

Court Skills

Diversity Issues in the Training Setting

People who present courses for Reconstruct make some assumptions, even though we're supposed not to, about participants.

These are that the group will contain people from a diverse range of backgrounds, some visible some less visible, some personal some professional. This diversity will cover gender, race, sexual orientation, disability and a lot more including personal experiences, class and religious persuasion.

So this means that the course will

- be presented using variety because people have different learning styles,
- describe concepts using a variety of examples.

The presenters will

- avoid jargon (or at least explain it),
- be aware of individual differences within the group and respect these,
- avoid the stereotyping of particular groups in society,
- be aware of the effect of language,
- accept that everyone has the right and the responsibility to challenge.

Additionally the facilitators hope that participants will:

- arrive punctually and stay (but explain unavoidable absences),
- respect each other,
- maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information,
- recognise and value difference,
- share experiences,
- ask questions,
- challenge views constructively.

We hope that this will provide a useful framework within which learning and development can take place.



Preparing For Court: The Procedural Requirements (Tabulated Format Of The Children Act 1989 Document "Court Procedures")

Emergency Protection Order Application

<p>Court must be satisfied:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) of reasonable cause to believe significant harm likely if child not removed or does not remain where living; or 2) Statutory welfare enquiries are being frustrated by unreasonable refusal of access where such access urgently required. s.44 (1) Children Act 1989 	<p>Application can be made ex parte, i.e. without informing parents, child etc. of time and place of application, but only with leave of justices' clerk. Rule 4 (4) of F.P.C> (C.A.) Rules 1991. Leave could be given over phone.</p> <p>Application form (one for each child) should be completed, and filed in court when application made or as justices' clerk directs. Rule 4 (4). A report or other documentary evidence can be filed with the form.</p> <p>If leave for ex parte application is refused, 1 days notice must be given of inter partes hearing unless clerk or court shortens the period. Rule 4 (1) & 14 (2) Ignore non-business days. Sat, Sun etc.</p> <p>Notice to be given to respondents, i.e. persons believed to have parental responsibility and also to person believed by applicant to be father without parental responsibility, and in some circumstances the child and current caretakers.</p> <p>To be served by the time-limit by delivery into person's hands or delivering to last known residence (or by 1st class post) the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) application form; b) notice of hearing form; c) reports or statements in support. <p>Assume proof of service will be required at hearing.</p>
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Warrant to Enforce Emergency Protection Order

