

London Borough of Havering Placement Stability Meeting Process

It is the responsibility of all social work staff to recognise and report to their line manager any concerns about placement stability so that a meeting can be convened to address issues as soon as possible.

A Placement Stability Meeting will be called when the placement of a child in foster care, residential or a semi-independence placement is considered to be at risk of disrupting.

This could be if:

- Concern is raised through the child's, foster carer's or units review process.
- Where an allegation or complaint has been made.
- The child or young person is absconding or being absent from placement on a regular basis.
- Where there is relationship fragility of the placement because the relationship between the child, foster carer or provider gives cause for concern that the placement may breakdown
- The child or young person has made it known that they want the placement to end.
- The carer(s) / providers have expressed concerns that they are experiencing difficulties or that they feel they can no longer care for the child or young person.
- The child or young person's social worker or other professionals raise concern that the placement does not meet the needs of the child or young person.

It is the aim of the Fostering and Placements Service, in collaboration with the child's social work team, to make every effort to prevent the disruption of a placement (when this is assessed to be in the best interests of the child).

Where it appears that a placement is unstable, every effort will be made to resolve the presenting difficulties. This will be in the form of added support with the aim of addressing the issues of concern. In many cases, this will be sufficient to resolve the presenting difficulties, but a placement stability meeting should be held if this isn't sufficient to make lasting change. The Fostering Service and Placement Service (when an independent fostering placement, residential unit or semi-independent placement) are responsible for coordinating a placement stability meeting in collaboration with the Child's Social Worker.

The aim of the meeting will be to hear from all parties involved in the placement to increase and share an understanding of the areas of difficulty and try to find ways to reduce the risk of breakdown and to improve the quality of the placement.

The Placement Stability Meeting will usually include the child and young person. Occasionally it might be decided to hold the meeting in two parts to have some discussion between the adults first and then include the child. This will be an exception and the reasons for this need to be documented

Attendees

- Child/ Young Person
- Child's social worker
- Foster carer(s)/key worker/provider
- Supervising social worker
- Fostering Manager
- Other relevant professionals
- Advocate for the Young person where appropriate

The meeting needs to be chaired by a Havering manager; the children's social work manager when an IFA placement, the Fostering Manager for Havering foster care placements.

Minutes should be taken by an allocated LBH minute taker.

A review must be booked at the time of the meeting. In some situations it may be that a series of placement stability meetings are held to review progress and take small steps to bring about positive and lasting change. There will be times when it may be necessary to facilitate and manage a planned ending of a placement.

Please note

- If it is recommended that extra external services (i.e. those with a cost implication) are needed, the child's social worker needs to present this to the Commissioning Panel first to seek agreement for funding.
- Where the decision of the meeting is that the placement will end in a planned way, for external resources, it is necessary for LBR to give notice to external providers and the Placements Service must be notified of this immediately(if they have not been at the meeting when this was agreed)

Disruption Meetings.

A disruption meeting is held when a permanent placement disrupts. This is held at least six weeks after the end of the placement and is chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer or similar person, who has not previously been involved in the case. The aim of this meeting is to reflect on the history of the placement and see what lessons can be learnt from all those involved and when possible seek some resolution between the parties.