

The Child's Plan

Any child whose needs are being addressed collaboratively by more than one agency has a multi-agency Child's Plan constructed with the child, family, carers and relevant people involved with the family and recorded by the Lead Professional. The plan must be clear, written in simple language, understandable by the child (where old enough) and family, contain information necessary to meet the child's needs, and address all required by legislation, guidance, procedures and protocols.

The Child's Plan records:

- the multi agency assessment of the child's needs,
- the actions agreed to address the needs, including what improved outcomes are expected, specifying who is to take what actions, within what timescales, and arrangements for monitoring progress and reviewing the Plan, and
- a summary of progress/ review.

The level of detail in the plan should match the complexity of the child's circumstances and needs, and meet the legislative requirements and care standards for children who are looked after and or where compulsory measures are recommended. The Plan will include the child and his/her parents' views of the child's circumstances, their views of what they think would help and what is planned, and of progress/ concerns. It will contain information recorded under template headings as appropriate. Where the heading is not appropriate to the child's circumstances, it, together with the accompanying box will not be included.

The Child's Plan Components

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demographic details • partners to the plan • reason(s) for the plan • chronology • assessment of child's development and circumstances • analysis • risk assessment and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • summary of needs identifying desired outcomes • long term aims, medium and short term goals • what needs to be done and by whom • timescales for action and change • any contingency arrangements, if necessary • arrangements for reviewing the plan • the views of the child, family and carers
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Purpose of this guidance

The purpose of this document is to assist social work staff who are lead professionals record Child Plans in a consistent way, which meet the child's needs and address all the requirements laid down in legislation, guidance, procedures and protocols. The guidance follows the Child's Plan template, noting where information should be recorded. It is intended as a summary and writers are advised to refer to relevant legislation, guidance, procedures and protocols to inform them of requirements. A series of brief practice notes are appended.

Referral to Children's Reporter, and Plan for Children's Hearing

The Child's Plan will be accepted as a referral to the Reporter provided that the decision to refer to the Reporter and the recommendation in respect of the need for compulsory measures is explicit within the document. This should be stated in the Reason's for Plan/Report with details recorded in the section of the Action Plan entitled "other actions required". The Child's Plan will also be accepted as the LA report for a Children's Hearing, provided that it meets the requirements of the Plans for Hearings Protocol 2008.

For these purposes the Child's Plan must contain:

- The **reasons for any referral** (bearing in mind the grounds – Section 52 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995);
- Information about the child and family background, including a **chronology** of significant events derived from the agencies involved records and contributions from the family;
- A thorough and integrated multi-agency assessment of risk and need, including relevant **evidence** in support of any Ground for Referral;
- A clear, realistic action plan for managing identified risks and meeting identified needs, agreed across all relevant agencies, with the lead professional identified.
- A clear, realistic set of **Goals** and **Outcomes**, with clear, realistic **Actions** to achieve them. It must be clear who is responsible for what and when, including the responsibilities identified for the child and parents/carers. The Plan needs to set out a realistic timescale for the achievement of outcomes and what will happen if they are not met;
- A clear assessment of parents/carers/child's ability and/or willingness to engage with services sufficiently to address the identified risks and needs for the child
- The child's and parents/carers **views**, of the child's circumstances, plan and progress.
- A clear, evidenced recommendation as to the legal measures required to support the plan. Where it is considered **compulsory measures** are necessary to address the child's needs, the plan should state clearly what is requested, eg Supervision Requirement, Warrant, and give reasons why these are needed. The plan should identify which actions in the plan require compulsion and recommend any Conditions to be included within the Supervision Requirement. Where it is considered that compulsory measures are not necessary, the plan should identify why not.
- Three very specific items, if appropriate (see Plans for Hearing Protocol/checklist for detail):
 - (i) information regarding any proposed placement;
 - (ii) flagging of a request for non-disclosure of the child's address;
 - (iii) the statement of the author of the Child's Plan regarding its disclosure to the child.

