



Forth Valley Multi-agency Child's Plan Transfer Guidance

Transfer of Responsibility for a Child's Plan or a Child Protection Plan between Local Authorities

Version	Date	Author	Date Review Due	Changes/comments
1.0	06.11.2020	FV Policies, Procedures and Protocols Group		First Draft
1.1	04.03.2021	FV Policies, Procedures and Protocols Group		Reviewed Updated Draft
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This guidance aims to provide a best practice model for the transfer of a child's case between local authorities. It is intended to be applied in situations where a family, who are being supported by one local authority area, become permanently resident in another area, and there needs to be a transfer of Lead Professional responsibility for the Child's Plan or Child Protection Plan. It would not apply where a child becomes permanently resident in another area through living in a substitute family or in a care setting whilst the family's home address remains in the original local authority area.
- 1.2 Every child in Scotland should have a standard of service that ensures they can access early support, have their wellbeing safeguarded and have protection from significant harm. The getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach underpins both preventative and child protection processes.
- 1.3 When a child moves from one local authority area to another in Forth Valley or beyond, there is an expectation that a transfer of GIRFEC and child protection services between partner agencies should not create a gap in service provision or result in an increase in risk or vulnerability. These geographical moves may be at a time of accentuated stress and risk for children and families, and multi-agency standards must be clear to ensure proper transfer of information and responsibilities when a Child's Plan or a Child Protection Plan is currently in place. There have been examples of practice that have led to uncertainty around roles or disagreement between local authorities over how transfers have been managed. This guidance aims to address this situation although acknowledges complexities can occur in the transfer of legal orders.
- 1.4 The key principle to transferring a Child's Plan or Child Protection Plan and the Lead Professional's case management responsibilities is that **the safety and welfare of the child is paramount.** To achieve this, it is essential to:
- Avoid Delay. Transfers and associated communications should be timely, ensuring that children and families receive support with no gap in service provision. Delays can result in children not being effectively safeguarded, families reaching crisis point and children waiting longer than is necessary to achieve permanence. There must be no delay in any necessary immediate protective action to ensure the safety of the child pending the outcome of any disputed resolution process. All agencies have a collective responsibility to promote effective case transfers for children to avoid drift and delay for the child and their family.
- Share information relating to assessment of risk and need. It is essential that
 the assessment and plans are up to date and are shared to provide a clear analysis
 of needs and risks relating to the child and family. All agencies/services have
 responsibility for promoting and creating positive communication and information
 sharing within and across other Local Authority areas in respect of the Child's Plan
 or Child Protection Plan.

- Hold a Transfer Meeting. This meeting will be particularly important in providing
 an opportunity to put detail to the transfer arrangements, discuss issues such as
 current or previous child protection concerns and consider services and support.
 These meetings may take different forms depending on the situation: an initial
 Transfer of the Case meeting between professionals, a Team Around the Child
 Meeting or a Transfer Case Conference. They should assist in getting to know the
 child, the parents or the wider family.
 - 1.5 It is the expectation that when a decision is made to transfer case management responsibilities to another local authority, a number of factors will be considered:
 - The current level of needs and risks assessed for the child and wider family
 - The geographical location of the child and the distance required by the Lead Professional and local services to assess/support
 - Does the family home remain in the original local authority area?
 - Is the family currently in crisis and requiring immediate intervention?

2. TRANSFER OF A CHILD'S PLAN IN FORTH VALLEY WHERE THE SOCIAL WORKER IS LEAD PROFESSIONAL

- 2.1 This is applicable for children who have a social worker as lead professional and a child's plan, including Looked After Children.
- 2.2 Before a child moves to another area within Forth Valley, the Social Worker, as Lead Professional, will discuss the intended move with the parent and the child depending on their age. The child and family's experience, views and needs should be part of these discussions.
- 2.3 Discussion must take place with the Team Around the Child and between the allocated Social Worker who is the Lead Professional and their Manager/ Team Leader to agree whether to request a transfer of Lead Professional responsibilities to the receiving Local Authority Social Work Service. The expectation is that the Team Around the Child will have an understanding of the child's needs and risks and will communicate their view on whether a transfer is required or not.
- 2.4 Where the decision is made not to request a transfer, the Social Worker as Lead Professional must still notify, in writing, the child's new Named Person to make them aware of the proposed or actual move. They will share information about any previous child protection intervention or if the child has been looked after.
- 2.5 Where a child requires a continuing Child's Plan and the co-ordinating role of a Lead Professional, the receiving Social Work Service will be written to by the Children & Families Social Work Team Manager/Leader requesting that a Transfer meeting takes place within 28 days to formally review the current assessment ,chronology and action plan and make the necessary transfer arrangements.
- 2.6 A copy of the last Child's Plan (assessment and action plan) will be sent by the Page | 3

