

	Document Title	Role of the Childs Social Worker
	Reference	
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	Date to be Reviewed	Every 3 years
	Authorised by	R Coates

1. Purpose

- 1.1. First for Fostering will always work closely and alongside the child's local authority allocated social worker. This policy is to ensure the duties and responsibilities of the child's social worker are clear.

2. Legal Framework

- 2.1. Every looked after child has an allocated local authority social worker responsible for ensuring that the child's welfare is safeguarded and promoted, statutory requirements are met, care planning and review arrangements are implemented, and the child's wishes and feelings are ascertained and taken into account.
- 2.2. This policy is informed by:
 - Children Act 1989
 - Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended)
 - Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Department for Education)

3. Visits

- 3.1. Carers are expected to work closely with the local authority allocated social worker.
- 3.2. During visits, the local authority allocated social worker should see the child alone, unless the child refuses, the child's age and understanding make this impracticable, or there are exceptional circumstances that make a private meeting inappropriate.
- 3.3. Following each visit, the local authority social worker must make a written record of the visit, including their observations of the child's welfare, wishes and feelings, the suitability of the placement, and whether the placement continues to meet the child's needs.
- 3.4. If carers are concerned that the child's social worker is not visiting in accordance with statutory requirements or the agreed care plan, they should discuss this with their supervising social worker. The supervising social worker should contact the child's local authority and draw attention to any missed statutory visits.
- 3.5. The child's social worker should ensure that the child knows how to contact them and understands how to raise any concerns about their care, welfare, or placement.

The number of visits depends on the needs of each child. The following are the minimum frequency: *Statutory visits by the child's allocated local authority social worker.*

Up to one year:

Within one week of the placement commencing and thereafter at intervals of not more than six weeks during the first year of the placement.

After one year and where the placement is intended to be long term and the child agrees.

Thereafter, at intervals of not more than three months where the placement is intended to be long term and this is consistent with the child's care plan.

N.B. The local authority social worker should participate in the placement process and also visit the child/young person within one week of the placement starting.

These are minimum statutory requirements. The child's needs, circumstances, or decisions made at a Looked After Child (LAC) Review may require visits to take place more frequently.