Child / Young person's Details

Name: <i>ie. name on birth certificate – if child prefers to be called by another name this should be stated at beginning of Reasons for Report / Plan on page 2</i>			
		Person ID:	
DoB :	Age	Gender :	Ethnicity :
Address: <i>if recommendation address “not to be disclosed” caption will be written here with reasons stated in box below.</i>			
Postcode <i>(blank if address not disclosed)</i>	Tel. <i>(as per postcode)</i>	School <i>(not shown if address “not disclosed”)</i>	

Legal basis for services currently provided

If child in Children's Hearing System this will include any conditions attached to order, warrant or supervision requirement.

It is necessary to withhold the following details from the report:

The two boxes below will be included on the front page of the Child's Plan in circumstances where for example the disclosure of a child's whereabouts to parents or relevant persons may pose a risk to the child. Where disclosure is not an issue, the front page will end following section on legal basis for services provided.

*List, description of details withheld ie, “address”, “school”, “foster placement”, “names of carers” etc as appropriate and identify to whom the information should not be disclosed. The report writer must ensure that details are not inadvertently disclosed subsequently in the plan. Where the Child's Plan is to be used as the Hearing Report, address and relevant details will be provided on a separate sheet (if placement with foster carers, the standard profile sheet) headed in bold, underlined capitals **REQUEST FOR NON-DISCLOSURE OF CHILD'S ADDRESS: FOR REPORTER ONLY**. See **PLANS FOR HEARINGS HIGHLAND PROTOCOL – November 2008**. Discuss with the Reporter prior to completion/ submission of the report.*

Reasons: *Where non disclosure of information is requested. Good, clear reasons are required, evidencing potential risks. These must also be woven into the assessment in terms of the impact of disclosure on the child/ other person.*

Family Details

Family members - includes all significant family relationships and details			
Name	DoB/Age	Address	Relationship

Other significant people – personal relationships including foster carers, adoptive carers, kinship carers as appropriate.		
Name	Address	Relationship

Parental rights and responsibilities are held by: list of names of all adults who hold parental rights and responsibilities Ensure this information is accurate - how pr & r were obtained should be included in attached Chronology
(Lists names) have relevant person status – list any additional adults who currently have relevant person status within the children’s hearing system because they ordinarily have charge of or control over the child (eg stable carers). Consult with the reporter if in doubt. – This box will only be included if applicable

Reasons for the Plan/ Report

<i>This will summarise the reason for the plan/report. It could be very simple, but would contain a summary of concerns and background as applicable. If a referral is being made to the Reporter, this should be made clear, with reasons</i>

Partners to the plan *List should include child and parents and others actively involved – (excluding any details which it has been requested should not be disclosed/ may reveal the whereabouts of the child). Identify Lead Professional relationship in this table in addition to table at end of report. For school aged Looked After Children identify the Lead Teacher and Designated School Manager.*

Name	Relationship	Contact details

Additional help required to enable participation in meetings

Describe any help required in respect of communication or other needs to enable the child/ young person and/ or their parents to participate in meetings and how this will be provided. This may include for example help with reading, or advocacy in addition to help to overcome disability.

Information Sharing

Record who has consented (child/ young person & parent(s)/ carer(s), how, and for what purpose. If information is to be shared without consent, note details, purpose, with whom and reasons.

Chronology

A Chronology must be appended to the Child's plan which outlines significant events in the child's life, derived from 1) the agencies involved (past and present) records, and 2) contributions from the child/family. The chronology plays a key role in any assessment of a child's circumstances and of parental capacity and motivation to work with agencies to make any changes required. This list is not exhaustive, however significant events may include for example:

- Date and details of birth
- Dates of hospital admissions and significant illnesses/ injuries
- Changes in family or household composition, Significant additions or separations
- Changes of address/ School or other significant transitions
- Changes in main carers, including changes in placements
- Notable achievements
- Record of concerns passed to named person
- Additional Support needs – assessment, planning and review
- Involvement/ cessation of a targeted or specialist service
- Allegations/ investigations of abuse
- Date of name being added to or removed from Child Protection Register plus registration category
- Changes in legal status, including any decisions made by a Children's Hearing
- Significant decisions, e.g. permanence
- Any court proceedings

