**Delegated Authority Procedure**

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# **About This Document**

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| Title | Delegated Authority Procedure |
| Purpose | **Process for agreeing delegated authority for Children Looked After who live with foster carers, in residential establishments or with supported lodgings providers** |
| Updated by | **Rosemarie Cronin** |
| Approved by | **Fostering Board** |
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# **Version Control**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date Issued | Version | Summary of Changes | Created by |
| March 2016 | **1.0** | **Added that it should be recorded on the foster carer/supported lodgings providers file that they have been given a copy of the delegated authority form** | **Rosemarie Cronin** |
| March 2016 | **2.0** | **Included information that if agreed by those with Parental Responsibility the delegated authority document for the main carer may be used for respite carers also** | **Rosemarie Cronin** |
| February 2023 | **3.0** | **Reviewed with fostering managers no changes required** | **Rosemarie Cronin** |

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# Introduction

Delegated authority was introduced in 2013 and allows foster carers to make everyday decisions about the children and young people that they care for, just as parents do. This can further be extended to children and young people who are care in other settings. To ensure that this happens it is important for social workers, foster carers, supervising social workers and other key professionals, work together with parents to ensure that this is completed.

# Delegated Authority Procedure

* 1. The Delegated Authority Decision Support tool should be completed with full discussion with the foster carers/residential units/lodgings providers, social workers, the child or young person (subject to age and understanding) and those who have parental responsibility for the child or young person. Consideration must be given as to the legal status of the child or young person and who has parental responsibility to make decisions.
  2. It is expected that “Foster carers should be given the maximum appropriate flexibility to take decisions relating to children in their care, within the framework of the agreed placement plan and the law governing parental responsibility”, (Fostering Guidance 2011 paragraph 3.10). This could also apply to residential staff or supported lodgings providers who are responsible for the day-to-day decisions for the children in their care (if they are under 18 years of age). This is to enable them to agree day to day decisions that other parents are able to make. It is important that all parties listed above are aware of and have an understanding of the agreed delegated authority.
  3. The social worker for the child or young person has responsibility for completing the Delegated Authority Decision Support Tool. This should ideally be completed at the Placement Planning Meeting for the child or young person. If some parties are not at this meeting the social worker is responsible for discussing the issues with the relevant person, ensuring that they understand what is being delegated and obtaining their signature to confirm agreement.
  4. A copy of the agreed Delegated Authority Decision Support Tool should be given to those who have responsibility for day-to-day decisions for the child or young person and a copy given to those who have Parental Responsibility. It should be recorded on the foster carer/supported lodgings providers file that this has been given to them. All information should also be recorded by the social worker on the child’s electronic file.
  5. Carers for the child/young person should take Section 1 of the Delegated Authority Decision Support Tool and the signature page to every medical intervention and appointment that the child or young person has with health professionals. It should also be shared with the school if/when signing consent to immunisations that are being undertaken at school.
  6. The social worker is responsible for ensuring that, for those children placed with Essex foster carers that each individual foster carer receives the medical consent card. This card needs to be completed alongside the Delegated Authority Decision Support Tool and states what consent has been agreed to be given to the foster carer. This is a wallet sized card that foster carers can keep with them at all times. The child’s name, d.o.b. legal status and NHS number needs to be inserted as does the individual foster carers name and the date the consent has been agreed from.
  7. The Delegated Authority Decision Support Tool should be reviewed as part of the Life Plan. Consent may change as the child/young person becomes older (and may be able to give consent themselves) or as the placement becomes more established.
  8. If the child or young person moves placement a new Delegated Authority Support Tool and medical consent card should be completed with all the relevant parties. This includes respite placements when a child/young person may only be placed for a short period of time. However, in some situations the person(s) with Parental Responsibility may agree the same delegated authority for respite placements as for the full-time placement. If this is the case the agreement must be clearly documented on the file to state this authority has been agreed so that foster carers are clear of the authority that has been delegated to them.

# Flowchart of procedure for obtaining Delegated Authority

Plan for child or young person to be placed with foster carer

Placement Planning Meeting held, Delegated Authority discussed (pre-placement or within 5 working days of the placement

If all relevant parties are not at the PPM. Social Worker to arrange to meet with absent parties to discuss and agree Delegated Authority

If all relevant parties at the PPM, the Delegated Authority Decision Support Tool should be agreed and signed

Completed Delegated Authority Support Tool signed by all relevant parties. Copy given to

* the foster carer/accommodation provider
* those with Parental Responsibility
* copy held on the child’s mosaic record

Carers provided with completed medical consent card

Carers provided with completed medical consent card

Carers provided with completed medical consent card

Carers provided with completed medical consent card

Carers should take section 1 of the Delegated Authority support tool and the signature page to every medical intervention and appointment. This should also be shared with the school when signing consent to immunisations

Delegated Authority reviewed as part of the Life Plan

Placement Planning Meeting held, Delegated Authority discussed (pre-placement or within 5 working days of the placement