<p>Court must be satisfied person attempting to implement an EPO has been refused entry to premises or access to child. s.48 (9) Children Act 1989.</p>	<p>Inter partes application on 1 day's notice, but ex partes application possible with leave on same basis as for EPO.</p>
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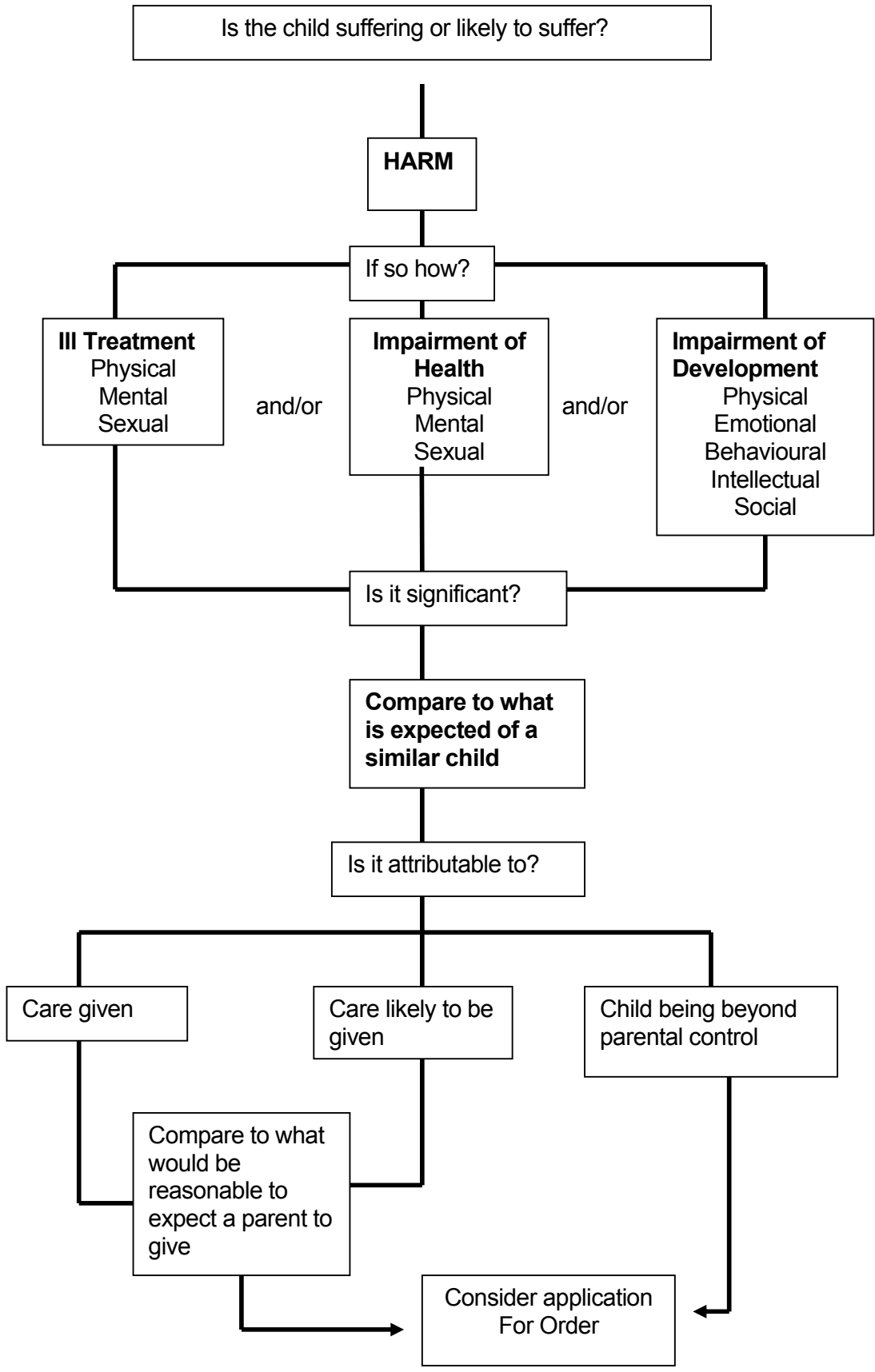
Preparing For Court: The Procedural Requirements (Cont.)

Interim Care or Supervision Order Application	
<p>Court must be satisfied of reasonable grounds for believing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and this is due to inadequate parental care given or likely to be given; or 2) child is beyond parental control. <p>Child's welfare is court's paramount consideration and welfare check-list is to be taken into account. s.38,31,1 Children Act 1989.</p>	<p>Application form for Care or Supervision Order and notice of hearing form to be completed for each child. Form to be filed at court and hearing date, time and place to be endorsed by justices' clerk.</p> <p>3 days notice (excluding non-business days) to be given before hearing. Rule 4 (1). Time-limit may be shortened by clerk or court on application. Rule 14 (2).</p> <p>Notice to be given to respondents, i.e. persons believed to have parental responsibility and also to person believed by applicant to be biological father without parental responsibility, and every person believed to be party to relevant proceedings awaiting hearing in respect of the same child and current caretakers.</p> <p>To be served by the time-limit by delivery into person's hands or by delivering to last known residence (or by 1st class post) the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) application form; b) notice of hearing form; c) reports of statements in support.
Other Applications	
<p>Application to Discharge EPO or to vary EPO directions for contact or medical examination s.45 (8), 44 (9) (b).</p>	<p>Assume proof of service will be required at hearing.</p> <p>As above - but 1 day's notice.</p>
<p>Extension of EPO Order Reasonable cause to believe the child likely to suffer significant harm if order not extended. s.45 (4) & (5).</p>	<p>As above - but 1 day's notice.</p>
<p>Secure Accommodation Orders s.25 Children Act 1989</p>	<p>As above - but 1 day's notice.</p>
<p>Child Assessment Order Reasonable cause to suspect harm or likelihood of it, assessment not likely. s.43 Children Act 1989.</p>	<p>Inter partes application. 7 days' notice, excluding non-business days, unless shortened by clerk or court. Rule 4 (1). 14 (2)</p>



