



North Somerset 
Primary Care Trust

**Joint Working Between
Children & Young People's Services,
Health and Connexions for Children
with Complex Needs for whom there is
Shared Agency Concern**

**Issued November 2003
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To be reviewed annually in September

1. Statement of Shared Objectives and Values

Health, Children & Young People's Services and Connexions recognise that the needs of children often cross organisational boundaries and that the delivery of good outcomes for children require effective working between agencies and the pooling of effort and sometimes resources, to identify creative and flexible solutions to complex and difficult cases.

The Complex Needs Process has been set up to identify solutions to the needs of children who are jointly regarded as the most complex and difficult to resolve in North Somerset.

In carrying out this role, decisions of the Complex Needs Process will be underpinned by the following values and principles:

- Children and young people usually do better living in the community where they are growing up, whether that be with their birth or extended family.
- Where it is not possible for children and young people to remain within their own family, children will normally be placed within a substitute family care setting where community based support, health intervention or education can be mobilised.
- Solutions for children and young people will be based upon promoting greatest inclusivity and access to universal services. Any specialist support or intervention would be geared towards promoting the use of and inclusion in universal services either immediately or in the future.
- Placement outside of North Somerset would normally be a choice of last resort when all other options have been thoroughly explored and exhausted and where a clearly demonstrable case has been made that such a placement is in the best interests of the child.
- Any solutions or packages identified for children and young people will be made on the basis of seeing the child's needs as paramount. They will be delivered in a way that enables parents to retain or regain and exercise parental responsibility, as is appropriate and consistent with the best interests of the child.
- The young persons' views in any decision making process are important, and the four agencies will always take these views into consideration.
- Any solutions identified for children or young people will be commensurate with the level of identified need and will take into account considerations of best value, value for money, and resources available to agencies either individually or collectively.

This protocol has been agreed by the above agencies to provide shared assessments and services to children with complex needs.

The aim is for children to benefit from the joint services at an early point based on the needs of the child and how to meet them bearing in mind what local services are available.

These notes should be read in conjunction with the flowchart ([Appendix 1](#)) which details the process. It is not anticipated that the Complex Needs Process will replace effective multi-agency casework meetings, but be a clear process to be enacted for the most complex children where solutions have not been easily identified. It is predicted that approximately 10 children will benefit from this process in any one year.

2 Agency Definitions of Complex Need

2.1 Health

A child with complex needs will be:

- Receiving health services from a multi-professional team of health workers who work with colleagues and other agencies as appropriate

2.2 Children & Young People's Services: Personalised Learning

A child with complex needs will either have:

- A Statement of Special Educational Needs
- Audit - SEN Funding
- Placed on the School Action Plus level of Code of Practice

It is anticipated that there will be a high level of Personalised Learning Branch involvement from the following teams: the Education Psychology Service, Education Welfare Service, Education Family Support Team, Educational Support Services and SEN Team. This involvement will have been in place over a significant period of time.

2.3 Children & Young People's Services: Children & Families

A child with complex needs will either be:

- A child in need living in the community and where a core assessment will have been completed
- A child already looked after for whom an assessment of needs and care plan will be in existence.

It is likely that either CYPS: Personalised Learning and/or Health will also be providing services in conjunction with CYPS: Children & Families.

The Child in Need review or Looked After Children review should consider:

- The assessed needs of the child
- How those needs can be met through the provision of local services *or*

- Whether a specific package can be developed locally through commissioning services to meet identified needs.

2.4 Connexions

A young person with complex needs will either have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or be on the School Action Plus stage of the Code of Practice. The young person will be a minimum age of 13 years if Connexions are to be involved.

The young person could be at either a special school or mainstream school and is likely to require a multi-agency intervention.

3 When to Call a Complex Needs meeting

It is anticipated that there may be approximately 10 children that will require a Complex Needs meeting in any one year, and that the Complex Needs meeting is only convened once other joint working has been implemented.

3.1 Health

Where a child's needs cannot be met by the team, or by the normal working arrangements between professionals and agencies, a Complex Needs meeting (involving relevant health professionals and relevant workers from other agencies) will be convened by the person deemed to be the "lead worker" in health (unless such a meeting is already being convened by Children & Young People's Services or Connexions).