Assessment *(this section will begin on a new page)*

This part of the Child's Plan contains the record of a thorough, integrated, **multi-agency** assessment of needs and risks, using the assessment tools of the *Getting it right for every child* Practice Model, with contributions from child, family, carers, health, education, police, social work, voluntary agencies and others as appropriate. Detailed advice regarding the use of "My World Triangle" and Resilience Framework in assessing and planning for children is contained in the Highland Pathfinder Guidance: <http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/htm/girfec/gir-publications/getting-it-right-pathfinderguidance-v1-mar08-consultation.pdf> (Warning 1.5MB - for individual sections, please access via the follow web page) <http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/htm/girfec/girfec-agencydocs.php>

Assessment is not an event, but a dynamic process by which children, families and practitioners can contribute information and decide what it means, so that they can plan the actions/ interventions required to improve the child's circumstances. The Child's Plan should reflect that process.

Basis of Assessment

Summarises agencies' contacts with the child, parent(s)/ carer(s) and the contributions of the various "partners to the plan" to the assessment. Make explicit the methods and tools used in gathering and analysing information which for example may include observations, structured and free ranging interviews/ questionnaires and assessment meetings. If a specialist assessment, for example an ASSET or psychiatric assessment is appended, this should be stated here and the meaning of any conclusions and subsequent recommendations incorporated with the help of the author into the "My World Assessment".

How I grow and develop.

This section of the assessment will highlight how the child is growing and developing in respect of: Being Healthy; Learning and Achieving; Being able to communicate; Confidence in who I am; Learning to be responsible; and Becoming Independent. - Is the child meeting expected milestones/ developing as well as expected? Detailed advice about what should be considered with regard to these headings is contained in the Highland Pathfinder Guidance. If the child is accommodated, care must be taken to ensure that the information is sufficient for the carer to meet the child's needs.

Strengths
<i>List of identified strengths</i>
Pressures

List of identified pressures

Analysis of child's developmental needs

What the above means in terms of the child's development? Are they doing well? Is additional support required? What impact does the child's development, needs or behaviour have on their parents/carers? If further assessment is required for example a health assessment or an assessment of the child's social and communication skills – this should be highlighted here – what don't we know?

What I need from people who look after me:

This section of the assessment will examine how the child's needs are being met by parents and carers (including any current placement away from home). It should consider strengths and pressures in respect of: Everyday care and help; Keeping me safe; Being there for me; Play, Encouragement and fun; Guidance, Supporting me to make the right choices; Knowing what is going to happen and when; and Understanding my family background and beliefs. Detailed advice about what should be considered with regard to these headings is contained in the Highland Pathfinder Guidance.

Assessment should include consideration of the parents' ability/willingness to cooperate with agencies and their motivation and capacity to make any changes required. Where the child is accommodated away from home, the assessment will include assessment of parental capacity to meet the child's needs, now and in the future, in addition to consideration of how the child's needs are being met in the placement and by the carers. Where a child is accommodated away from home, the Plan must indicate that the placement and carers are suitable to meet the child's needs and how. Where such a placement or respite is recommended as a condition of a supervision requirement, there must be confirmation that Regulation 15 of the Fostering of Children (Scotland) Regulations 1996 is met - refer to *Plans for Hearings Highland Protocol, Nov 2008,* and *Highland Council Kinship Care Procedure.*

Strengths

List of identified strengths

Pressures

List of identified pressures

Analysis of impact on the child

If further assessment is required for example a parenting assessment this should be highlighted here – what should this include? What don't we know?

