

Foster Carers Delegated Authority

Decision Support Form

(Revised May 2016)

This Delegated Authority Decision Support Form provides guidance for foster carers making common sense, everyday decisions about the children and young people they care for in agreement and in conjunction with supervising social workers and children's / young people's social workers.

Foster carers should have flexibility to make decisions relating to children in their care taking account of the placement plan. Delegated Authority (DA) assists foster carers make decisions regarding issues such as health, education, contact and leisure unless there are particular reasons why this should not be the case helping to ensure that the children and young people experience as normal a family life as possible. Clarifying who is best placed to make everyday decisions depends on many factors: the young person's age, their views, legal status and care plan, the parents' views and the experience and the views of the foster carers.

Collaboration and consultation are essential for successful partnership working and it is important, subject to their age and level of understanding, that the child or young person is involved in the completion of this document.

Using this form:

This form provides guidance on each Task area of possible DA for each child / young person placed.

- Relevant placement specific details on how DA will be achieved must be completed in the right hand column to ensure it effectively meets the needs of the placed child / young person.
- It should be completed at the initial placement planning meeting and updated at each subsequent review when the placement plan is considered. This is particularly so where the child is accommodated and the birth parent's role in day to day parenting may be significant.
- Agreement and any subsequent amendments to this form must be signed and dated.

Name of Child / Young Person:

Foster Carer:

1. Medical and Health

Task	Authority	Guidance	Placement Specific Agreement details
1.1 Signed Consent to Emergency Medical Treatment including anaesthetic	Local Authority (LA)	Foster carer (FC) must, wherever possible, seek the permission from the LA by contacting the social worker (SW) or their Manager. In out of hours situations the Emergency Duty Service (EDT) Manager will need to give permission in consultation with parents wherever possible. In exceptional cases where the situation requires immediate and urgent action a foster carer will need to be guided by the medical practitioner and the Children's Social Work Service (CSWS) informed as soon as possible. CSWS will work with the foster carer to consult with and liaise with parents.	
1.2 Consent – Routine Immunisations	Foster Carer (FC)	The placement planning meeting should address health and immunisation matters and wherever possible the view and consent of the parent/s must be obtained. Where consent is denied, the health service should be informed by the SW.	
1.3 Planned Medical Procedures	LA	Planned treatment should be discussed and agreed with the parent/s, SW and FC. Where an anaesthetic is required, the Chief Officer (Social Work) must give permission for the operation. Consultation with parents should take place as appropriate.	
1.4 Medical Procedure carried out in the home where the person administering the procedure requires training (e.g. child with disability/illness)	Trained FC	Training must be given by a qualified Health professional and then approval can be given for the procedure to be undertaken by the FC. No one other than the trained carer may carry out the medical procedure. Parents will be asked to give permission for these procedures to be undertaken by the trained FC. Only in exceptional circumstances will parental permission be dispensed with.	
1.5 Dental signed consent to emergency treatment / anaesthetic	LA	See 1.1	

1.6 Dental - routine treatment including anaesthetic	FC	Pain relief injections are usual in routine dental treatment and do not require permission unless specifically stated in the placement plan. Routine treatment does not usually involve an anaesthetic. Where an anaesthetic is required permission must be given must be given by the Chief Officer (Social Work).	
1.7 Optician – Appointments, Prescription glasses	FC	This is routine and should be reported in the child's looked after review.	
1.8 Consent to Examination /Treatment by community paediatrician	FC	For routine non - invasive examination only. For example; health needs assessment / routine GP appointments. All other examinations should be agreed with the SW in advance.	
1.9 Administration of prescribed/over the counter Medications	FC	The dosage would normally be managed by the FC and kept in a secured medicine cupboard. The FC must record all prescribed medication given to the child, ensuring information is available for the SW and parent/s.	
1.10 Permission for School to administer prescribed/over the counter medications	FC	Schools are usually unwilling to administer medication, but will decide on a case by case basis. For regular medication, individual schools will draw up a plan to administer and the FC should approach the school to arrange this. The school may require the written permission of the SW.	
1.11 Referral/ Consent for child to access other services e.g. CAMHS	Social Worker (SW)	In discussion with the FC and parent/s, then referral via appropriate channels.	

2. Education

2.1 Signed Consent for school day trips	FC	Unless specifically excluded in placement plan.	
2.2 Signed Consent for school trips of up to 4 days	FC in discussion with SW	For long term placements the FC will usually be given the authority to agree this. Where further permissions are required, are stated in the placement plan Where additional LA payment is required, prior agreement is sought from the SW.	

2.3 Signed Consent for School Trips of over 4 days	As above		
2.4 School Trips abroad	SW	Parental permission will be sought for an accommodated child (S20) and where appropriate for a child on a care order.	
2.5 Using Computers at School	FC	Unless directed otherwise by SW for safeguarding reasons / digital safety	
2.6 School Photos	FC	Unless specifically excluded within the placement plan.	
2.7 Attendance at Parents' Evenings	FC	Parent/s may wish to attend and this should be established at the outset of the placement and arrangements agreed. This is especially important in temporary placements.	
2.8 Attendance at PEP meetings	FC	As above.	
2.9 Attendance at Unplanned meetings re incidents or immediate issues	FC	FC should usually be the first person of contact. SW should be informed prior to the meeting if at all possible.	
2.10 Registering at a School	FC/SW	FC to register the child with permission from the SW. Issues to consider includes other children in school with a family connection to the placed child.	
2.11 Changing a School	FC/SW	FC should discuss any proposals with the SW, IRO and parent/s before making arrangements as this is a change in the care plan. NB: The children's CLA review in year 6 considers high school choices.	
2.12 Referral/ Consent for YP to access another service (please specify the service)		As above 2.11	
2.13 Personal Health and Social Education	FC	In temporary placements there will be a need to actively seek the view of parent/s in respect of religious and cultural views. FC's may find it helpful to discuss their approach with the child's SW and their SSW.	