3.2 Children & Young People's Services: Personalised Learning

A Complex Needs meeting should be convened where a child's needs cannot be met via the normal multi-professional meetings, and when interventions have been trialled and proven as ineffective. It is anticipated that there will be a high level of involvement from Personalised Learning Branch Teams prior to convening a Complex Needs meeting. The Complex Needs meeting will be convened by the person deemed to be the "lead worker" in Personalised Learning (unless such a meeting is already being convened by Health, CYPS: Children & Families or Connexions).

3.3 Children & Young People's Services – Children & Families

Where the CN or LAC review is not able to progress the above due to a need for wider multi-agency representation then a Complex Needs meeting should be convened to include Health, CYPS: Personalised Learning and Connexions. The Complex Needs meeting is therefore a recommendation from the Child in Need or Looked After Children review. Wherever possible the Complex Needs meeting will be chaired by an independent Reviewing Officer or Co-ordinator.

3.4 Connexions

Where provision for the young person is unlikely to be met via the existing routes or by normal working arrangements between agencies, a bespoke multi-agency package may need to be developed to meet the needs of the young person.

4 The Complex Needs Meeting – Phase 1

A Complex Needs meeting on a specific young person may be convened by Children & Young People's Services, Health or Connexions by following separate procedures as outlined under respective agency headings in the previous section.

It is the responsibility of each agency to provide up-to-date information on the assessed needs of the child. For CYPS: Children & Families, this will either be a core assessment or LAC documentation.

The Complex Needs meeting may include input from all agencies involved with the child. If a professional is unable to attend, they must provide the relevant information in writing in advance.

The Complex Needs meeting should include the child and parents/carers where appropriate. If this is not possible their views must be obtained and presented at the meeting.

The meeting should clearly identify the assessed needs of the child and how these needs might be met through co-ordinating local services or local packages of care and setting a date to review these. The agreed Action Plan will then be implemented and reviewed by the Complex Needs meeting.

There are three possible routes:

- i. The Complex Needs Meeting review progress and agree new targets. A new review date is set.
- ii. The Complex Needs Meeting review progress and decide that a single agency or multi-agency approach is sufficient and agree no further complex needs meetings are required at this point.
- iii. The Complex Needs Meeting review progress and decide that needs cannot be met by such arrangements and information is referred to the SCIP Panel. **Information must be collated on the yellow Complex Needs Proforma ([Appendix 3](#)). Please type proforma and print on yellow paper.**

Where needs cannot be met by such arrangements, the minutes of the meeting should clearly identify these and each agency should indicate where local resources are not sufficient or available to meet assessed needs.

Minutes of the meeting will be the responsibility of the convening agency. This agency will also be responsible for the completion of the proforma, which

identifies needs, how these are to be met and a review date. It is important to complete the proforma as this will be needed should the case progress to the Statutory and Complex Issues Panel (SCIP).

The Chair of the Complex Needs meeting must ensure that all options are discussed in respect of meeting identified needs, including developing creative packages working across all agencies.

Where these options include additional costs, resources or services not within the control of those attending, these should be identified and clearly recorded on the proforma.

If the meeting is able to make a recommendation then this should be noted along with any disagreements.

Care should be taken not to raise expectations of young people, parents or others. The meeting should focus on solutions.

Any recommendations which require additional funding outside the control of those attending must be referred either to the relevant single agency (if a clear single agency responsibility is identified and agreed) or to SCIP (where multi-agency funding is needed). Referral to SCIP requires a completed copy of the proforma, minutes and covering memo which should be sent **within seven working days** of the meeting to:

**SEN Manager
Education Department
North Somerset Council
Town Hall
Weston super Mare
BS23 1ZZ**

for inclusion on the agenda for an extended Statutory and Complex Issues Panel (SCIP) (see below).

5 Statutory and Complex Issues Panel (SCIP) - Phase 2

The Statutory & Complex Issues Panel is a weekly panel held every Wednesday morning convened by the Personalised Learning department. The core work of the panel is to consider statutory issues relating to the SEN Code of Practice 2001, the needs of permanently excluded pupils and children or young people not on the roll of a school.

