**Swindon Borough Council**

**Covid 19 02/04/20 Child In Need Guidance**

**Purpose of Guidance**

This guidance is being written to inform ongoing practice in respect of Children receiving Child In Need services and is intended to remain in place until further notice.

**Child In Need Visits**

The expectation that Children and their parents or guardian/s are seen on a 4 weekly basis remains in place.

No visit shall take place until the social worker has phoned ahead to undertake the Covid-19 risk assessment and it has been approved by the Manager which is clearly recorded on Capita One.

Children who continue to be assessed as being ‘in need’ still need to be seen and assessed as safe. When visits are being undertaken, there is a need for practitioners to be creative in their approach. This will include meetings in the garden, in a space at the front or the rear of the property or through an open window if appropriate. Staff should always adhere to the Social Distancing rule of never being closer than 2 metres to another person.

If a child or person in the household is showing symptoms of Covid-19 then there will be further discussion with your manager about how a child can safely be seen by a worker wearing the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The decision must be signed by a Service Manager and recorded on ICS via the risk assessment.

In the event that a child is still attending an educational provision because they have an EHCP, or have a parent as a Keyworker, the discussion should be had with the educational provider about how best to speak with a child. In this event, when you can guarantee who is in the room and how a child is presenting, then calling/Skype/Skype for Retail can be considered.

**Child In Need Reviews**

Children should continue to be reviewed in line with SBC policy. However, the way that these reviews take place will need to change.

In the week prior to the planned review the social worker should speak with the child and family and review the plan and outstanding risk. Parents, guardians and Young People should be given the opportunity to participate in their meeting if they wish. This can be via SKYPE for retail; telephone conference or by a telephone call with the Chair. Parents can also share their views and updates with the social worker who can then share this with professionals via Skype.

The CIN Reviewing Officer will be available to Chair any reviews as requested by the safeguarding teams and DCT.

In the week prior to the planned Child In Need Review, the social worker should confirm the date with all professionals and invite them to a Skype/Skype for Retail/telephone conference meeting, whilst also asking them to provide their updates in writing prior to the actual meeting. This will make minuting this meeting and clarifying the issues for discussion more straightforward.

Child In Need Panel

This panel will continue to take place on a fortnightly basis. However the focus will change to focus on children where there has been no recorded Review for 16 weeks or no visit recorded for 5 weeks +. The purpose of this is to ensure that every child is being considered as a priority and has the appropriate recorded activity on Capita One.

These meetings will happen via Skype. The Panel will continue to be chaired by a Service Manager, and minuted by the CIN Reviewing Officer. Social Workers and managers will be invited by Skype.

Practice Review

These arrangements will remain in place until further notice and will be reviewed in line with National Guidance on a monthly basis.

If there are difficulties in visiting or abiding by this guidance then this should be discussed with your manager or service manager and reported via the CRIP reporting process as an emerging issues or a request to change practice.

Laura Ketchen

Child In Need Reviewing Officer

02/04/2020