

# Guidance For Completing Placement Requests (PR)

## Introduction

Good quality information is required to ensure successful procurement and the best placement match for your child. The prompts provided within this guide are intended to support effective and efficient completion of the placement request.

Regardless of the urgency, a placement request and a risk assessment are required for each child before the team can begin to procure a safe and appropriate placement. Both documents are shared with potential carers in PDF form. The information contained needs to be anonymised; use the first name of your child and refer to others only as mother, sister, step-father etc.

If no in-house carers are available, your request will be sent out to the fostering and residential providers who have been accepted on to the East Midlands Regional Children's Framework. This Framework is used by the following local authorities:

- Derby City Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Rutland County Council

This arrangement greatly assists procurement but there is still very real competition for placements, with demand for placements far exceeding the number of available placements. Providers receive in excess of fifty requests per week from Authorities across the region and consequently, the quality of the request you produce is vital in enabling providers to understand your child/young person, match them to available resources and offer foster carers or residential provision which will meet their stated needs.

Please see below guidance details for completing placement requests, which are intended to assist workers in completing the request and to develop a consistent standard of information for all future requests. The format follows the template contents of the Placement Request (PR) episode on Framework-i:

## Placement Request for Providers

**Name**

**Date of birth**

**Age**

**Gender**

**Ethnicity**

**Religion**

**First language**

Any particular speech language or communication difficulties.

## **Disabilities**

Clearly state any disability which has a formal diagnosis as distinct from anecdotal information supplied by the family e.g. “mother feels he has ADHD”. A section further down the form allows for further explanation and an exploration of the implications. The social work view of any undiagnosed needs belongs in the emotional and behavioural section of the request.

## **How many children are requiring placement**

Remember – one request and risk assessment per child.

## **How could the sibling group be placed**

See below

## **Name ALL siblings needing placement. If this is a large group which may have to be split, specify which combination of children would be most appropriate?**

Use only first names. Three or more siblings may well not be placed together; how should they be placed? By gender? By age? Does an older child have a close caring relationship with one of the younger children? Is there sibling friction? And so on.

## **Reason for making a placement request?**

Select reason e.g. Child entering care

## **Is this placement an Emergency placement (a placement that is needed today)**

Yes/No.

## **If yes, give an explanation for the emergency**

This can be brief as circumstances will be described in “why is a placement needed” below.

## **Type of Placement Required**

Select reason e.g. Foster care

## **Expected length of placement**

If known. If unclear at point of accommodation, say so.

## **Required Placement Start date**

25/12/2016

## **Is there a proposed end date**

Enter date if for support care.

**Preferred Location** Give the number of miles radius to specified post code or town. Minimum or maximum distance? Is this desirable or essential?

Here the advice contained on the Framework document has not always proved to be helpful.

Give a town or region of Nottinghamshire that is preferred area for the new placement – usually for reasons of school or family contact.

Avoid stipulating how many miles away from the desired area the new placement should be – this is invariably misleading and if the distance is short will lead to providers making a quick judgement that they have no carers/provision near that specific location. Better to say “within reasonable travelling distance of \*” rather than “within 5 miles of \*” and let the provider consider what that might be in relation to their own resources.

Avoid post codes as these could be identifying. If any location in Nottinghamshire will be considered, say so.

Weigh the importance of current educational arrangements. Should they be maintained or can your child move school for the right placement? If a new school could be considered, please say so.

If the preferred location is out of county or if the request is for residential provision, discuss in detail with Placements Team.

### **Has a Transition /Exit Plan been established**

Leave blank if this is not clear at the point of request.

### **Timescales for exit /transition plan**

Complete if known otherwise leave blank

### **Is this a confidential placement**

Yes/No

### **If so, why is this a confidential placement**

The majority of placements are not confidential. If it is say why briefly. If there is a risk of the child’s family/friends/other risky adults coming to the carer’s door, make this plain.

### **Child's whereabouts at time of request**

A brief statement – with family; with emergency foster carers; missing etc. is all that is required.

## **Previous Care History**

For a child coming into care, there is no need for a large amount of information describing all social work contact with the family prior to this request. A brief summary of the main issues and events will suffice.

For a child moving between placements a simple brief chronology of previous moves with dates and reasons is effective.

## **Current LAC legal status of the child**

Self-evident

## **Current Placement Type**

If already in care.

## **Proposed Legal status**

Complete if court action proposed or Sec 20 not yet agreed.

## **Would a trans- racial placement be appropriate**

Self-evident

## **Specific Religious / Cultural Needs**

Please take time to consider this information, particularly in relation to UASC. If none please say so rather than leave blank.

## **Does this child have a known disability? Give details.**

Allows for further description and an exploration of the implications for both child and carers of any disability referred to at the top of this form.

## **Does this child have an involvement with CAMHS**

State briefly the nature and duration of CAMHS involvement and how this is delivered. Comment on the extent to which your child/young person has been able to engage.

## **Does the child have a statement of special educational needs**

EHC plan.

## **School, school address**

This section pulls through from information entered earlier on Framework and is often wrong. Please check and edit.