The meeting will extend the agenda and membership as necessary to consider complex cases of joint concern. The additional membership will include Health and Connexions representation as appropriate.

In cases where there are clearly Children & Young People's Services, Connexions or Health issues regarding the ability to meet assessed needs, then the case must be considered by the Statutory and Complex Issues Panel. All such cases will have been subject to a Complex Needs meeting.

The role of this Panel is to further consider the needs of the child and how these might be met locally using additional resources/funding.

All agencies will need to ensure assessments, review and other reports in addition to the proforma from the Complex Needs meeting are available for the Statutory and Complex Issues Panel.

Relevant papers should be sent to the SEN Manager in the Personalised Learning department who will confirm the date, time and venue for the case to be discussed. Papers received by 12:00 pm Friday will be included in the next SCIP meeting.

The SCIP meeting may be able to identify additional resources or other ways in which the young person's needs could be met. Where this is possible SCIP will produce:

- Proforma of action needed based on needs
- Set a date for the case to be reviewed through a Complex Needs meeting

5.1 Who attends SCIP?

- CYPS: Personalised Learning – SEN Manager, a representative of the Educational Psychology Service/Education Welfare Service Education Other Than At School Manager and team members
- Health - Programme Manager, Primary Care Trust where appropriate
- CYPS: Children & Families – Commissioning manager and/or other representative
- Connexions Team Leader

Where needs cannot be met SCIP will be responsible for referring individual cases to the Joint Concerns Panel by ensuring the name of the child/young person is given to the chair of the next Joint Concerns Panel for the agenda and identifying the person on the Joint Concerns Panel who will take lead responsibility for ensuring all necessary reports, reviews and supporting information from all agencies is collected and available for the members of the Joint Concerns Panel. The proforma will be used to record the SCIP decision.

6 Joint Concerns Panel (JCP) - Phase 3

Criteria for referral to the Joint Concerns Panel must be children or young people who fall into at least two of the following categories:

- Children assessed as being “in need” and who have complex needs who may be looked after by the Local Authority or at risk of not being able to have their needs met locally

and

- Children who have been, or who are being, statutorily assessed in relation to a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN); and where significant inter-agency action is likely to be required to meet the child's SEN.

and

- “Children in Need” who are assessed by a consultant in paediatrics, psychiatry/multi-disciplinary team and involving other agencies

The collated paperwork presented to the panel must include:

- Assessments by each agency
- The action plan of the Complex Needs meeting and SCIP meeting. This information must provide evidence of local options tried and reasons why these were not successful
- A care plan to include a clear statement of the child's assessed needs, the aims, objectives and where possible timescales to include transitional planning where age appropriate
- Confirmation of parental involvement, views and information provided to them on the joint concerns process.
- The child's views

The Joint Concerns Panel meets monthly. Referrals to JCP must be sent to the Inclusion Branch Administrator, Education Department, North Somerset Council, PO Box 51, Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1ZZ. This must include the completed Complex Needs Proforma ([Appendix 3](#)).

For consideration at a particular meeting documentation must be submitted at least 7 working days in advance.

The membership of the Joint Concerns Panel is as follows:

- Assistant Director (Personalised Learning) - CYPS
 - Assistant Director (Children & Families) - CYPS
 - Programme Manager, North Somerset PCT
- } Rotating Chair
- Service Manager Child Care Commissioning
 - SEN Manager or CYPS: Personalised Learning Designate
 - Connexions Team Leader

It is the responsibility of the Panel to reach a decision regarding the use of resources in order to meet complex needs.

The chair will ensure that all decisions relating to individual children/young people are recorded on the Proforma. This will include specifying what action should be taken next and by whom.

Where specific recommendations have not been agreed, the reasons for this should be clearly recorded in order for the lead professional to provide an explanation to the parents. A separate letter should also be sent to the parent from the panel chair. The proforma will also record the date the case will be reviewed by the JCP and the agency responsible for providing review information. In some instances the JCP may refer a case back for further information at the next panel.

Where the JCP conclude that an out-of-area placement is necessary, the predominant overriding needs of the child will be used to identify the agency and specific worker who will undertake the task of researching suitable options.

