

1.4.1 Emergency Placement/Same Day and Emergency Reviews

Regulations and Standards

England

- Regulation 6: The Quality and Purpose of Care Standard
- Regulation 14: The Care Planning Standard
- Regulation 17: Placement plan for looked after child

Wales:

- Regulation 14: Suitability of the service
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/14/made>
- Regulation 15: Personal plan
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/15/made>
- Regulation 18: Provider assessment
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/18/made>

Scope of this Chapter

This chapter covers the requirement for emergency placements and reviews.

Relevant Chapters

For planned placements please see: **Referrals and Placements Procedures**

For non-emergency reviews please see: **Looked After Reviews Procedure**

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1. Emergency Placement Definition

An emergency placement occurs when a placement for a child becomes necessary without any forewarning. Situations when a placement must be arranged urgently to ensure the safety and welfare of a child include:

- To protect a child from sexual exploitation or gang involvement;
- When a placement is made out of hours by the emergency duty team; or

- When a placement must be made immediately (on the same day) because of the breakdown of the child's current placement;
- When a child becomes looked-after because they have been remanded by the youth court.

A placement in Secure Accommodation without a Court Order but authorised by a Designated Manager (Secure Accommodation) for a maximum of 72 hours may also be an emergency placement.

Emergency Placements Out of Area

In circumstances of emergency placement, Regulation 11(2) of the Children Act 1989 (amended) does not apply as it will not be possible to take all necessary steps before making the placement. However, as a minimum, the Nominated Officer within the **Placing Authority** (Director of Children's Services in the case of **Placements at a Distance**) must be satisfied that the child's wishes and feelings have been ascertained and that the placement is the most appropriate placement available and consistent with the **Care Plan**.

The requirements to notify/consult the area authority, and provide them with the child's care plan and consult the child's relatives and inform the IRO must be undertaken within five working days.

Receiving Emergency Admissions (in line with the Statement of Purpose)

The Registered Manager of the home cannot admit children in an emergency unless they are registered to do so, therefore this capacity will be explicitly included as a function and written into the home's Statement of Purpose. The home will need to demonstrate it is capable to care for children admitted at very short notice while continuing to offer high quality care.

Where it is within the Home's Statement of Purpose the Registered Manager will ensure that procedures are in place for receiving emergency placements. They will have a detailed routine, with which all members of staff are familiar.

The routine will include having:

- A check list for admissions readily available;
- A vacant bedroom with appropriate facilities, in a state of readiness;
- Easy to prepare basic food and drink accessible for staff to prepare day or night;
- A strategy for the redeployment of staff to deal with the emergency admission.

Registered Managers of our homes should ensure that where an emergency admission takes place a planning meeting also known as an Emergency Review is held within 72 hrs, see **Section 2, Criteria and Timing for Emergency Reviews**.

Emergency/Same Day Placement Procedure

In the event of a referral for an Emergency Placement, the person receiving/administering the referral should do all that is reasonable to follow the normal admissions procedures. (When an emergency placement is requested out of hours then the on call manager should be consulted prior to accepting the referral).

Any decision to admit a child in an emergency must be based a proper assessment of the available information,

Given the time constraints, this assessment is likely to be carried out from information provided over the telephone or by email. Referral forms need to be completed and received before the young person is admitted despite the time pressures with emergency placements.

The placing authority must be satisfied that, on the basis of the available information, the child's needs are likely to be met by the home.

When emergency placements are made, local authorities should endeavour to make as much of the necessary information about the child available to the home as is possible and should always make available any information that is vital to allow the home to care safely for the child (e.g. medical information or information about any known serious behavioural issues which may place the child at risk of harm to him/herself or others).

As a minimum, the following information will be required at the time of the placement:

- The contact arrangements that may be permitted between the child and his parents, siblings, relatives and friends - no contact may be allowed without the approval of the social worker or as set out in the child's Placement Plan;
- A copy of the child's **Health Care Plan** or, if this is not available, details of any healthcare or medical needs/requirements that the home should be aware of e.g. Home Remedies or Medication that the child may require, see **Health Care Assessments and Plans Procedure**;
- Copies or information relating to any Court Orders that may be required or influence the child's placement e.g. if the child is subject to a Remand.

The person administering this process must keep a record of the matters that are not undertaken, and pass this to the Manager so they can be followed up.

2. Criteria and Timing of Emergency Reviews

An emergency review meeting must be held within 72 hours of any emergency admission, this is a maximum timescale and the urgency of the situation may dictate that the timescales should be shorter.

The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain whether the child should remain at the home, or if it is in that child's interests to move to a different placement.

Discussion around suitability of the placement should take place and if it is found that this is not an appropriate placement, an alternative placement should be discussed and any actions to follow up decided upon.

3. Arranging and Conducting Emergency Reviews

Emergency Reviews will normally be arranged by the manager of the home, who should act as the chairperson (unless the LA provides an **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**). This responsibility may be delegated to a member of staff.

The review must be conducted in the form of a meeting.

See **Section 5.1, Chairperson Responsibilities during the Review.**

4. Who Should Attend or Contribute to Emergency Reviews

The people listed below should contribute to the Emergency Review.

The people who should contribute are:

1. The child's social worker;
2. The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for the Child;
3. The child;
4. The child's parents;
5. The child's Key Worker, if known, or other member of staff.

5. Preparation and Chairing of Emergency Reviews

Before the review, the chairperson should attempt to collate relevant documentation, such as Risk Assessment/Referral records, **Placement Plans**, Chronologies, a **Care Plan**, **Pathway Plan**, and other relevant background information about the child.

5.1 Chairperson Responsibilities during the Review

The overall purpose of the Emergency Review is to consider whether the placement is suitable for the child; having regard for the child and the other children in the placement.

The views of the child, parents and others should be accounted for; but the decision should be made by the social worker and Home Manager or Meeting Chair.

The matters which should be considered are:

- a. The likely appropriateness of the placement in meeting the child's needs, as set out in the Care Plan or Placement Plan in the context of the **Statement of Purpose** for the home;
- b. Whether the placement of the child may adversely affect any other children in the placement.

If it is decided that the placement is suitable then the Placement Plan should be updated to reflect this decision.

If there is a view that the placement is appropriate but that additional support is required to make it entirely suitable, the Placement Plan should be updated to reflect this.

If there are concerns that the placement is not suitable, even with additional support, consideration should be given to the following:

- a. The child remaining in the placement until a more suitable placement can be found; in which case, the Placement Plan should be updated to reflect this decision;
- b. The immediate ending of the placement, in which case no Placement Plan is necessary.

If the Placement Plan cannot be completed sufficient to sustain the child until the first **Looked After Review**, the chairperson must arrange for a **Placement Plan Review** to occur within 7 days so that the plan can be completed.

If this is necessary, the chairperson must agree what further information is required in time for the Placement Plan Review.

Where the placement has been agreed to be sufficient to sustain the child the following apply:

1. Information for Children and Notifications;
2. Health Care;
3. Support and Monitoring desired outcomes.

Revision History

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

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End