current allocated Social Worker as Lead Professional to the receiving Social Work locality. If the last Child's Plan was written more than 3 months prior to the move, an updated assessment will be completed by the originating Local Authority. This crucial assessment will be shared with the receiving Local Authority at least 1 week prior to the Transfer meeting. Best practice for the Transfer meeting is that it follows within 28 days of making the transfer request.

- 2.7 The receiving Local Authority Team Manager will write back to the originating Local authority within 2 weeks confirming an in-principle decision to accept transfer of responsibility for the Child's Plan and both Team Managers/Leaders should agree a date for the Transfer meeting within the 28 day timescale.
- 2.8 The Transfer meeting for a Child's Plan will;
- Consist of the current Social Work Team Manager/Leader and the receiving Social Work Team Manager/Leader as a minimum and may include the current Social Worker/ Lead Professional and the newly identified Social Worker/ Lead Professional. It could also be a wider Team Around the Child Meeting if that was considered timely and appropriate.
- Clearly identify the needs of the child and concerns around risk.
- Identify actions to facilitate the transfer and ensure there are no gaps in the assessment and protection of the child.
- If services have found it hard to engage with the family, this should be explored. Terms such as 'non-engagement', 'resistance' and 'disguised compliance' need to be understood. Effective co-operation can fail at any point, sometimes rapidly and anticipating predictable cycles of stress may be part of planning the transfer. Best practice is always to consider what impact a closure of a service has on a child and to recognise their rights to help when they're looking for it. It's important to have a shared sense of purpose in relation to what needs to change for the child.
- Agree the transfer of key electronic/paper documents for the child.
- Be recorded with salient points and agreed actions. This should be undertaken by the originating Social Work Team and included on the child's file in both Local Authority areas.
- If the child is subject to a compulsory supervision order, the Children's Reporter must be notified of the agreement to transfer Lead Professional responsibilities by both Local authorities and a Children's Hearing Review requested to formally transfer host arrangements for the Statutory Order.
- 2.9 Once transfer has been agreed, formal transfer to the new Social Work Service should take place no longer than 2 weeks from the date of the Transfer meeting unless an alternative transfer point has been agreed such as a Children's Hearing and provided this is within 28 days.
- 2.10 Prior to the formal transfer date, the new Social Worker/ Lead Professional and current worker should plan introductions to the family and other involved practitioners in the Team Around the Child. They should also write to them all confirming Lead Professional transfer has taken place.
- 2.11 The original Named Person from either Health or Education will be advised that they should arrange their respective information sharing and transfer of Named Person responsibilities to the new named person in the receiving local authority. The new

named person should attend the transfer meeting.

- 2.12 Where the decision is made not to request a transfer, the Social Worker as Lead Professional must still notify, in writing, the child's new Named Person to make them aware of the proposed or actual move. They will share information about any previous child protection intervention or if the child has been looked after.
- 2.13 If a child is subject to a compulsory supervision order (CSO) the Children's Reporter must be notified immediately. The implementing authority will remain the responsible authority until transfer is agreed.
- 2.14 There may be circumstances where a transfer should not be undertaken as outlined above, or circumstances where there is a need for both Local Authorities to work closely together and share information effectively to reach a timely and informed transfer decision. This may include situations where:
- A Child Protection Investigation or Inter-agency Referral Discussion has just commenced.
- The original Local Authority are supporting the child/ren who live at home and the parent is pregnant. The original Social Worker/ Lead Professional should undertake the pre-birth assessment due to their knowledge and current contact with the family. This allows a trauma informed approach, prevents multiple change-over of workers and minimises potential legal complexities for older children subject to permanence planning. Once the Forth Valley pre-birth assessment has been written, this will determine whether to proceed to a transfer or not and it will contain a clear recommendation.
- The original Local Authority are supporting child/ren who are looked after away from home and the parent is pregnant. If the child/ren are subject to permanency planning, a Transfer should not proceed until a permanence decision has been agreed at a review.