6.1 Funding Arrangements

Where the Joint Concerns Panel conclude that an out-of-area placement is necessary, the SEN Team will be asked to research suitable options in liaison with lead workers from Health, CYPS: Children & Families and Connexions.

- Guidance for LEA members of Joint Concerns Panel (JCP)

The LA will consider contributing to the funding of a social care/educational or health placement where a child or a young person is:

- Subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs *and*
- Has special educational needs that cannot be met locally *and*
- Is placed in a DfES registered and approved provision

- Guidance for Social Services Members of JCP

CYPS: Children & Families will consider contributing to the funding of a social/educational/health placement if:

- Assessed social care needs cannot be met locally *and*
- The child/young person is looked after or at risk of needing care and accommodation

- Guidance for Health Members of JCP

The Primary Care Trust will consider contributing to the funding of a social/education/health placement if:

- The service provided has a health component *and*
- The health care is appropriate to the individual's health need *and*

- Clinically appropriate local NHS services are not available or accessible to the Primary Care Trust or clinically appropriate NHS services are available, but for a valid reason are not accessible by the individual
- The decision as to whether it is appropriate for the NHS to contribute to a placement will be reached through an assessment by the child's consultant who will advise the PCT. A clinical assessment will be made and include the following elements:
 - The patient's condition and health needs
 - The health objectives
 - The requirement for health services
 - Different treatment options
 - Discussion of the options with the child/family and those with parental responsibility
 - The appropriate deliverer of services
 - The estimated length of treatment
 - An outline treatment plan including review periods
 - A detailed treatment plan up to the first review
 - Monitoring mechanisms
- Guidance for Connexions Members of JCP

Connexions will become involved if:

- The young person is a minimum of 13 years old, and
- The young person has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and
- The young person has special educational needs that cannot be met through current local provision.

6.2 Review Arrangements

The JCP will review all children jointly funded placed in out-of-area provision at least every six months. Every September, a list of dates on which each child will be reviewed will be circulated by CYPS: Children & Families to all agencies. Collated paperwork should be provided prior to the review date (see section 6).

6.3 Guidance on Identifying Suitable Provision

Once the JCP has agreed that an out-of-area placement is needed the CYPS: Children & Families Team Manager must ensure that South West Agency Placements (SWAP) is contacted. SWAP is a database run by Gloucestershire Social Services on behalf of the South West Authorities which all contribute to the running costs.

The social worker should endeavour as far as is reasonably possible to use the SWAP Agency Provider Placement Report (which you will find in your SWAP guide) to provide feedback on Agency Placements used. This is to ensure SWAP is:

