

Looked After Reviews Policy

Version number:	Version 1	Document owner:	HND Children's Care Ltd.
Version Date: Review Date:	January 2026 January 2027	Document ID number:	3.9 Looked After Reviews Policy
Version expiry:	January 2027	Document classification:	Final
Version status:	Live document		

Regulations and Standards:

The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015:

- Regulation 6 - The quality and purpose of care standard
- Regulation 7 - The children's views, wishes and feelings standard.
- Regulation 17 - Placement plan for a child who is not looked after.

Introduction:

The arranging of Looked After Reviews, sometimes referred to as 'CLA Reviews', is that of the social worker, usually in collaboration with an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). However, HND Children's Care Ltd staff play a crucial role in the process.

This HND Children's Care Ltd policy summarises the responsibilities of the social worker, the Independent Reviewing Officer and what steps should be taken by the home.

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1. Purpose of Looked After Reviews:

The purpose of the review is to:

- Ensure that appropriate plans are in place to safeguard and promote the overall welfare of the child in the most effective way and achieve permanence for him or her within a timescale that meets his or her needs.
- To monitor the progress of the plans and ensure they are being progressed effectively.



- To make decisions, as necessary, for amendments to those plans to reflect any change in knowledge and / or circumstances.

Decisions taken at CLA Reviews should be implemented in the form of recommendations with timescales and responsibility for actions clearly defined. Looked After Reviews are normally chaired by an IRO and the arrangements, including the setting of dates and invitations, are normally made by the Independent Reviewing Officer in consultation with the social worker. The manager of the home should take all reasonable steps to be consulted too.

The social worker is normally responsible for informing, consulting and preparing the child at least 20 days before the review; but the HND Children's Care Ltd staff should assist as far as they can in this process and should ensure that the child is properly informed and prepared. To this end, the child must be encouraged to contribute to any report prepared by the home. If the child wishes, he / she should be assisted in preparing his/ her own contribution and staff should be mindful that the child may wish to or may benefit from being supported by an Advocate or, if appointed, an Independent Visitor.

In time for the review, or beforehand if required, the home should arrange for an up-to-date care plan to be available demonstrating what arrangements exist to meet the child's needs. The home should also produce a report of the work undertaken since the child's placement or the last Looked After Review.

2. Areas to be Discussed:

The key plans / areas that should be considered at a CLA Review are:

- Care Plan.
- Placement Plan.
- Permanence Plan.
- Rehabilitation Plan (if applicable).
- Health Plan - including emotional well-being and substance misuse (if applicable).
- Pathway Plan (if applicable).
- Personal Education Plan.
- Contact Plan.
- Safeguarding - including sexual exploitation, missing from home and offending (if applicable).
- Identity Needs.
- Leisure Needs.
- Social Development.
- Participation by the child, including consultation prior to the Review.
- Participation by parents, other key family members, carers and relevant professionals.

The review should also take account of the child's placement plan and care plan, statutory social worker visits and any other plans or strategies (e.g., the Personal Education Plan), ensuring that they are up to date, or that arrangements are in place to update them.



After the Review, the social worker is responsible for updating and circulating the care plan, Personal Education Plan (PEP) and, if appropriate, the pathway plan. The manager of the home is responsible for updating and circulating the child's placement plan.

3. Frequency and Arranging Looked After Reviews:

Normally, Looked After Reviews should be convened at the following intervals:

- An initial CLA Review should be conducted within 20 working days of the child becoming Looked After.
- The second CLA Review should be conducted within three months of an Initial CLA Review
- Subsequent CLA Reviews should be conducted not more than six months after any previous review unless the child moves placement.

CLA Reviews should be brought forward in the following circumstances:

- Where the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the placement.
- Where the placement provider, parents or area authority are concerned that the child is at risk of harm.
- Where the child so requests, unless the Independent Reviewing Officer considers that the review is not justified.
- As soon as practicable where a child is moved from one placement to another on an unplanned basis or a significant change in the circumstances of a child suggests his / her placement is no longer appropriate. Every effort should be made to hold the CLA Review before the child moves and the IRO should always be informed of any proposed changes to the care plan and moves before they occur.

Where a significant change to the child's care plan is required at the request of the IRO, this should include:

- Contemporaneous court proceedings that require a revision to the care plan
- consideration to be given to the need to hold a CLA Review within 2 months of the Final Hearing.
- Following appropriate enquiries, including visits, the social worker's assessment is that the child's welfare is not adequately safeguarded and promoted.
- A review would not otherwise occur before the child ceases to be detained in a YOI or secure training center or accommodated on remand.
- The Local Authority proposes to cease to provide accommodation for a child.
- Where the Independent Reviewing Officer agrees that such a review should be convened, for example, upon the request of the child, parent(s) or any other significant person.

3. Role of the Independent Reviewing Officer:

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) must meet the child before his / her first Looked After Review. Under the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2015, the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) has substantially changed, in essence, the



IRO has a responsibility to monitor the child's case in between Looked After Reviews.

For example:

- The IRO should produce a written case record of the decisions or recommendations made within three (and no more than five) working days of the completion of the review and a full case record of the review within 15 working days of the completion of the review. Recommendations should be agreed with the appropriate Team Manager within 5 working days.
- Children should be told who their IRO is and how to make contact with him / her.
- Where parents do not attend the review / part of the meeting and contribute their views in some other manner, a discussion should take place between the Social Worker and the IRO as to whether it is in the child's interest for the parents to receive a full record of the review and, if not, what written information should be sent to them. Examples of where this should be a consideration are where there is a 'no contact order' or supervised contact only.
- The IRO must be consulted before a child is placed outside the area where the child normally lives.
- The IRO should be notified and consulted if a child persistently absents him / herself or has been missing from the home.
- Children have a right to contact their IRO if they are concerned about their placement or Care Plan.

HND Children's Care Ltd Home managers should be aware of these wider responsibilities and should ensure that children are informed of their right to consult or notify the IRO; and home's managers should also consult the IRO if they are concerned about the child's placement.

End.