

London Borough of Havering (LBH) - Permanency Planning Process and family finding for children updated January 2015 - to be read in conjunction with LBH permanency strategy

- i. **Introduction – all referrals for PPMs are sent to admin@havering.gov.uk . There is not a referral form. Requests for a PPM are made by email providing the child's details**

Children under 8 years old. The LBH permanency strategy states that adoption will be the care plan / parallel plan for all children aged 8 and younger. For several of these children there will be a connected adult family member who applies for a special guardianship order (SGO) and if this is successful, this will be the route to secure the child's permanency. PPM's are still held on these cases. A team or service manager is responsible for coordinating and chairing all the permanency planning meetings (PPM's) for children in this age band. The chair will be determined according to demands in the service

Children under 14 years old. The fostering deputy team manager and fostering manager are responsible for coordinating and chairing all the PPM's for children in this age band. As a way of securing permanency the care plan for older children will usually be long term fostering. For several of these children there will be a connected adult family member who applies for a special guardianship order (SGO) and if this is successful this will be the route to secure the child's permanency

PROCEDURE TO ARRANGE PPM's

- ii. Following the Child's first looked after review (week 6 at the latest) when it is apparent that a child is going to remain looked after for a further period of time, all children need to be referred by their Social Worker to the PPM administrator via the generic admin email address as above. They coordinate, minute and upload to the child's file all PPMs meetings. For some children it may be appropriate to refer them at an earlier stage and this decision will be made at the Looked After Children's Panel
- iii. PPMs are held on a fixed day each week. The PPM will be arranged asap on receipt of a referral email
- iv. Attendance at PPM's children 8 and under - The child's social worker, the social work manager, a Service Manager (Chair under 8's), child's foster carer, the fostering supervising social worker (SSW) the adoption team or deputy team manager, the family finding social worker once allocated. Other professionals from the Team around the Looked after Child should attend as required. When the case concerns a child living with a connected person the chair will decide if it is appropriate to invite the carers to the PPM
- v. Attendance at PPM's children 8 -13 as above, except the fostering team or deputy manager chair and adoption service is only present when there is a SGO application because they will lead on the assessment.
- vi. PPM's follow a fixed agenda. The purpose of the meetings is to establish the child's permanence plan and agree the preparation that is required and by who, to achieve this plan in as short a timescale as possible. The timescale for review PPMs will be determined by the circumstances of the case and review meetings scheduled at the PPM.

FAMILY FINDING ADOPTION AND LONG TERM FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS FOR CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS

- vii. Family Finding meetings are the next stage in achieving a child permanence plan and the PPM meeting moves into the stage of a Family Finding meeting once relevant court orders are achieved , although some preliminary family finding activity will have taken place in advance of achieving a court order so that delay so minimised . In almost every case it will be necessary to obtain a court order to realise a permanency plan, when a child is not returning to the care of their parent/s
- viii. A Family Finding social worker will be allocated from the adoption or fostering service as soon as any family finding work can begin. It is usual that they will be required to prepare a family finding statement to support the final court hearing, so allocation will take place to allow time for this.
- ix. Adoption cases. Once a care order and placement order have been granted the chairing for family finding meetings will transfer and be the responsibility of the adoption and permanence team manager .This is the second stage of the PPM process
- x. For children over 8 years old, the family finding meeting will continue to be chaired by the fostering service through the family finding and matching stages
- xi. The Adoption Team Manager and Fostering Manager maintain a tracker of all cases subject to the Permanency Planning Process and provide monthly reports to the Adoption and Fostering Service Manager.
- xii. Family finding meetings will be held until the permanency arrangements for the child are secured.

MATCHING CHILDREN WITH PERMANENT FAMILIES

- xiii. The family finding process will conclude with a formal matching meeting which identifies why a family is suitable to be matched with a child. The recommendation of the matching meeting is presented to the independent Fostering and Adoption Panel in Havering for all children under 14 and providing this recommendation is endorsed by the agency decision maker then the family finding process is completed.
- xiv. It is also completed when a child is secured through the granting of a SGO or CAO
- xv. For older children an alternative PPM and matching process is followed

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