- a) providing evidenced information and
- b) monitoring service standards

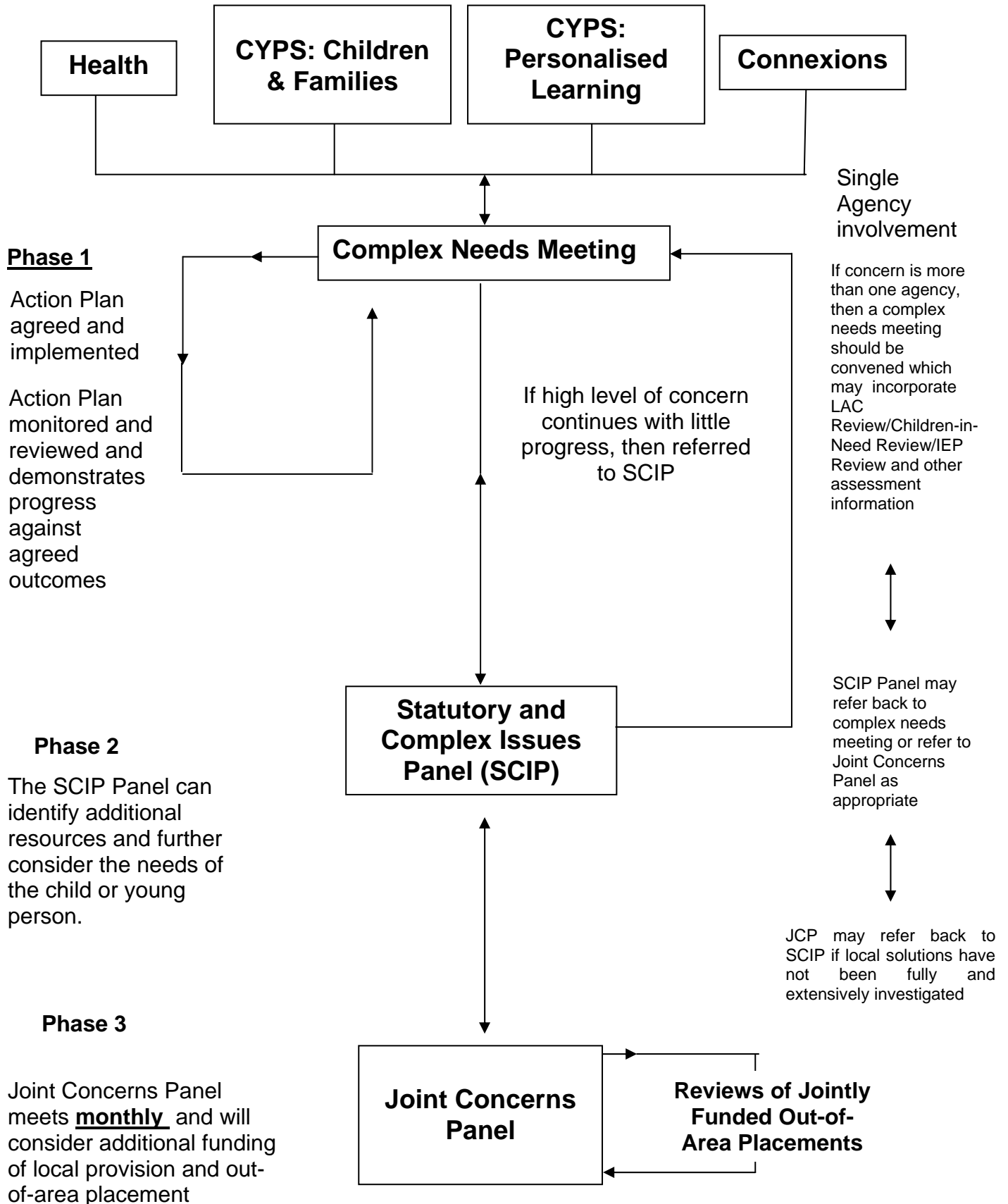
This should be the responsibility of the Case Holder reviewing the Young Person's Care/Placement.

All South West Authorities should notify SWAP when areas of concern or investigations may arise, SWAP can then ensure that potential placing Authorities are put in contact with those who have expressed concerns. Similarly it is the responsibility of each Authority to ensure SWAP is notified when concerns/investigations have been resolved.

