

Viability Assessments – Process

1

Stage 1 is completed by the Children's Social Work Team using 'Viability Assessment Form Template – Stage 1 & Stage 2'. SW provides applicants with 'Information Sheet for Families and Potential Carers (Viability Assessments)'

2

Team Manager (Children's Social Work Team) signs off Stage 1 Assessment.

3

Request for Stage 2 Viability Assessment email to 'Fostering Team Duty' inbox(FTeamDuty@swindon.gov.uk) and Fostering Managers. Completed Stage 1, PNC Checks and Local Authority Checks (where out of area) to be attached to the email. Stage 2 will not be accepted without PNC's attached.

4

Fostering Duty Manager receives and reviews request – confirms correct version of form has been used and all required information / documentation included. Return to children's team if further action required. Escalates to TM (Fostering) if any concerns re suitability. Duty Manager shares request for Stage 2 with Fostering Management group, advises timescales (i.e. Reg 24 or not), and checks capacity.

5

If 72-hour timescale, Stage 2 to be completed by Duty SW for the current or following day. Non-urgent referrals to be assigned based on capacity, and completed within two weeks.

6

Fostering Duty Manager adds to Viability Tracker and creates a folder in the child's name under WG_FP / Foster Carers Files / VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS ALL. Within the child's folder create a sub-folder in the applicant's name.

7

Viability Assessment Visit to be completed jointly with child's SW wherever possible (best practice). As a minimum expectation, the child's social worker must meet with the assessing social worker prior to assessment visit to applicants, to ensure fostering have a robust understanding of the child's needs. Without this, Fostering Team will not be able to complete the viability.

8

Progress of ongoing viability assessments to be reviewed at least weekly, via the Fostering Team Manager's Meetings.

9

Once complete, Stage 2 Viability to be sent to Fostering TM (or ATM) for signature. Record updated status on Viability Tracker.

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Once signed by Fostering (A)TM, send to Children's TM and SW for their review. Any feedback to be provided to Fostering TM within 24 hours; if no feedback within this timeframe agreement with the assessment will be presumed.

11

Assessment Outcomes:

Negative - process finalized with Fostering TM
Recommended for further assessment - to Service Manager (for Fostering/ Corporate Parenting) for agreement
Recommended for Reg 24 - to ADM for agreement

12

Once agreed, share with applicants for their comments and redactions.

13

Once signed off, send to Childcare Legal Support and the allocated solicitor (if known), Social Worker. (redacted and unredacted version)

NOTE: Wherever possible, Reg 24 Stage 1 should be completed and forwarded to the Fostering Team before the child is placed.