My Wider World

This section will highlight how the wider community impacts on the child and parent(s). Consider strengths and pressures in respect of: Support from family / friends and others; Belonging; Nursery/School; Enough money; Work/ opportunities for my family; Comfortable and safe housing; and Local Resources. Detailed advice about what should be considered with regard to these headings is contained in the Highland Pathfinder Guidance.

Strengths
<i>List of identified strengths</i>
Pressures
<i>List of identified pressures</i>
<i>Analysis of the impact on the child, and their parent(s)/carer(s) ability to meet their needs</i>

Involving children and families

The involvement of children and families in assessing, planning and action is central to good practice and effective outcomes and Part 2 of the Highland Pathfinder Guidance, “Child and family centred help” provides advice and guidance for practitioners. Children and parent(s) should be actively involved throughout the assessment, planning and reviewing process, and will often play a lead role. The Child’s Plan has three sections in which child and parent(s)/ carer(s) opinions, thoughts and feelings are recorded by the lead professional. Their views of their circumstances should be documented in the box below. Their views of the agreed actions planned, and of how the plan is working should be recorded in the appropriate sections.

(Name of child / young person) ‘S views of his/her circumstances.

Requires careful consideration and description of how child’s views/ assessment of their circumstances are obtained and represented. This will include; observations, pictures, discussions with the child, use of tools such as “Having my say”. What do they think would improve their circumstances? Note if any documentation is appended.

Parent/ Carer/ Significant others views of (name of child/ young person's) circumstances

As above: Note if any documentation/ report is appended.

Analysis

Having analysed the information gathered around the triangle with the child, parent(s) and others as appropriate. Summarise what it means. What is balance of vulnerability/ resilience in the characteristics of child? What is the balance of adversity and protective environment? What is the impact/ likely impact on the child/young person in terms of the child's current and prospective wellbeing? What is the impact on the parent(s)/ carer(s) ability to meet their needs? What areas around the triangle should/could be improved? What strengths should be protected/ built on? What priority?

Risk Assessment

Identify any risk to the child or others. Include immediate or longer term significant harm. Highlight the nature of the risk, triggers for harmful behaviour and circumstances in which risk is most likely to occur – Identify ways that this could be managed.

Summary of Needs

Record of conclusions/ recommendations about what the child needs and how needs should be met.

***What are the agreed main goals for this child in terms of promoting their wellbeing?
What outcomes have been agreed are necessary to improve the child/young person's wellbeing?***

***State how is the action plan is structured i.e. which outcomes have been link with which SHANAR&RI heading.
What options have been considered/ discounted and why?***

Where a child is looked after the plan must explicitly address all the child's needs, including– educational needs, health needs, religious beliefs, ethnicity, contact with family etc.

Action Plan *(this section will begin on a new page)*

The Action Plan is the part of the Child's Plan which contains the overall aims for the child, the medium and short term goals, what improved outcomes are expected, by when, and what actions are to be taken to address the child's needs and achieve these goals. It specifies who is to take what actions, within what timescales, and details the arrangements for monitoring progress and reviewing the Plan. It provides a summary of progress/ review.

The overall aim for insert child's name is

The overall long term aim/purpose of the multi-agency intervention and plan in a sentence (for example "to remain in the care of their family", "to be helped to access appropriate resources", "to return to a suitable placement in Highland".)

The next seven sections of the Child's Plan provide the portfolio to record the **medium and short term goals** for the child in terms of improving individual areas of their wellbeing as appropriate and proportionate to their circumstances, noting how this improvement will be recognised, detailing what needs to be done by whom and in what timescales. (see definitions and example on next page)

The different aspects of wellbeing may impact on each other, (the child who is not safe, is unlikely to be achieving). Interventions at one side of the Child's World are likely to have an impact on the others and in turn influence different aspects of wellbeing. An action to improve how a child is parented is likely to also improve their health and development.

Desired outcomes and actions should not be repeated under different goals The discussions with the family and other professionals involved during assessment and when agreeing the aims of the Plan, the goals and the outcomes required should clarify the main purpose of the interventions which will help these decisions and support change.