<p>Contact Care Orders Including Authorisation to Refuse Contact s.34</p>	<p>Inter partes application. 7 days' notice, excluding non-business days, unless shortened by clerk or court. Rule 4 (1). 14 (2)</p>
<p>Application for Prohibited Steps and Specific Issue Orders s.8 Children Act 1989</p>	<p>Inter partes application. Local Authority applicants must first obtain leave to make application through a "request" and a draft application. If leave granted, 21 days' notice, unless leave granted for ex parte application or time shortened.</p>
<p>Applications for Residence and Contact Orders s.8 Children Act 1989</p>	<p>Inter partes application. 21 days' notice, unless shortened by clerk or court.</p>





ORDER	SECTION	LENGTH OF ORDER	NOTICE FOR APPLICATION
RESIDENCE	8	VARIABLE	21 DAYS
CONTACT	8	VARIABLE	21 DAYS
PROHIBITED STEPS	8	VARIABLE	21 DAYS
SPECIFIC ISSUES	8	VARIABLE	21 DAYS
CARE ORDER	31	UNTIL CHILD IS 18	3 DAYS
INTERIM CARE ORDER	38	UP TO 56 DAYS (FIRST) UP TOP 28 DAYS (THEREAFTER)	3 DAYS
SUPERVISION ORDER	31	1 YEAR	3 DAYS
EDUCATION SUPERVISION ORDER	36	1 YEAR	7 DAYS
INTERIM SUPERVISION ORDER	38	UP TO 56 DAYS (FIRST) UP TO 28 DAYS (THEREAFTER)	3 DAYS
CHILD ASSESSMENT ORDER	43	7 DAYS	7 DAYS
EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDER*	44	UP TO 8 DAYS ONE EXTENSION FOR UP TO 7 DAYS	1 DAY
POLICE PROTECTION	46	3 DAYS	NO APPLICATION NECESSARY
* Can be heard without notice with the Court's permission			



The Family Proceedings Court

Pre-Court Preparation for Social Workers

Most cases have already been won or lost (if you will excuse the terminology) prior to going into court.

Before you go to court:

1. Check that the work on the case is OK - make sure you have visited the family recently - make sure that the most suitable placement has been found. Don't put up with second best.
2. Check that the work you've done has been recorded - the Guardian will be looking through your files and will want to look at the preventative work done with the family. If you haven't noted it down how will they know?
3. Be open with parents from the beginning. When working in partnership with parents you must explain to them that you have a statutory role. Explain your duties towards the child - you'll then feel less uneasy if you have to tell the court about their parenting skills etc.
4. Demand good supervision from your manager - make sure you are happy with the recommendation you are making to the court. It is your recommendation not your manager's.
5. Make sure the plans for the child are formulated and clear.
6. Check that you understand the law. Look back through your Children Act training packs.
7. List the strengths and weaknesses of your case - be honest with yourself. If the placement isn't ideal but it is better than the child going home, be prepared to say so and why.
8. Practice with a colleague the questions you think you'll be asked.
9. Prepare a good statement - the court will be able to read your statement before you say anything. It is the first impression the court will have of you.
10. Co-operate with the Guardian ad Litem. If they point out any weaknesses in the plan discuss them with your manager to see if you can remedy them.
11. Know what you are talking about - think through any plans carefully - don't panic. Read up on the relevant literature. If you are dealing with a sexual abuse case you should have read the whole of the Cleveland Report.



Setting the Scene - Court Dynamics

1. Speak clearly - call the Judges or Magistrates by their correct title.
2. Keep your answers brief and to the point.
3. Take your case file and notes for reference.
4. Make sure you are on time.
5. Don't try to memorise large chunks of information.
6. Think about the questions, refer to your notes.
7. Dress and behave in a suitable manner.

