



Independent Reviewing Officer Practice Standards

NIROMP'S REGIONAL NETWORKS

NIROMP has an established network of regional alliances made up of IRO managers and IROs. Our regional networks cover the nine government area regions of England.

We aim to:

- help IROs achieve continuously better and more consistent practice;
- be responsive to policy and practice updates, consultation exercises and research projects – keeping members up to date with developments and service issues;
- ensure contributions from IROs draw on their expertise – to use this towards the effective learning, development and consistently effective delivery of IRO services at local, regional and national level;
- to use the regional networks to understand local variations and challenges to practice which are driving regional priorities;
- allow flexibility for local, regional and national priorities;
- provide leadership of task and finish groups which can be called on for specific support by DfE, local authorities and other key stakeholders, as required.

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Introduction

The partnership seeks to improve outcomes for looked after children by providing up-to-date guidance to independent reviewing officers (IROs) about how they should discharge their distinct responsibilities to looked after children.

About this document

The partnership has produced a set of standards to help support IROs effectiveness. Originally produced in 2015, the standards remain relevant.

This set of standards does NOT replace the statutory guidance found in Chapter 6 of the IRO Handbook available online at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/337568/iro_statutory_guidance_iros_and_las_march_2010_tagged.pdf

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The IRO'S primary focus is to quality assure the care planning and review process for each child and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration.

The IRO handbook draws on a model of best practice to improve outcomes for children looked after and this document serves to ensure that every child in care can expect the best possible service from their IRO.

One of the most important aspects of the IROs role is to meaningfully engage with children and to remain child-centred in everything they do.

IRO Practice Standards

1. Ensure the child is at the centre of all they do.
2. The IRO will ensure that the child's wishes, views and feelings are given full consideration.
3. The IRO will be satisfied that each placement is meeting the needs of the child.
4. The IRO to ensure that each child knows who their IRO is and how to contact them between reviews and this should be clearly recorded in the record of the review.
5. Each review process to have the necessary information available and people attending, to ensure clear, robust and informed judgements are made about the progress of the care plan.
6. All care plans and decisions to have a timescale attached that meets the child's needs and a named person to implement them.
7. The IRO will challenge where there is drift in care planning and alert using the local authority formal dispute resolution process.
8. The IRO should be satisfied that plans for permanency have been identified by the second review.
9. The IRO will be satisfied that the local authority is meeting the requirements of the care planning regulations including fulfilling its duty as corporate parent.
10. The IRO pro-actively monitors the progress of the child's care plan and the implementation of the review decisions.
11. The IRO will determine whether a review needs to be convened when there is a significant change/event in the child's life.
12. The IRO will engage with the child's guardian in line with the Cafcass protocol in order to ensure effective communication about the child's care plan.
13. The IRO will provide both positive and constructive feedback to all the stakeholders in order to achieve good outcomes for children.



More information

More information about the National IRO Managers Partnership can be found here: <https://niromp.org/about-us-3/>