

Looked After Children's Emotional Health Service Consultation Clinic

What is it?

A meeting to discuss mental health issues for children who are looked after by Bolton Social Services and in:

- Foster care
- Residential care
- This could include:

Discussion regarding the outgoing work of the social worker/carer from a mental health perspective

- Thinking about a child's presentation and other possible interventions, e.g., direct work from Mental Health Practitioner, CAMHS or Adult Mental Health.
- Discussion regarding care planning

Consultation is a shared problem-solving process and not something done to the worker or carer.

How does this fit with CAMHS?

This service is in addition to the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). When you contact us to book a consultation we will liaise with CAMHS to see who would be most appropriate person to offer the consultation.

How do I arrange a Consultation?

- Social workers and Residential staff can telephone the LAC Mental Health administrator to provisionally book the next available slot, on telephone 01204 337480 or email FPU@bolton.gov.uk
- Foster carers can ask their supervising social worker or the child's social worker to book in as above.
- Appointment last 1½ hours.
- The appointment will be confirmed once we have liaised with CAMHS.
- The Consultation Clinic is not an emergency service. Immediate concerns about serious self harm or risk of suicide should be directed to the child's GP, A & E or the CAMHS risk assessment service, Monday to Friday, Tel: 01204 390859.

Who should come?

For children in foster care it is usually helpful for the field social worker, supervising social worker and foster carer to attend.

For children in residential care it is useful for the social worker, key worker and assistant manager to be present.

In some cases it may be helpful to invite the children's parents. Children themselves should not be brought although they should of course be informed. Other professionals may also be invited should this seem appropriate. ***It is your responsibility to inform and invite all appropriate people to the consultation.***

How can you facilitate the consultation?

When booking in we need to know:-

- child's name (including any alias's), date of birth, address, GP, what type of care i.e. foster or residential, whether already known to CAMHS, dates of any previous consultations, whether in Bolton or out of borough, names and roles of others who you maybe be inviting.
- It saves time during the consultation if you have forwarded a copy of the 'consultation information sheet' and/or:
- Detailed chronology of child's life experiences/placement.
- Recent/relevant reports and assessments from other agencies, e.g. independent psychologist, educational statements, core assessments, previous CAMHS assessments.
- At consultation it is helpful if the social worker can outline:
 - child's history
 - their legal status
 - contact issues
 - presentation in school/educational issues
 - health needs
 - presentation at home
 - emotional or behavioural concerns
 - supports/other agencies already in place and plan for ongoing involvement.

If the supervising social worker can support carers in outlining:

- their concerns about the child at home
- how carer manages difficulties
- what advice and support has been offered to date
- how helpful carer has found this advice/support
- carer's own background and caring experience, strengths, weaknesses, etc.

If foster carer/residential worker can

- provide detailed information of current presentation
- how carer deals with concern
- how child respond to this
- how child makes carer and other family members feel.

What happens after the consultation?

The aim of the consultation is for us to work together to gain understanding of the child and the difficulties that the child presents. Sometimes this can be done in one meeting. At other times this is more complex and we may therefore agree to meet again and/or consider referral to another team/agency. After each consultation a brief feedback form will be provided for all concerned, including the child's GP.