## **What transport are carers to undertake?**

**To School  
To Contact**

**To Activities**  
**To Hospital/ Health appointments**  
**Frequency and**  
**further information**

Contact and school transport commitments if known are significant to future carers when deciding whether or not to offer a placement. If contact is not yet known, avoid speculation as to future arrangements.

**Contact**  
**Describe the requirements for contact with family members**

Describe any existing arrangements if known. Record any court directed contact. If contact arrangements are yet to be determined, please say so.

**Dates**  
**Give any important dates for the child**  
**Court Dates**  
**Review Date**  
**Health**  
**Appointments**  
**Further**  
**Information**

Supply only if known. This section is of limited value to a child entering care. Most health arrangements can be changed.

**Summary of Placement Requirements**

**It is essential to present a balanced picture. Ensure that behaviour is set in context and detail triggers for any particularly challenging behaviour. Remember to include the positive attributes and interests of your child/young person.**

**Be aware that Framework pulls through to this request information contained under the same headings in other previous episodes; this needs to be edited and updated to ensure it is accurate, current and relevant to securing a new placement.**

**Why is a placement needed? Provide a summary that gives the background to the case and what events have led to a placement being required**

A brief paragraph explaining why your child/young person can no longer be cared for within their family/care placement.

**Avoid reproducing paragraph on paragraph of previous assessment or conference reports which give overly detailed information.**

**For those children/young people already accommodated, describe clearly and succinctly what led to the breakdown of the previous care placement. For any prospective carer this is the first information they read.**

**Make sure the information in this section has been edited and updated to reflect the recent events leading to this request. Do not simply repeat the information from the previous placement request - even if it was recent - the information must be current.**

### **What is currently being done to support this family, and what services are currently engaging with the family**

The accent here is on *current* – describe only those professionals involved with your child at the present time.

### **Specific peer group and carer requirements, who would the child be best placed with and who would present some difficulties**

Be realistic in your request. This is not an invitation to design an ideal placement, rather an opportunity to avoid obviously poor matching.

If requesting a foster placement, consider if there are any issues of gender, age, physical or sexual risk in your child/young person being placed alongside other children and what type of family configuration, peer group and lifestyle is best suited to them. If seeking a residential placement, consider also the concerns and risks which mean they have gone beyond a family placement.

Based on these considerations make a statement of where your child might best be placed.

**This section needs also to explicitly state the placement objectives i.e. what we expect from the carers in their care of our YP in placement.** This information will inform the Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) form to be completed by Placements Team, which records the objectives, includes the costs of the placement and is the basis on which we hold providers to account for the care provided.

### **Please be aware of the following;**

**Solo placements** – most children do not need a solo placement. Those who do have very specific needs. Most foster placements have other children, either LAC or the carers own. Please consider carefully any request for a child to be placed on their own.

**Therapeutic placements** – Strictly speaking any foster or residential placement which is “therapeutic” should practice a named therapy and deliver it via accredited professionals. If your request is based on CAMHS or other assessments which specify a named therapeutic approach for your child, then Placements Team will endeavour to source such a placement. If not, it is best to avoid use of the word in this context.

**Residential staffing** – do not make statements about the level of staffing required, e.g. 1:1 or 2:1 unless there has been prior discussion with Placements Team.

### **Health needs**

A summary of any current medication and treatment related to any disability, allergy or other health condition.

## **Education Needs**

A short summary of educational history is useful here. Make sure the information about which educational provision your child attends is up to date (and does not conflict with the information in the school details section) and that information on educational achievement is current. Is the educational placement stable and is it desirable that it be maintained?

Please state if education provision will be reviewed and a change of provision considered when a new placement is identified.

## **Emotional and Behavioural Development and issues**

Please try to avoid this section becoming a litany of behavioural difficulties which will only discourage providers from offering a future placement.

It is important to provide balance, degree and context.

Concerning and risky behaviours needs explanation. In isolation, the statement “self-harms” could indicate anything from superficial scratches, not requiring hospital treatment, to attempted ligature, admitted to hospital repeatedly. Similarly substance abuse can cover a wide range and severity.

Please be specific. Please indicate whether there are known triggers and set this in the context of how these can be managed and any progress made during placement/since coming into care.

Make sure the picture is current. Be clear about any behaviour which might have been the reason for the previous placement coming to an end.

## **Self - Care Skills**

Rather than just saying skills are “poor” or “age appropriate”, give a little detail on personal hygiene, personal safety preparing meals, handling money etc. and highlight those areas which the next carer will be asked to develop.

## **Identity and Social Presentation**

Please use this section of the request to describe your child or young person, their likes and dislikes, strengths, talents, aspirations.

A short paragraph “pen picture” personalises the request and gives a sense of the real child rather than just the difficulties.

Highlight the social, educational and leisure activities which should be supported in the new placement.

This can provide a positive picture which will hopefully interest prospective carers and lead them to want to find out more.

## **Childs views about the current plans for their accommodation**

Self - evident

## **Parents views about the current plans for their child's accommodation**

Self - evident