

**ADOPTION AND PERMANENCE PANEL
INFORMATION LEAFLET**



Introduction

West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Adoption and Permanence Panel gives consideration to and makes recommendations on all aspects of adoption and permanent care which relates to decisions about children and applicants.

The primary functions of the Panel are to consider and make a recommendation on :

- A plan for permanence for a child
- Whether adoption is in the best interests of a child
- Whether an application for a permanence order is in the best interests of a child
- Whether a prospective adopter or permanent foster carer should be approved
- Whether a prospective adopter or permanent foster carer is suitable for a particular child or children for whom a permanence plan has been agreed.

Who makes the Decisions following the Recommendations of the Panel

The panel recommendations are considered by the Agency Decision Maker. He or she may or may not agree with the recommendations of the Panel.

Written notifications of the decision made will be sent to all applicants and social workers within 21 days of the Panel.

What happens if the recommendation is not approved?

Where a permanence plan is not endorsed, the permanence planning meeting will be reconvened to reconsider the child's future needs.

Where a proposed match is not agreed, an alternative resource will be sought.

Where an application by prospective adopters or foster carers has not been approved, the applicants may ask for a review of the decision by writing to the Head of Children's Health Care and Criminal Justice within 28 days of their notification.

The review will be undertaken by different Panel members or a Panel in neighbouring local authority. A decision on the review panel's recommendation will be made by the Head of Children's Health Care and Criminal Justice.

What Recommendations can the Panel make?

The Panel can make one of three recommendations

- To agree with the recommendations in the reports submitted
- To disagree with the recommendations in the reports submitted
- To defer a recommendation until further information is provided

What happens if the recommendation is not approved?

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Where a proposed match is not agreed, an alternative resource will be sought.

Where an application by prospective adopters or foster carers has not been approved, the applicants may ask for a review of the decision by writing to the Head of Children's Health Care and Criminal Justice within 28 days of their notification.

The review will be undertaken by a reconstituted Panel or a Panel from a neighbouring local authority. A decision on the review Panel's recommendation will be made by the Head of Children's Health Care and Criminal Justice.

Where and When is the Panel held?

You will be notified by letter where the Panel meeting is held. Tel No: 01389 776414

The Panel usually meets on the last Monday of each month. Each presentation takes approximately one hour.

What is the membership of the Panel?

There is a pool of panel members from within Health and Social Care Partnership. The Panel is also supported by a legal adviser and medical adviser.

Who attends the Panel?

Who attends the Panel depends on the case the Panel is being asked to consider:

Child's Permanence Plans

A copy of the reports will have been sent to Panel members in advance of the meeting. The social worker and senior social worker will attend throughout to present the plan and respond to questions from panel members.

The parent(s) will be invited to attend prior to the date of the Panel to share their views on the proposed plan for their child. They can be accompanied by a friend or a family member for support.

The child may be invited to attend part of the meeting, where he/she is of an age and stage of development and understanding to suggest that this could be helpful for the child.

Applications from Prospective Adopter and Foster Carers

A copy of the assessment report will have been sent to Panel members in advance of the meeting. The applicants will have contributed to the report and will have read and signed it. The Social Worker and Senior Social Worker will attend throughout to present the plan and respond to questions from Panel members. Applicants are invited and encouraged to attend part of the meeting. It can be helpful for both the Panel and applicants to meet each other and ask questions of each other.

Matchings between a Child with Permanence Plan and approved Adopters or Foster Carers

Panel members will have received a minute of the linking meeting and all previous reports and Panel Minutes, in advance of the Panel. The social worker and senior social worker for the child and the social worker for the prospective family will attend throughout to present the proposed match and respond to questions from Panel members. The child's current foster care and the prospective family will attend for part of the meeting.

What Recommendations can the Panel make?

The Panel can make one of three recommendations

- To agree with the recommendations in the reports submitted
- To disagree with the recommendations in the reports submitted
- To defer a recommendation until further information is provided

The Social Workers will normally be present when the recommendation is made. The applicants should be informed of the recommendation within 24 hours of the Panel.