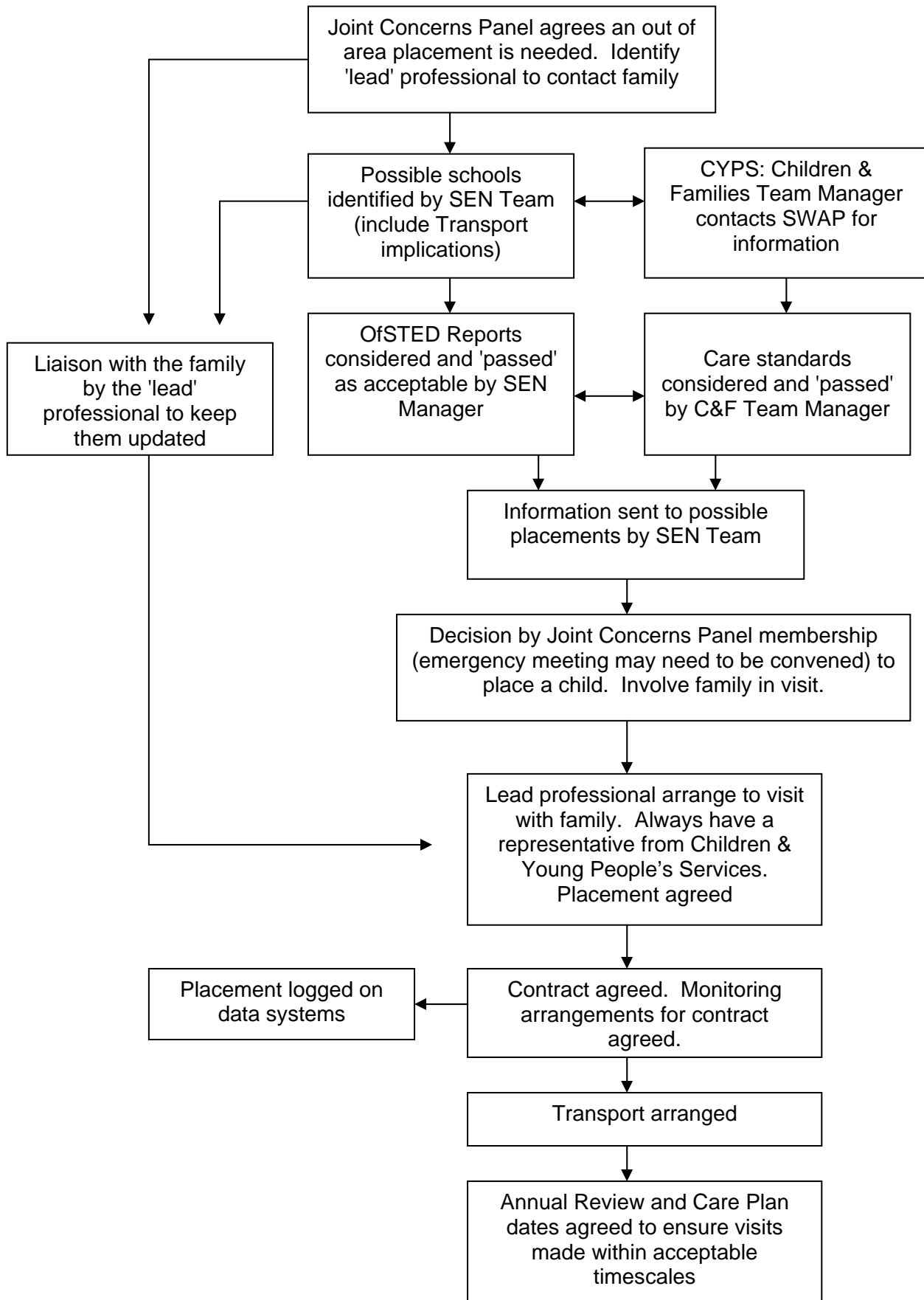
6.4 Guidance on Finalising an Out of Area Placement

The flowchart in [Appendix 2](#) describes the process by which a placement is secured.

Complex Needs Process Flowchart



Flowchart to Explain the Process for Finalising an Out of Area Placement



APPENDIX 3

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX NEEDS PROFORMA

This form should be completed at the Complex Needs Meeting and passed to subsequent panel meetings for endorsement/action agreed.

NAME OF CHILD:		DATE OF BIRTH:	
ADDRESS:			
CURRENT(LAST) SCHOOL:			
PARENTS/CARERS:			
LEAD REFERRING AGENCY:			

PANEL	DATE OF MEETING	CHAIR
Complex Needs		
SCIP		
Joint Concerns		

<p>Summary of Needs of Child/Young Person <i>Please attach relevant information that identifies needs and action already implemented</i></p>

What strategies have been put in place locally to meet the child/young person's needs?

Why have the local services been unable to meet the identified needs?

**What questions/issues are you requesting that the SCIP/Joint Concerns Panel
(*please delete as appropriate*) should consider?**

What specific options are being suggested, with associated costings?

What are the views of the child/young person?

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What is the view of the parents/carers?

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Please attach minutes of the Complex Needs Meeting(s) and SCIP Meeting as appropriate.

Please attach recent documents, e.g. LAC Review, Health Assessment, Annual Review, etc.

Signed by Key Worker from Lead Agency:

Information from SCIP/Joint Concerns will be provided to the Key Worker (named above). It is their responsibility to inform all involved participants.