Giving Evidence in Chief

1. You can take the oath or make an affirmation, you read words from a card. If you need to affirm (or take the oath in a different way) please inform the usher beforehand.
2. You normally take the oath standing up, but your lawyer will ask for you to be allowed to sit down when you are giving evidence.
3. Speak slowly and clearly - the Clerk has to write down your answers and does not take shorthand.
4. Remember that the bench will have already seen your statement.
5. Answer the questions asked. Don't volunteer other information.
6. Keep your answers short. Don't ramble. Your lawyer will know what she / he want you to say. If you answer the questions, you'll be saying it.
7. Look up when you answer the questions.
8. Accept that everything on the case may not have gone perfectly - your lawyer will want to get the difficulties out of the way so if he / she asks you if the foster placement is ideal and it isn't, tell them that.
9. Avoid jargon. Use language that will be understood by ordinary people.
10. Don't worry too much about hearsay - hearsay is now admissible in the Family Proceedings Division of the Magistrates Court, although the court can attach such weight to it as they think fit. If you are giving too much hearsay someone will ask you to stop.



Answering Other Lawyers' Questions (Cross Examination)

1. Do not take this too personally. The other parties' solicitors are not necessarily trying to make you look incompetent or a liar. They will however be looking for inconsistencies within your own evidence, inconsistencies between your evidence and that of other witnesses, obvious gaps in your evidence and weaknesses in your argument from fact to conclusion.
2. Don't lose your cool.
3. Don't think that everything you say must be damaging to the parents - accept you might be wrong - for example, couldn't this mother change - yes she could but it would be very unlikely.
4. Don't be afraid to express your opinion on social work matters. Provided you can come up with the facts to support your opinion you are entitled to give it. You are a professional experienced witness.
5. Don't be afraid to qualify your answers. Cross examination questions are often framed in such a way as a simple yes or no are not an adequate or full answer. If necessary, say yes, but or no, but . If the cross examiner tries to force you into giving without qualification an answer which is not the whole truth, stick to your grounds and if need be explain.
6. Keep an eye on the Magistrates for reactions. You can pick up signs of irritation from Magistrates. If they think you are waffling, shut up.

Useful Phrases to keep in mind

1. Yes.
2. No.
3. To the best of my knowledge.
4. As far as I can recall.
5. It is my view that.
6. In my experience.
7. No I did not say that.
8. The plan was.
9. At that time.
10. With the benefit of hindsight.



Usual Order of Proceedings (The Court May Require Changes)

The Local Authorities Case

- Magistrates read statements from all parties (in private or in court).
- Solicitor for the council opens the case giving general background, describing what evidence will be called, indicating what order will be asked for.
- First witness is questioned by local authority lawyer (evidence in chief).
- First witness is questioned by parents' solicitor (re-examination).
- First witness is questioned by the child's solicitor instructed by a Guardian ad Litem (cross examination).
- The witness may be questioned again by the Council solicitor (re-examination).
- Next witness is called and examined in chief (and so on).

The Decision

- Bench retires to decide case.
- Bench return and make their decision together with reasons.

NB: If as case is heard in the County or High Court the same order will be followed but the case will be dealt with by a Judge.



Ten Aspects On Giving Evidence In Court

1. Knowledge Know your case well, be clear about:

What happened – the facts
What your view is about why it happened – the opinion
The basis for your opinion – your experience and any relevant research.
2. Preparation Prepare witness statements with care.
If possible remove opinion and stick to fact.
3. Demeanour Show respect to the Court in behaviour and dress.
4. Equipment Take a copy of your witness statement with you.
Use files with care, ensure the main areas of case records are highlighted for easy reference.
5. Stance Whether sitting or standing ensure that you are facing the magistrates. Stand or sit with your feet pointing to them. In this way you will naturally turn to face them when answering questions.
6. Content Your verbal evidence should follow the good practice set out in report writing. Avoid exaggeration, labelling terms “alcoholic”, meaningless words, “several”, hearsay evidence.
7. Opinions Ensure that any opinions are grounded in facts.
8. Delivery Speak clearly and slowly so that the magistrates can take full notes.
9. Language Use every day language, avoid jargon.
10. Arguments Avoid arguing with lawyers. However, remember that the magistrates want to hear your professional views so don't be bullied by the lawyers. If you need time to think or want to have the question repeated, then ask for it. If you don't agree with statements made by lawyers, state that you don't.