Figure 1: Transfer Pathway Transfer of a Child's Plan within Forth Valley where a Social Worker is Lead Professional Timeline **Multi-Agency Guidance** Checklist Planning A child with a Child's Plan Original social Original social worker Clarify and confirm and is moving between worker gathers decision discusses the child's intended move with Clackmannanshire, parent/carer E.g. registered with GP/ information and needs and risks with their to Stirling, Falkirk and the discusses the manager and the team transfer parent/carer intends the move with the around the child Education, has new is made family's move to be child, parent/carer tenancy agreement before permanent family's move Ensure safety measures/child and no Does the situation require protection interventions later an immediate response to If the child is subject to a are instigated if required than 14 protect the child? compulsory supervision order, davs If so, the original Local the Children's Reporter must be Talk to parent/carer and from a The social worker notifies. in Authority follows its child sudden informed immediately. The child about the decision writing, the child's new Named protection procedures move to request a transfer or mplementing Local Authority will remain the responsible Local Person that they have moved into their area and the reason for not not Authority until transfer is agreed requesting a transfer. They share information about any previous Ensure previous history child protection intervention and if of child protection Is the child the child has been looked after. investigations, YES requiring a Child's plan They let the child, parent/ carer registrations or NO case transfer? know that they are doing this. becoming looked after are explicitly shared with Child's receiving Named Person Social worker/ team manager lets the child, parent/carer know that they are requesting a transfer of social Child's worker/ Lead Professional Plan shared Ensure the Child's plan Team manager writes to the receiving Local Authority team manager to notify them of the move and request minimum 7 days a transfer meeting of the case action plan) has been prior to updated and shared . Transfer Has the Child's Plan been updated within the last 3 months? with receiving Local Meeting Authority Ensure previous If Yes, social worker/ team manager sends the Child's Plan (assessment and action plan) to the receiving history of child Local Authority social work team manager protection registration, investigation or becoming looked after If No, social worker/ team manager updates the Child's Plan (assessment and action plan) and send it to the are explicitly shared Transfer receiving Local Authority social work team manager meetina held within 28 days of The receiving Local Authority social work team manager writes back to the originating team manager within 2 notification weeks confirming an in-principle decision to accept transfer of responsibility for the Child's Plan and both of move managers agree a date for a transfer meeting Escalate to Service Managers where an The receiving Local Authority team manager identifies a social worker to become Lead Professional agreement cannot be reached or there is a delay Consider effective Transfer meeting for Child's Plan takes place, the new social worker and named person should attend communication and partnership as a matter of relationships and Both social work team managers record actions identified to facilitate the transfer and ensure there are no build these early gaps in the assessment and protection of the child Formal Receiving social worker and original social worker plan and undertake introductions to the child and transfer parent/carer concluded within 14 days of Original social worker writes to the original team around the child to confirm the transfer has taken place Transfer and the Named Person follows their agency procedure to notify the receiving Named Person meeting

3. TRANSFER OF A CHILD'S PLAN OUT OF FORTH VALLEY WHERE THE SOCIAL WORKER IS LEAD PROFESSIONAL

3.1 The Transfer process above (see Figure 1) should also be initiated for a child moving permanently into or out of Forth Valley, where they have an existing Child's Plan co-ordinated by Social Work.

4. TRANSFER OF A CHILD'S PLAN IN OR OUT OF FORTH VALLEY WHERE THE LEAD PROFESSIONAL IS FROM UNIVERSAL SERVICES OR ANOTHER SERVICE AND IS NOT FROM SOCIAL WORK

- 4.1 This is applicable for children who have a plan and the lead professional is not a social worker. The lead professional may be from any of the services providing support to meet the child's wellbeing needs and reduce risks i.e. health visitor, teacher, early years officer, family support service. For a child with complex physical or mental health needs, a specific medical specialist may take the co-ordinating role. Regardless of their organisation, it is the Lead Professional's role is to make sure the child is supported through their transition to another area.
- 4.2 Before a child moves to another area in or outwith Forth Valley, the Lead Professional will discuss the intended move with the parent/carer and the child depending on their age. The child and families experience, views and needs should be part of these discussions.
- 4.3 Discussion must take place between the Lead Professional, the Named Person (if a different person), other members of the Team Around the Child and relevant Managers to agree whether to request a transfer of Lead Professional responsibilities to the receiving Local Authority. At this stage it may not be clear who the new Lead Professional should be and the transfer request should be made to the receiving Named Person as soon as they are identified or the request should be escalated to an appropriate Service Lead if there is a delay.

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4.4 Who is the Named Person?

