**Under 13** **Referral**

**Yes**

**No**

**Complete the SWCU Referral form.**

**Secretary of State for Education approval is required before the referral can be considered by a secure home. You will need to apply for this *alongside* completing the standard secure welfare referral.**

**Applying for SOS Approval**

**Ensure you have all the required documentation to hand. Details of this can be found here:** [**Guidance**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/secure-childrens-homes-how-to-place-a-child-aged-under-13)

**Call the DfE** **secure children’s homes policy team:**

**0208 142 5218**

**(Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)**

**The DfE will require the following information:**

* **The name and date of birth of the child you wish to place in a SCH.**
* **The reasons why you believe a SCH is the right placement and why the child meets S.25 criteria.**
* **Confirmation of whether you have identified an available bed in a SCH.**
* **Confirmation of whether the child is currently with you or whether they are missing from care.**
* **Details of when you intend to go to court to seek a secure accommodation order for the child.**
* **Details of the alternatives to a secure placement you have considered and why you think a secure placement is necessary.**
* **Confirmation of whether you have approached the Secure Welfare Co-ordination Unit (SWCU) to submit your referral.**

**The DfE will then email you a checklist of the documentation required to make the referral and provide you with the U13 email address.**

**The required documentation is then emailed to the U13 email address provided by the DfE.**

**The DfE will review the documentation, assess the application and advise of the decision as soon as possible. The LA will receive a certificate via email to confirm that the SoS approves the secure placement.**

**SoS approval will remain valid for 28 days, after which time the LA will need to submit a new application seeking SoS approval if a placement has not been found within 28 days.**

**If the child remains under 13 when the placement ceases, the LA will need to seek further approval of the SoS if the LA wishes to extend the placement in a secure children’s home.**

**The LA is required to review the child’s placement within one month and provide the SoS with documentation of the Secure Accommodation Review i.e. minutes of the review meeting.**

**Is the child being placed under 13?**

**Process Flowchart (England)**

**Out of Hours**

**Under 13 Referral**

**Yes**

**No**

**Is a secure welfare placement required for an under 13 outside of core working hours?**

**(Weekends, Bank Holidays and Mon-Fri after 5pm- 9am)**

**The U13 process for core working hours.**

**Call the DfE secure children’s homes policy team:**

**0208 142 5218**

**The ‘on call’ duty officer will require the following information:**

* **The name and date of birth of the child you wish to place in a SCH.**
* **The reasons why you believe a SCH is the right placement and why the child meets S.25 criteria.**
* **Confirmation of whether you have identified an available bed in a SCH.**
* **Confirmation of whether the child is currently with you or whether they are missing from care.**
* **Details of when you intend to go to court to seek a secure accommodation order for the child.**
* **Details of the alternatives to a secure placement you have considered and why you think a secure placement is necessary.**
* **Confirmation of whether you have approached the Secure Welfare Co-ordination Unit (SWCU) to submit your referral.**

**Based on the information received, the ‘on call’ duty officer will consider whether the criteria is met and if a secure placement would be appropriate for the young person.**

**The duty officer will give a verbal approval to the LA on the basis that the** [**required documents**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/secure-childrens-homes-how-to-place-a-child-aged-under-13#application-documents) **are submitted as soon as possible the next working day.**

**Once DfE assesses the documents, the LA will receive a certificate via email to confirm that the SoS approves the secure placement. Contact the SCH’s individually to explore bed availability via the contact details on the SAN website:**

[**Our Homes. – Secure Children's Homes (securechildrenshomes.org.uk)**](https://www.securechildrenshomes.org.uk/homes/)

**If an out of hours bed is sourced, then a referral to the SWCU will still be required within core working hours. If there is no bed availability, please revert to the SWCU referral process for core working hours.**

**Process Flowchart**

**(England)**