Cross-Examination - Questions To Ponder

Cross-examination is most effective when developed through a series of linked questions. The following are just examples of questions which the Children Act may put into the minds of advocates acting for children and families when questioning social workers.

- Has the child been regarded as 'in need' by your Department? (If yes) "Since what date has that been the case"?
- What process is supposed to be carried out in your Department before deciding a child is 'in need'? (When answered) "What was actually done in this case"?
- What services were provided to the family by your Department to the family in consequence"?
- "Have any services not been provided"? (If yes) "Why not"?
- "What consideration was given by you to alternative to court proceedings in this case"?
- "Are you aware of Department of Health guidance about precisely this issue"? (If yes) "What does that guidance say"?
- "What consultation with family members about alternatives to proceedings was attempted"? (When answered) "What investigation actually took place as to the possibility of the child's going to live with another part of the family"?
- "Isn't it fair to say that old discredited methods of child protection have been used in this case instead of sorting the problem out voluntarily with a the family"?
- "What do you understand by the term 'significant harm'"?
- "Is it your view the child has already suffered 'significant harm' due to inadequate parental care"? (If yes) "In a few words, what does the significant harm you say has occurred consist of"?
- "If significant harm due to inadequate parental care has not in fact yet occurred, it must be right, surely, that significant harm is likely in the future to be no more than a possibility"? (After reasons are given) "Those are also reasons for saying future significant harm is just a possibility. It's possible you've over-stated the likelihood of future harm, isn't it"?



Report Writing

Length

It is important to set a target length for any report that you are proposing to write before you commence. Most reports are too long. Once the report is written in rough it is often a good idea to cut the length down. Set a target and achieve it; about 20% is a reasonable figure. This is likely to reduce opinion and overstatement as well as improve the length.

Structure

All reports should follow a basic structure which is usually based around the following:-

1. INTRODUCTION
2. SUMMARY
3. CONCLUSION
4. RECOMMENDATION

An **introduction** should be short and should include the purpose of the report.

A **summary** is the longest part of the report as this describes the events. It should follow a sensible order and be chronological. However, if the report is describing a family containing four children for example, it may be more sensible to discuss each of the children in turn, but use a chronological order within the wider framework of "children".

The **conclusion** should draw together the summary and be available to the reader as a simple reference tool.

The **recommendation** should only be used where it is expected that the writer will make a recommendation, many reports are written for information purposes only.



Content

Differentiation should be made between

OPINION	“he is an alcoholic”
HEARSAY	“Mrs Smith told me that he has a drink problem”
FACT	“I smelt alcohol on his breath”

If possible hearsay should be avoided, or backed up by a fact.

Fact should be separated from opinion. Indeed no opinion should be stated without a fact to base the opinion on. Ideally some research should then follow to show that there is a correlation between the fact and opinion.

This can best be illustrated by the following example of the process of preparing a statement regarding drinking which is to be contained within a child protection report.

“In my opinion he is an alcoholic”.

This is a worthless piece of information. It is based on no evidence and implies that the writer of the report is prejudiced.

A redraft may include, **“in my opinion he is an alcoholic because I have noticed that on four occasions he has been barely conscious at 10 am when I have visited, he has admitted to having a drink problem, and he has told me that he drinks eight pints of “Tennents Super” and a half bottle of whisky per day”.**

This is an improvement because the opinion “he is an alcoholic” has been partly justified by some facts.

It can be further improved by the addition of research showing a correlation between the fact and the subject being discussed, in this case child protection.

“In my opinion he is an alcoholic because I noticed that on four occasions he has been barely conscious at 10 am when I have visited, he has admitted to having a drink problem, and he has told me that he drinks eight pints of “Tennents Super” and a half bottle of whisky per day”. “Wyatt and Powell showed in their report dated 1988 that alcoholism played a part in 65% of cases of abuse”.

We now have the three necessary ingredients for a good report.