Age of Child	Named Person	
Pre-birth, usually until 10-14 days old	Midwife	
Birth until child starts school	Health Visitor or Family Nurse Practitioner	
Primary school pupils	Primary Head Teacher or nominated promoted member of staff	
Secondary school pupils	Guidance Teacher	
Gypsy Traveller and home educated children	Interrupted Learners Service within Falkirk Council Children's Services	
School leaver until 18 years old	Interrupted Learners Service within Falkirk Council Children's Services	
Children Looked After and accommodated/educated out with the Falkirk area OR Children placed within Falkirk from a different local authority	The lead professional will have the coordinating role, but the child will also have a named person who will be a key contact person from the local authority area where they live/go to school. There will also be close liaison with the original local authority named person/ lead professional.	
Young person serving a custodial sentence	Representative from Scottish Prison Service	

- 4.5 Where a child does not require the continuation of a Child's Plan and where the decision is made not to request a Child's Plan transfer, the Lead Professional must still notify, in writing, the child's new Named Person to make them aware of the proposed or actual move. They will share information about any previous child protection intervention or if the child has been looked after.
- 4.6 Where a child requires a continuing Child's plan and the co-ordinating role of a Lead Professional, the receiving Named Person will be written to by the Lead Professional requesting that a Transfer meeting takes place between them within 28 days to formally share the current assessment ,chronology and action plan and make the necessary transfer arrangements.
- 4.7 A copy of the last Child's Plan (assessment and action plan) will be sent by the current Lead Professional to the receiving Named Person. If the last Child's Plan was written more than 3 months prior to the move, an updated assessment will be completed by the originating Local Authority. This crucial assessment will be shared with the receiving Local Authority at least 1 week prior to the Transfer meeting. Best practice for the Transfer meeting is that it follows within 28 days of making the transfer request.
- 4.8 The receiving Local Authority Named Person will write back to the originating Local authority Lead Professional within 2 weeks confirming they accept transfer of responsibility for the Child's Plan and both individuals should agree a date for the Transfer meeting.
- 4.9 The Transfer meeting for a Child's Plan will:
 - Consist of the current Lead Professional and the receiving Named Person. It could also be a wider Team Around the Child Meeting if that was considered timely and appropriate.
- Clearly identify the needs of the child and concerns around risk
- Identify actions to facilitate the transfer and ensure there are no gaps in the assessment and protection of the child
- If services have found it hard to engage with the family, this should be explored. Terms such as 'non-engagement', 'resistance' and 'disguised compliance' need to be understood. Effective co-operation can fail at any point, sometimes rapidly and anticipating predictable cycles of stress may be part of planning the transfer. Best practice is always to consider what impact a closure of a service has on a child and to recognise their rights to help when they're looking for it. It's important to have a shared sense of purpose in relation to what needs to change for the child.
- Agree the transfer of key electronic/paper documents for the child.
- Be recorded. A note of the meeting must take place, with salient points and agreed actions. This should be undertaken by the originating Lead Professional and be recorded in both Local Authority areas files.
- 4.10 Once transfer has been agreed, formal transfer to the new Named Person

shouldtake place no longer than 2 weeks from the date of the Transfer meeting.

- 4.11 Prior to the formal transfer date, the new Named Person and original Lead Professional should plan introductions to the family. They should also write to original Team around the Child members confirming a Child's Plan transfer has taken place.
- 4.12 The new Named Person will take responsibility for arranging a Team Around the Child Meeting, if this was not part of the Transfer meeting.