The plan should be proportionate to the child's needs and circumstances and, as simple as these needs and circumstances allow. The child will have goals and associated actions formulated under one or more of these headings, depending on their needs and circumstances. **Care must be taken not to use more sections than necessary.**

Safe - Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, school or community

Goal : Record goal that has been agreed

We will know this has been achieved when: Identify how improvements in relation to this goal will be recognised.

Healthy : Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices

Achieving : Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self esteem at home, at school and in the community

Nurtured : Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed, or where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting

Active : Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community

Respected & Responsible : Children, young people and their carers should be involved in decisions that affect them, should have their voices heard and should be encouraged to play an active and responsible role in their communities

Included : Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn

Example

Nurtured
Goal: To ensure that Jenny is safe from abuse and harm and that Mr and Mrs Scott are able to provide her with the nurture and care that she requires to meet her needs.
We will know this has been achieved when: assessment indicates, and Mr and Mrs Scott, the professionals and others involved feel confident that the factors which led to the problems in her care have been identified, and strategies are in place to ensure they won't happen again in the future. Mr and Mrs Scott will be able to demonstrate that they can effectively and consistently meet Jenny's needs.

What “desired outcomes”, are needed to meet the goal, based on building strengths and reducing pressures or risks which were identified in the assessment, and in what priority? These outcomes might relate to the child’s developmental needs, their parent(s)/ carer(s) needs or capacity to parent, and /or the wider world, in combination.

Example

	Desired Outcomes	Details
1	Alternative Care/Accommodation	Should include purpose of placement; Address (unless not to be disclosed) Statement re suitability of placement. How long is placement available? How long might it be needed?
2	Appropriate contact with family/ significant others	Purpose of contact; with whom; supervised?
3	Assessment of parenting	Purpose/ focus of assessment – what will it include? What timescales are appropriate taking into account age/ stage and needs of the child

Outline actions required to be taken to achieve these outcomes, by whom and within what timescales?

Example

	Actions	By whom	When
1.	Jenny to continue to be cared for in foster placement	Foster carers and SWS	If timescale not known -Date this will be reviewed
2.	Contact to take place – frequency, place – any special arrangements	Foster carer, parents, social worker	As above

3	Who has to do what in terms of assessment of parenting? Eg. Parent needs to meet with the assessor - frequency? Where?	Parents, Health Visitor? Social worker	Needs date
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Other actions required to help the child/young person or their parent or support the plan are recorded in the next section. One example might be a service provided to a parent in terms of meeting their need for example for advocacy or legal advice. Where it has been decided that the Local Authority will make a referral to the Children's Reporter, or progress other Legal Measures, for example a Coordinated Support Plan, the details, actions and timescales should be recorded here.

Other actions required to help the child/young person or their parent(s)/ carer(s)

For example

	Desired Outcomes	Details
1	Compulsory measures/ other legal measures	Needs to set out specific recommendation of 1) legal measure required eg Warrant under particular section of the C(S) Act or Supervision requirement and 2) any compulsory conditions required to support the plan

	Actions	By Whom	When
1.	Child's Plan, Chronology, Statement by Report Writer and Foster-carers profile to be forwarded to the Children's Reporter	Named Social Worker	At latest, 7 days before date of hearing

Reasons for proposed legal measures: *summarise why, for example, it is believed a Children's Hearing/ Compulsory Measures may be necessary, indicating reasons in plain English/ language as used to explain to child and family. Link the reasons for compulsion with the actions required to meet the child's needs, and the specific recommendations made re necessary legal measures. refer to cooperation, motivation and capacity of the parent(s) and young person to work effectively with agencies on a voluntary basis. Refer to the desired outcomes/ actions which require compulsion. Make clear Reference to any relevant document(s), for example evidence or specialist assessment which is attached.*

A recommendation to continue, change or end any legal measure must be recorded in the same way, with the same level of explicitness and detail.