Opinion	-	“he is an alcoholic”
Fact	-	“his admission”
Research	-	“Wyatt and Powell”



If we were to reduce the length by 20%, from 76 words to 60 we have the following. **“On four occasions I’ve noticed that he has been barely conscious at 10 am. He has admitted to me that he has a drink problem and has said that he drinks eight pints of “Tennents Super” and a half bottle of whisky per day. “Wyatt and Powell showed in 1988 that alcoholism played a part in 65% of cases of abuse”.**

This is 60 words. The value judgement “in my opinion he is an alcoholic” which started the process has now disappeared. The writer of the report has stuck only to facts and research. The reader can draw her / his own opinions from the report.

Be wary of using words that have ambiguous meanings. The following list is an example of words that should be avoided as they all mean different things to different people.

Often	Rarely	Numerous
Sometimes	Occasionally	Always

It is obvious that there are different meanings that can be attributed to these words. Less obvious but just as inappropriate for the same reason are the following:-

Serious	Harmful	Dirty
Manipulative	Inadequate	Bonded
Uncaring	Caring	Good
Bad	Loving	Supportive

The areas that these words describe are important in the area of child protection. The words themselves are meaningless unless they are supported by evidence to show how the writer of the report has formed the opinion. As in the example given, however once the evidence is stated it is often unnecessary to state an opinion, perhaps leaving any conclusions to the end of the report.



Principles And Problems In Recording

PRINCIPLE	KEY PROBLEMS
1. ACCURACY	Factual Inaccuracies Opinions recorded as facts Unsubstantiated opinions
2. CLARITY	Jargon, Codes or Abbreviations Material badly set out Ambiguous material open to interpretation
3. RELEVANCE	Failure to focus on point of piece of work / recording Irrelevant material
4. RETRIEVABILITY	Source of information not given Assumed knowledge Material hidden in different parts of record / file



Judicial Protocols for Case Management

Issues for social workers

In an effort to streamline proceedings and reduce delay in the courts the Department for Constitutional Affairs launched a new set of protocols for children's hearings which came into effect in November 2003. This new approach focuses on effective case management with a guideline of completing all cases within 40 weeks of initial application. The new protocol covers six steps in the process and gives more control to the judges to ensure that all parties meet the deadlines. At various points all parties are given the opportunity to review the key issues and explore available options. It is hoped that simplifying the process will lead to better and faster results for children.

Main Issues:

The protocol aims to address:

- (a) Delay – All care proceedings should be heard within an overall timetable of 40 weeks.
- (b) Uniformity between all Court centres.
- (c) Judicial continuity and consistency with the same judge involved throughout wherever possible.
- (d) Timetabling of key stages through to final hearing should be fixed at an early stage.
- (e) Rigorous control of experts, with an emphasis on reducing the need for external reports
- (f) Standardisation of court documents.

Planning:

Pre-application requirements:

All cases should be concluded within 52 weeks of a referral to social services and the protocol puts forward a timetable of 40 weeks from date of issue of proceedings to the final hearing. Therefore from the time social services receive a referral, the Local Authority has 12 weeks to decide whether to issue proceedings. There is an onus on the Local Authority and the social worker to have identified and prepared key issues and documents prior to the initial application. Files should be in good order and properly written up.

Everyone is required to keep the principle of Active Care Management in mind at all times. (See Annex to Practice Directions Pg. 86 PJCM).



Legal planning meetings:

These are vital at an early stage in each case. There is a 12-week time limit from referral to issue of proceedings.

- Need to consider: -
- (a) Necessary documentation
 - (b) Core assessment
 - (c) Disclosure
 - (d) Experts
 - (e) Time scales
 - (f) Grounds for any proceedings (schedule of facts)

Documents required:

Social workers chronology

Lord Laming's report into the death of Victoria Climbié makes it a requirement to have a chronology of significant events on every social work file and kept up to date as events unfold. A chronology sets out the main factual basis of the evidence and has been a requirement for some time as guidance was given in Re E (Care Proceedings: Social Work Practice) [2000] 2 FLR 254

Appendix B/2 sets out the requirements of a Chronology and describes it as a succinct summary of the significant dates in the child's life in chronological order. It is a running record and must be updated during the proceedings.

The Chronology is a separate document and not incorporated into the statement.

Initial Social Work Statement: (AppendixB/3)

http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/docs/using_courts/protocol/protocol-appendix-b.pdf

These statements are needed at the beginning of proceedings and must be available before proceedings are issued. An initial statement need be no more than 6 pages and it should complement, not repeat, the information in the chronology. It is important to include an analysis of the facts and circumstances that have lead to the decision to take action through court proceedings.

