

MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT GUIDANCE

Ensuring effective case management and decision-making

1. Team Manager (TM) Oversight

Team Managers provide direct, day-to-day oversight of social workers/Youth Justice workers and case management, typically updating the electronic record at least every 4 weeks. Records should provide a clear account of work undertaken, including discussions held that support and lead to decision-making.

The Manager records their 'oversight' of the case via a case note under the heading 'Management Oversight'. This is distinct from 'Management Decision' and 'Supervision'.

When to Add a Management Oversight Case Note:

The child or young person's records should evidence their journey and provide a clear explanation for decisions made. Should the child or young person request access to their records, they should be able to see the work being undertaken, the direction and oversight of the manager, and understand the decisions made.

- **Supervision Case Note:** Relates specifically to an organised supervision session.
- **Management Decision Case Note:** Provides the Manager with the opportunity to clearly record a decision that impacts the direction of work or plan for the child or young person.
- **Management Oversight Case Note:** Evidences that the Manager has knowledge of the child or young person and is involved in case management by giving direction and reviewing records.

The following examples of when a Case Note should be added by the Manager are not exhaustive but should clarify and support staff in understanding why the information is required.

Key Triggers for AP Oversight:

- All the below if covering for the Team Manager.
- FSW and DAP supervision.
- Peer reflective supervision.

Key Triggers for TM Oversight:

- **Referral & Triage:** A new contact/referral, to approve the decision (e.g., NFA, Child in Need assessment).

- **Case Allocation:** Immediate oversight on any urgent cases, or within 1 days of a new case being allocated.
- **Assessment Completion:** Reviewing and signing off Child & Family Assessments (Section 17 or Section 47) and any other assessments.
- **Pre-Review/Conference:** Review of case prior to a LAC Review or Child Protection Conference where the Manager wishes to convey the progress of work or indicate to the Reviewing Officer that the case is ready for the meeting. This may also relate to supporting a recommendation, for example, to de-plan a child from the Child Protection Plan.
- **Child in Need (CiN) / Core Groups:** Monthly review of CIN and CP plans.
- **Strategy Discussion:** When a strategy discussion is required and the safety plan around the risk, then the actions from the strategy meeting.
- **Significant Incidents:** Immediately upon notification of any incident representing a risk of significant harm, to authorise protective actions.
- **Court Reports:** Review of formal report for Court or other such forum, where authorization has been requested.
- **Informal Discussion:** Informal discussion with the SW/YJS worker regarding an issue which has arisen and where advice or direction has been given to the allocated worker.
- **Supervision:** Documenting decisions made during formal supervision sessions.
- **Audit:** Where a manager is undertaking an audit of the case records, it is good practice to add a Management Oversight Case Note to evidence that this has been completed and identify any immediate actions that are required.
- **Entry into Care:** Clear understanding of why this decision was made and the plan to be recorded if a decision is made outside of the Legal Gateway.

2. Service Manager (SM) / Head of Service (HOS) Oversight - Depending on service

Service Managers provide strategic oversight for complex cases and ensure compliance with quality assurance standards. Head of Service oversight focuses on quality assurance, high-level risk, and strategic decisions.

Key Triggers for SM Oversight: (written in green) IRO/CP chair oversight to be written in green

- **High-Risk Cases:** Regular review of cases involving complex risk, such as suspected fabricated illness etc.
- **Permanence Tracking:** Chairing permanence tracking meetings for children looked after to prevent drift. Also before the second review for all cared for children.
- **Case Tracking:** Tracking at key points in the child's journey e.g., 9-month CP plans, 6-month CIN planning pre-proceedings, pre-birth panel.
- **Repeat CP Planning:** Any child being presented to ICPC again within 9 months.
- **End CP Planning:** When a child/ren are stepping down from CP planning after 3 months.
- **Pre-Proceedings/Court:** Reviewing cases before attending Legal Gateway.
- **Complaint Resolution:** Overseeing the resolution of formal complaints made by families.
- **Entry into Care:** Clear understanding of why this decision was made and the plan to be recorded if a decision is made outside of the Legal Gateway.

- **Final Child Planning:** When the decision around the final care plan for a child is being made.
- **Agree a Placement Move:** A clear understanding of the decision and rationale for the move and the plan.

Key Triggers for HOS Oversight: (written in blue)

- **Serious Incidents/Rapid Reviews:** Notification and review of cases involving the death or serious harm of a child.
- **High-Cost Packages:** Authorizing high-cost placements or bespoke, high-needs care packages.
- **Complex Litigation:** Direct involvement in cases requiring High Court action or complex secure accommodation orders.
- **Strategic Audits:** Reviewing audit findings across the service to monitor performance and identify themes.
- **Inadequate Audits:** When an audit is inadequate, determining the plan of work to improve the child's plan and file.
- **Agree Child on Care Order Return to Live with Parents:** Agreement for a child on a care order to return to live with parents, and follow the PWP guidance.

Unregistered Placements: Use and monitoring of unregistered placements – everyone to follow the separate guidance on this.

Content Considerations for All Oversight Levels

When recording oversight, the question of the **impact on the child** must always be considered and recorded. When making and recording management decisions, oversight should clearly evidence how and why the decision will impact the child, how it is expected to improve outcomes, and what contingency actions will be taken if there is no positive change. This could be included in the analysis section of the case note.

Actions should be clear and child-focused, written with a rationale included. NB: Consider who else should be alerted to the case note, for example, FIW or PA.