

## **APPENDIX 1 – DRAFT OF:**

### **Hampshire's Independent Reviewing Service (IRS)**

#### **Our Vision**

*“Through independent challenge to operational colleagues balanced with a belief that cooperation achieves best results our aim is to improve outcomes for Hampshire's most vulnerable children, always ensuring that their voices are heard. We work to assure that children are provided with the stability, security and permanence that allows them to be safe, nurtured and meet their full potential both as children and when moving on to adult life. Our service is independent but sits within the local authority.”*

#### **WHO WE ARE**

Hampshire's IRS is a team of experienced GSCC registered social workers who have worked in a wide range of operational and managerial settings. We sit outside of the operational team structure in order to provide an independent quality assurance function which is integral to the work of Hampshire's Children's Services Department. We have a statutory responsibility to help monitor the local authorities practice and performance.

#### **WHAT WE DO – We:**

Work with others to ensure the Local Authority accepts and responds to its corporate parenting responsibilities.

Ensure that 'Children Looked After' (CLA) and 'Child Protection' (CP) processes are focussed on best achievable outcomes to keep children safe and that the child's voice is heard within these processes by providing:

- Oversight, facilitation and chairing of CLA reviews
- Independent chairs for CP conferences
- Chairs for specific meetings when children are secured for their own welfare

Contribute to the wider quality assurance processes around CLA and CP work with Hampshire by:

- Collating and providing information for team, district and senior managers
- Contributing to development and review work of CLA and CP processes
- Undertaking quality assurance audits of CLA and CP conference processes

#### **HOW WE DO THIS – We will:**

- Work within relevant legislation, guidance and procedures
- Work with other professionals and services to ensure involvement of parents, carers and relevant agencies
- Communicate with and listen to children
- Actively encourage children's participation and use of advocacy if appropriate
- Challenge appropriately and confidently, including use of the problem resolution process
- Offer consultation and advice

- Ensure the quality of individual CLA and CP plans
- Help monitor the delivery of these plans
- See the worth of and maintain a focus on permanence arrangements for CLA
- Bring objectivity to our work
- Ensure our work is transparent, accountable and visible
- Ensure timescales around CLA and CP processes are met
- Offer constructive feedback to help develop better practice
- Learn from feedback and comments made about the IRS
- Link with teams to ensure good communication between the service and operational staff

**THE VALUES INFORMING OUR WORK** - We believe:

- CLA and CP Processes should be child focussed and child centred
- Children, parents and carers should be empowered to ensure they have the best chance to change their own circumstances through full and positive participation
- Children have an important role to play in the planning and assuring outcomes for them through attendance at meetings and positive contribution
- All agencies working with children have important contributions to make
- Processes and outcomes should be, and be seen to be, fair and impartial
- Innovation, creativity and best practice should be at the centre of our work

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