3. Personal, Leisure and Home Life

3.1 Passport Application	SW	Must have Parental Responsibility (PR) to apply	
3.2 Overnight Stays with friends ('sleep over')	FC	FC unless there is a specific exclusion written into the placement plan. FC's must satisfy themselves of the safety and appropriateness of the arrangement.	
3.3 Overnight/Weekend/ Short Stays with foster carers' family and friends.	FC	FC's should ensure they have checked out any general or specific safe care issues pertinent to the child, e.g. checking sleeping arrangements, children being left without an adult present.	
3.4 Overnight/weekend and short stays with birth family members and friends (please cross reference with section 6 on contact).	FC & SW	The Placement Plan and this form should specify any arrangements for contact with birth family and whether any delegation can be given to foster carer to make additional informal arrangements. Should also specify DBS requirements.	
3.5 Holidays within the UK	FC	Note: camping/caravan holidays may not be suitable for some children / young people given safeguarding and risk considerations. Arrangements should be discussed with the SW.	
3.6 Holidays outside the UK	SW	Letter from SW is required giving permission to take the child out of the country.	
3.7 Sports/Social Clubs	FC	Recommend discussion with SW.	
3.8 Haircuts/Colouring	FC	FC undertakes this task in discussion and agreement with child unless specifically excluded in placement plan. FC should take into consideration the wishes of the birth parents being sensitive to any religious or cultural views and also the child's views.	
3.9 Body Piercing	SW	In English law, it is illegal for under 16s to have their genitals pierced. It is also illegal for females under 16 to have their breasts pierced, although this does not apply to males under 16.	
3.10 Tattoos	None	It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to have a tattoo	

3.11 Mobile Phone / Devices / PC's	FC	Initial discussion with SW regarding any safeguarding issues. Thereafter, FC should agree usage with child / YP. House rules about mobile phones should be observed. Safeguarding considerations may require phones / devices to be outside of bedrooms during sleeping hours. In case of disagreement between FC and child / YP, advice may need to be taken from SW/SSW/IRO to reach compromise. FC should not sign for mobile phone contracts on behalf of child / YP as could be legally subject to any contract debt incurred.	
3.12 Part Time Employment	FC / SW	Depending on age and type of work.	
3.13 Accessing Social Networking sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	FC	Discussion with SW advisable in order to consider specific safeguarding issues for child and use of Digital Safety Agreement. Advice information for FC's is available for reference and guidance e.g. Social Networking Guidance / Digital Safety.	
3.14 Photos or other media activity	SW / FC	This should be agreed by the SW and FC.	

4. Faith and Religious Observance

4.1 New or changes in faith, church or religious observance	All	All involved in the care and spiritual development of the child should make the decisions required. Birth parent and SW must agree any changes depending on age of child.	
4.2 Attendance at a Place of Worship	FC	To be specified in the placement plan if permission is required from birth parent.	

5. Identity and Names

5.1 Life Story Work	SW/FC	In discussion with the FC, birth parent and TSW if involved.	
5.2 New or changes in 'nicknames', order of first names, or preferred names.		FC/SW does not have the right to change the first name or order of names. The child must be happy with and accept any 'nickname'.	

6. Contact

6.1 Transport	FC	There is an expectation that the FC provides transport for the child, unless otherwise specified. SW's need to be mindful of the other children in the family home and the implications for them when making requests.	
6.2 Arranging	SW / FC	SW's make initial arrangements and then should discuss delegating to the FC. This should be detailed in the placement plan.	
6.3 Formal Supervision	SW / FC	Level and expectation of Supervision must be discussed and agreed between SW and FC	

7. Other Areas or Categories

7.1 Leaving Children / Young People at 'home alone'	FC	Decisions must always take into account age / capabilities of young person and in what situation in agreement with SW	
7.2 Babysitting	FC	FC's should ensure baby sitters are 18 years or older unless there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the FC must discuss the details with the child's SW/SSW.	

7.3 Disability Benefits	FC (as Corporate Appointee)	For child / young person in receipt of disability benefits, FC manages benefit on their behalf. Benefit monies should kept separate from other household monies with a record kept of spend. If young person is over 16yrs, confirm if YP has been assessed as having or not having financial capacity and that a financial planning meeting has been held to confirm.	
7.4 Out of Office Hours / contact with EDT	FC	DA as detailed on this form also applies (where relevant) to decisions that the FC can take outside of normal office hours. If FC requires advice out of office hours, contact in first instance should be with the LFCA Carer Support Line who will be able to advise and if requiring decision on immediate risk / safeguarding, refer to EDT service.	

Agreement Please print name(s) and sign:

Foster Carer/s:

Signature:

Child / Young Person:

Signature:

Social Worker:

Signature:

Supervising Social Worker:

Signature:

Date: