

Protocol governing 'out-of-hours' arrangements for Hackney Children's Social Care

Introduction

Hackney is deploying 'day staff' to provide an out-of-hours service to children that reduces bureaucracy, is overseen and reviewed by Access and Assessment Service management and ensures a high degree of safety and timeliness in its response.

Referrals to Hackney CSC during office hours:

Referrals can be made to CSC during office hours in a variety of ways:

- Phoning First Response Team on 020 8356 5500
- Emailing a referral to cscreferrals@hackney.gov.uk or cscreferrals@hackney.gov.uk.cjism.net (if you need to send it from a secure address)
- Faxing a referral to 020 8356 5516
- Visiting Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, E8 1DY

It should be remembered that referring children during office hours is the accepted way of accessing services; out-of-hours contact with CSC should be reserved for urgent situations.

Referrals to Hackney CSC outside office hours:

- Urgent referrals can be made to CSC outside office hours (after 5 p.m., weekends and Bank Holidays) only by calling 020 8356 2346 (option 1 will divert the caller to CSC and option 2 will divert to Adult and Mental Health Services).
- Callers to CSC will access directly a Consultant Social Worker, front-line managers qualified to conduct child protection strategy discussions, initiate and carry out child protection enquiries and take decisions about thresholds of intervention.
- If the CSW is engaged in a call the caller is diverted to a voicemail facility to which the CSW has access.
- The CSWs work from home with remote-working technology and thus have access as needed to the CSC database. They are able to conduct visits as needed.
- All CSWs who provide 'out-of-hours' cover have access to a resource pack which gathers together paperwork, telephone numbers and service provider details.
- There is immediate access available for CSWs who need Head of Service approval when scenarios arise such as placing a child in care, moving a Looked After Child's placement, providing emergency housing to a family or responding to a child death.
- CSWs email records of their interventions to cscreferrals@hackney.gov.uk which is then sent by First Response Team to the allocated social work unit. If the child is unallocated, is screened by one of the Screening and Referral Managers.
- At weekends each CSW gives a verbal 'hand-over' to the CSW coming onto the next shift in addition to emailing them regarding issues that may arise during the shift.

City of London out-of-hours cover

- Hackney CSC and the East London NHS Foundation Trust provide out-of-hours cover for the City of London regarding children and adults respectively.
- On-call social workers are accessed as above (020 8356 2346)
- City of London CSC are improving their safeguarding arrangements by providing Hackney CSC with out-of-hours access to their social care records. CSWs fielding requests for services or information regarding City of London children will access their records via a secure laptop kept in the office of Adult and Mental Health Services and which will be accessed as needed by colleagues within Adult and Mental Health Services out-of-hours service.
- City of London children dealt with by Hackney CSC's out-of-hours service have their details passed to City of London CSC by First Response Team in the daytime (emailed to social.services@cityoflondon.gov.uk or 020 7332 1224).