

Version 1.0 FOI Status: Public Document	Children's and Young Persons Advocacy Service Referral and Allocation Procedure	December 2006 Review Due December 2007
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## DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SOCIAL SERVICES

### Children's and Young Persons Advocacy Service Referral and Allocation Procedure

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#### 1. *Approval and Authorisation*

Completion of the following signature blocks signifies the review and approval of this Process

Name	Job Title	Signature	Date
Authored by:- Bev Milway	Children's Rights Officer		December 2006
Approved by:- <Name>			
Authorised by:- <Name>			

#### 2. *Change History*

Version	Date	Reason
Version 1.0	December 2006	New Procedure

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## **Children's and Young Persons Advocacy Service Referral and Allocation Procedure**

The aim of the advocacy service is:

- To support children and young people to tell adults and professionals what their views and wishes are
- To support children and young people when dealing with professionals and systems to make sure their opinions are taken on board
- To advocate on behalf of young people who are unable to communicate their wishes or views effectively to the adults or professionals in their lives

The advocacy service is open to all children and young people from Derbyshire who are in care up to the age of 21. Anyone can refer a young person to the service. This includes:

Children and young people themselves  
 Social Workers  
 Carers  
 Family or friends  
 Residential staff  
 LACES  
 LAC Nurses  
 Teachers  
 CAHM's staff

The advocacy services aim is to support children and young people to have their opinions and views heard by those around them. This could include professionals or family members. The advocacy service will always be informed when a child or young person has made an official complaint. The service will then get in touch with the child/young person to ask them if they would like an advocate. The advocacy service can also be used in the following circumstances when a complaint has not been made:

- Placement issues - If the young person is unhappy in their placement
- Conflict between the young person and their social worker
- Reviews - to prepare a young person and support them in their reviews
- Contact - when the young person is unhappy about contact
- School placements - if the young person has been excluded or does not have a school placement
- Secure units - If a young person is placed in a secure unit to make sure the young person gets their views across at secure panels, reviews and in exit plans.

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other instances where an advocate may be appropriate.

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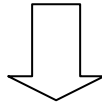
The advocates aim is to provide time limited focussed support to children and young people on issues. This may take a differing amount of time and in some cases may last up to 6 months or slightly longer. The advocates however do not provide general support of a long term nature and they do not fulfil the role of independent visitors.

### Out of county placements

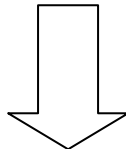
The advocacy service will provide advocacy services to young people placed out of borough. This is usually achieved by buying in advocacy from the area of the placement. This may take longer to achieve than an allocation of an advocate within Derbyshire. If this is the case the referrer will be kept up to date with the progress of the referral and the reason for any delay.

## The Referral Process

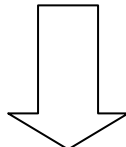
If an individual thinks that a child or young person could benefit from an advocate then they should firstly contact the Children's Rights Officer on 01629 772029. They can then talk through the young persons circumstances. A young person must always want advocacy involvement.



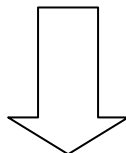
The Children's Rights Officer will then send out a referral form (appendix A) which will need to be filled in by the person referring. This gives the service basic information on why an advocate is needed and contact information for the young person. **Timescale: The same day**



In most circumstances the Children's Rights Officer will then go out and visit the young person to talk to them about the service and assess which advocate to match them with. Please note an advocate may be put in place without a visit if the situation is urgent. **Timescale: Within 5 working days or immediate allocation within 24 hours if urgent**



An advocate will then be allocated to the young person and make contact with them within 24 hours. The Children's Rights Officer will then inform the referrer, carers and or social worker of the advocate's involvement. **Timescale: 24 hours**



The advocate will report back to the Children's Rights Officer following the initial contact and then at weekly intervals giving a progress report until the case is resolved. The young person will then be sent an exit questionnaire following completion of the work. **Timescale: Weekly**