Figure 2: Transfer Pathway Transfer of a Child's Plan where the Lead Professional is from Universal Services or another Service and is not a Social Worker **Timeline Multi-Agency Guidance** Checklist Planning A child with a Child's Plan Lead Professional Clarify details of and Lead Professional is going to move to gathers decision intended move with discusses the child's another Local Authority information and parent/carer to needs and risks with the and their parent/ carer discusses the transfer team around the child and intends the family's move move with the Ensure safety is made their line manager where before to be permanent child, parent/carer measures/child appropriate protection interventions family's move are instigated if required and no Does the situation require Talk to parent/carer and later than 14 an immediate response to child about the decision protect the child? days to request a transfer or from a If so, the original Local sudden Authority follows its child The Lead Professional notifies, in move protection procedures Ensure previous history writing, the child's new Named of child protection Person that they have moved into investigations. their area and the reason for not registrations or requesting a transfer. They share becoming looked after information about any previous child protection intervention or if are explicitly shared with Is the child child's receiving Named YES NO requiring a Child's plan the child has been looked after. Person transfer? They let the child, parent/carer know that they are doing this. Lead Professional lets the child, parent/carer know that they are requesting a transfer to another Lead Ensure the Child's plan (assessment and action plan) is recent Lead Professional writes to the receiving Local Authority Named Person to notify them of the move and and shared with Child's request a transfer meeting for the Child's Plan receiving Local Plan Authority Named shared Person minimum Has the Child's Plan been updated within the last 3 months? 7 days Ensure previous history prior to of child protection Transfer registration. Meeting If Yes, Lead Professional sends the Child's Plan (assessment and action plan) to the receiving Local investigation or Authority Named Person becoming looked after are explicitly shared If No, Lead Professional updates the Child's Plan (assessment and action plan) and sends it to the receiving Local Authority Named Person Transfer meeting Escalate to Service held within The receiving Named Person writes back to the original Lead Professional within 2 weeks confirming Managers where an 28 days transfer of responsibility for the Child's Plan and both agree a date for the transfer meeting agreement cannot be reached or there is a notification delay of move Transfer Meeting for Child's Plan takes place Consider effective Both the receiving Named Person and the original Lead Professional record actions identified to facilitate communication and the transfer and ensure there are no gaps in the assessment and protection of the child. A new Lead partnership as a matter Formal Professional is identified of relationships and transfer build these early concluded within 14 Receiving Named Person and original Lead Professional plan introductions to the child and parent/carer davs of transfer meeting Original Lead Professional writes to original team around the child to confirm the transfer has taken place

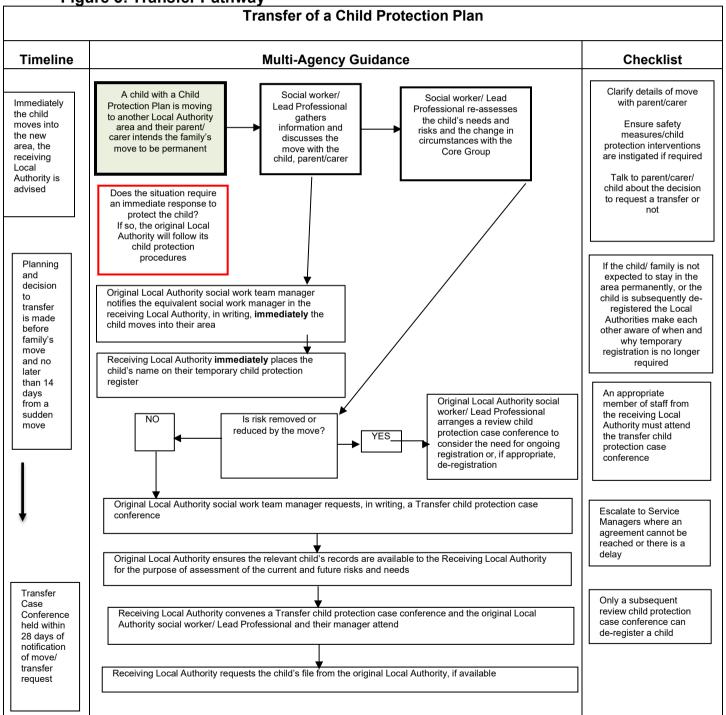
5. TRANSFER OF A CHILD ON THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

5.1 When it's known that a child with a Child Protection Plan and their family are

moving permanently to another Local Authority area, the original Local Authority will notify the receiving Local Authority immediately, in writing. The original Local Authority must assess the change in circumstances. If there is felt to be a reduction in risk, the original Local Authority should arrange a review child protection case conference to consider the need for ongoing registration or, if appropriate de-registration. In such circumstances it would be best practice for an appropriate member of staff from the receiving authority to attend the review. Where the original authority considers that the risk is ongoing or even increased by the move, the receiving Local Authority is responsible for convening the transfer child protection case conference.

The process for these types of transfer is outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Transfer Pathway



6. RESOLVING DISAGREEMENT

6.1 It is the expectation that when a decision is made to transfer Lead Professional responsibilities, a quick resolution is concluded around any disagreement. Under these circumstances the Lead Professional and their manager should follow Forth Valley Guidance for Escalation.

https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/fa/public/GirfecFalkirk/uploads/sites/2017/2021/02/16113824/FV-Multi-agency-Guidance-for-Escalation-09.11.2020.docx