Review

The Child's Plan requires to be reviewed regularly with the child and family to look a whether the actions agreed have been carried out and whether they have achieved the desired outcomes and goals. Formal review in accordance with statutory requirements will take place at Child's Plan meetings; however the reviewing process is greater than the meeting and should begin from the time actions are agreed.

If a child is subject to supervision, a Hearing Review must be requested whenever a condition of that supervision requirement is not being complied with, or whenever the LA believes that there needs to be a change to the conditions. Provide clear information, recommendation and reasons. Similarly, compulsory measures should only be in place when they are necessary to address the child's needs. For any child subject to supervision, it is essential that the Child's Plan Meeting regularly reviews the need for compulsion, and that a Review Hearing is requested if it is believed that compulsory measures are no-longer required. The Plan must provide good analysis of what has changed. Where the plan has been recently changed, (for example when the reporter requests an update or a hearing is continued), it will be helpful to appendix a summary sheet highlighting which sections of the plan have been changed/ updated.

The sections below provide space in the Plan to record progress and concerns, and highlight further actions required.

Have actions been fully/partially or not met?		
<i>Refer to individual actions.</i>		
Child's view of progress		
<i>Record the child's view of progress - how the plan is working or not</i>		
Parent(s)/ Carer(s) views of progress		
<i>As above</i>		
Progress/concerns	How have actions helped or hindered progress	Further actions required <i>(to be detailed in new plan)</i>

Planning and Review Arrangements

Resources Required - which are not currently available to the child/young person or family

Record any additional resources that require to be sought from out with those accessible to professionals/ agencies already involved in the plan. E.g. respite placement, day care place, full time local education placement. Where this is the case, note any associated actions and interim arrangements in the plan. Delete section if not relevant.

Unmet Need

Ensure that where the ideal to meet the needs of the child/young person is unavailable, alternative interim arrangements are made. Delete section if not relevant

Contingency Plans *Records actions that will be taken if resources are unavailable or if the child/young person's situation fails to improve or deteriorates – for example*

If assessments indicate that Mrs & Mr name are not able to, and will not be able to offer child name a safe and nurturing environment long term, then alternative long term family options should be explored in the first instance as a means to secure her future.

If alternative family options prove not to be viable, then given child's name age and stage, the process for adoption should be started.

Lead Professional – key contact person for the family, responsible for monitoring the child's or young person's progress and for putting the plan into place.

Name	Address	Telephone	E-mail

Monitoring – how the plan/ progress will be monitored/ reviewed

Monitoring & reviewing must be in accordance with statutory or procedural requirements and proportional to the child's needs and plan. Note relevant statutory/ procedural timescales and other considerations which relate to the child's circumstances and legal status, thereby ensuring that the Local Authority meets these requirements.

Consider how monitoring is carried out and record agreement e.g. Telephone, Regular Meetings of the Core Group of those involved.

Review Arrangements

Note arrangements for the next formal review and Children's Hearing (where appropriate). Who will be involved/ attend, when it will take place, how and where. It will not always be necessary to have a meeting.

Where the child's circumstances are to be considered at a Children's Hearing. Consider in consultation with the Children's Reporter, who should attend the Hearing.

Who (will be present)	When	How	Where
List names	Date & Time	Child's Plan Meeting	Address
List names	Describe	Children's Hearing	Address

Arrangements for consultation in respect of assessment/ reports

Describe arrangements agreed including membership and frequency of core group meetings where appropriate

Name and contact details of person responsible for coordination, communication and undertaking review arrangements, if different from lead professional. *i.e. Quality Assurance and Reviewing Officer where appropriate*

Name	Address	Telephone	E-mail
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Child's Views of Plan**Parent(s)/ Carer's Views of Plan**

Note and explain any disagreements with any areas of the plan, and any further action that is required.

Date of Plan/ Review when plan updated

Report/ Plan recorded by Signed Date

Appendix: (to follow)

Brief practice guides

LAC

LAC Accommodated

Child Protection

Reports for reporter/ hearing

References: