Care, Wellbeing and Learning

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