In preparation of the statement, social workers should consider and discuss with Legal Services all other sources of information/evidence that could/should be explored, for example health visitors, teachers or carers. Any additional evidence in existence from other sources must be served by the Local Authority to the other parties involved by day 3 following application.



Core assessment/initial assessment (Appendix F of Protocol)
http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/docs/using_courts/protocol/protocol-appendix-f.pdf

Initial and core assessments are required as part of the LA documentation and should be available at the outset of proceedings unless it is an emergency application and the child is not previously known. More reliance is going to be placed on the expertise of social workers and less on 'experts' with a consequent emphasis on good analysis within the assessment.

Decision to Apply for a Care Order:

The core assessment should identify

- The needs of the child (including for protection),
- The services that will be provided,
- The role of other professionals and agencies,
- Whether additional specialist assessments are to be undertaken,
- The timetable and
- The responsibilities of those involved.

Interim Care Plans:

Where social services decide to make an application to the Court they must satisfy the Court that an order would be better for the child than making no order at all. An interim care plan should be prepared, filed and served so as to be available to the Court for the Case Management Conference. In cases where no core assessment has been undertaken (e.g. because the interim care order had to be taken quickly before one could be begun/completed) it should be completed as soon as possible. The interim care plan should be developed from the initial assessment information

Care Plans:

Care Plans should be written so as to comply with the Government guidance given in **LAC(99) 29** in England *Care Plans and Care Proceedings under the CA 1989*, **NAFWC 1/2000** in Wales and should include details of the following:

- The aim of the plan and a summary of the social work timetable
- A summary of the child's needs and how these are to be met including
 - placement
 - contact with family and other significant persons
 - education, healthcare and social care services
 - the role of parents and other significant persons
 - the views of others
 - implementation and management of the plan



Emergency Protection:

Where the grounds are met for significant harm an application for a child assessment order or an emergency protection order may be made by social services. The child may be removed or remain in a safe place under police powers of protection

Disclosure

By day 3 the Local Authority must file:

- (a) C1 and C13
- (b) Any Court Orders
- (c) Initial Social Workers Statement
- (d) Social Workers chronology
- (e) Core or Initial Assessments
- (f) S37 Report (if it exists)
- (g) Any other evidence, expert, medical reports etc.

The Local Authority must give full and frank disclosure, and directions can be made by the court to ensure compliance.

Relevant documents include:

- Contact recording i.e. supervision of contact notes/observations
- Minutes / notes of meetings
- Case Conference reports

The Children's Guardian has a duty to read files and confirm that all necessary documents have been disclosed.

http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/using_courts/protocol/protocol.htm



STEP 1: The Application

Objective

To provide sufficient information about the Local Authority's (LA) case to enable:

- The parties and the Court to identify the issues
- The Court to make early welfare and case management decisions about the child

Target time by DAY 3

STEP 2: The First Hearing in the FPC

Objective

To decide what immediate steps are necessary to safeguard the welfare of the child by:

- Determining contested interim care order applications/with whom the child will live
- Identifying how to prevent delay
- Identifying the appropriate Court
- Transferring to the appropriate Court

Target time by DAY 6

STEP 3: Allocation Hearing & Directions

Objective

To make provision for continuous and consistent judicial case management

Target time by DAY 11

STEP 4: The Case Management Conference

Objective

To consider what case management directions are necessary

- To ensure that a fair hearing of the proceedings takes place
- To timetable the proceedings so that the Final Hearing is completed within or before the recommended hearing window

Target time between DAYS 15 and 60

STEP 5: The Pre-Hearing Review

Objective

To identify and narrow the remaining issues between the parties and ensure that the Final Hearing is effective

Target time by WEEK 37



STEP 6: The Final Hearing

Objective

To determine the remaining issues between the parties

Target time by WEEK 40

http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/using_courts/protocol/protocol.htm

http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/docs/using_courts/protocol/protocol-appendix-b.pdf standard documents required

http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/docs/using_courts/protocol/protocol-appendix-f.pdf initial and core assessments and care planning

