

Care Leaving Strategies: a good practice handbook (2002)
Department of Health, Centrepoint.

Copies available from DTLR: E-mail: ltr@twoten.press.net

Setting the Agenda: What's Left to do in Leaving Care (2004)
Action on Aftercare Forum

Copies available from Rainer National Leaving Care Advisory Service
E-mail: nlcas@raineronline.org

Fair Access to Care Services: Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care.
Department of Health

This guidance can be accessed on the Internet at **www.doh.gov.uk** .
Further copies of the guidance may be obtained from the Department
of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH, telephone 0870 155 5455 or
fax 01623 724 524.

The National Leaving Care Project Group:

**[http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/lookedafterchildren/
leavingcare/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/lookedafterchildren/leavingcare/)**

Children and Young People's Unit:
www.cypu.gov.uk/

Valuing People:
www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/

Connexions:
www.connexions.gov.uk

Supporting People:
www.spkweb.org.uk

Choice Protects:
www.dfes.gov.uk/choiceprotects

Removing Barriers to Achievement:
www.teachernet.gov.uk

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

- **Appendix 1:** Future Positive: Policy Map – Disabled care leavers

1.2 Who is a young, disabled care leaver?

Background information

This document is informed by the Social Model of Disability and grounded in a human rights perspective. This means that the term 'disabled' is used to describe the impact that societal attitudes, unequal access and other environmental barriers can have on young people who have impairments and it is the aim of this guide to promote the development of services that actively work to deconstruct those barriers.

Those people using this guidance should try to adopt a comprehensive inclusive approach starting with the needs of the young person irrespective of types and level of impairment.

For this reason the term 'disabled' is understood very broadly to identify those who have physical or sensory impairments, behavioural or learning difficulties or mental health needs who experience barriers in accessing services and are less likely to experience the same life opportunities as their non-disabled peers.

The use of a broad definition may also assist with the identification of the young people in and leaving care who are the focus of this guide so as to ensure the 'visibility' of young people in different service streams, some of whom may not have been considered eligible for aftercare support when ceasing to use Children Looked After services, or those that as users of children's services are not necessarily eligible for adult services as they reach 18.

The Act specifically exempts young people regularly using planned short break services for periods of time 'none of which individually exceeds four weeks' and who return to their parents or person with parental responsibility after each placement (Regulation 3). This does however raise some concerns about young people in these circumstances who may, in effect, spend so little time at home that support and preparation for adult life from a parental figure is impractical or unrealistic. For example, those young people receiving 120 days or more of short breaks or a combination of residential school and short breaks during the holidays. Even if not entitled to the full provisions of the Act, these young people may still be defined as 'looked after' (Children Act 1989 Section 22, LAC 1995(14)) and in this sense may 'qualify' for aftercare support under Section 24 Children (Leaving Care) Act (see above).

Care must be taken to ensure that those young people who have a high number of short breaks are carefully monitored so that their entitlements are not overlooked. Management information systems should indicate when a young person exceeds a continuous four-week period of short break use and meets the other criteria for eligibility under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1** Are all relevant teams working with disabled children and young disabled adults informed about the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000?
- 2** Are they actively considering the implications for young people using their services?
- 3** Is action being taken to ensure that:
 - Young disabled people’s entitlements to support, as care leavers, are being met?
 and
 - The needs of young people leaving care arising from any physical impairment, learning difficulty or mental health issue are being appropriately met?
- 4** Is particular attention being given to the needs of young disabled people living out of the authority area (fulfilling the role of ‘responsible local authority’)? (See Section 3)

**GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:****Liverpool**

“A new joint initiative the ‘Action for Transition’ project involving the Local Authority, Health, Connexions and a local community college will ensure that learning disabled young people have appropriate continuity of support from Children’s and Adult’s Services into further learning and employment. Links will be further developed with Liverpool’s Positive Action section to further develop appropriate employment opportunities within the local authority and within local business. Commitment to maximising opportunities and involvement and customising support for learning disabled young people will be endorsed by corporate approval of the recently developed Transition Protocol to which Connexions have already signed up.”

Example taken from *Putting Young People at the Centre: Developing service for care leavers* (2003) Department of Health/First Key. Copies available from Rainer, National Leaving Care Advisory Service, E-mail: nlcas@raineronline.org

Further reading and useful resources:



Department of Health/First Key (2003) *Putting Young People at the Centre: Section 6, Supporting Young Disabled People Leaving Care.*

Copies available from Rainer, National Leaving Care Advisory Service
E-mail: nlcas@raineronline.org



Harris, J., Rabiee, P. & Priestley, M. (2002) *Enabled by the Act? The Reframing of Aftercare services for young disabled people*, in Wheal, A. (ed) *RHP Companion to Leaving Care*. London: Russell House Publishing.

Morris, J. (1999) *Move on up: Supporting young disabled people in their transition to adulthood*. Barnardo's.

Morris, J. (1999) *Hurting into a Void: Transition to adulthood for young disabled people with 'complex health and support needs'*. Brighton: Pavilion Publishing.

Rabiee, P., Priestley, M. & Knowles, J. (2001) *Whatever Next? Young disabled people leaving care*. Leeds: First Key.

Copies available from Rainer, National Leaving Care Advisory Service
E-mail: nlcas@raineronline.org

British Council of Disabled People:
www.bcodp.org.uk

Council for Disabled Children:
www.ncb.org.uk/cdc/

People First:
www.peoplefirst.org.uk

Scope:
www.scope.org.uk

SKILL (National Bureau for Students with Disabilities):
www.skill.org.uk/

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

- **Appendix 2:** Protocol: Leaving care and children's disability services, Brighton & Hove

1.3 Eligibility, rights and entitlements under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000

Background information

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 builds upon and extends rather than replaces the Children Act 1989, strengthening the role and responsibilities of local authorities in supporting young people who have been looked after through to adulthood. Children's Services take the lead in co-ordination and provision, working within a corporate parenting framework and with partner agencies. The aim of the Act is to improve the life-chances of young people in and leaving care by:

- delaying young people's discharge from care until they are prepared and ready to leave
- improving the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care
- providing better personal support after leaving care
- improving the financial arrangements for care leavers.

In order to achieve these aims, the Act places duties on the responsible local authority to:

- assess and meet needs
- prepare Pathway Plans
- provide Personal Advisers
- provide assistance to achieve goals agreed in Pathway Plans
- provide support and accommodation
- provide financial support
- keep in touch.

Each of these duties and the accompanying guidance is explained in the relevant section of this guide.

Who is entitled and to what?

Young people entitled to services under the Act fall into four categories as follows:

Eligible children are those aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after by the local authority for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14 and are still in care. The period of 13 weeks need not have been continuous and could be made up of a series of shorter periods during which the child was looked after. Planned periods of respite care (no one period longer than 4 weeks) do not count towards eligibility.

Relevant children are those aged 16 and 17 who meet the criteria for eligible children, but who left care after reaching their 16th birthday.

Former relevant children are those young people who have reached 18 but not 21 and were eligible and/or relevant prior to becoming 18. However, if someone is being helped with education or training, they remain a former relevant child to the end of their agreed programme, even if it takes them past the age of 21.

Qualifying young people are those who do not meet the qualifying criteria for being eligible but who are still entitled to aftercare support under sections 24, 24A and 24B of the Children Act (*persons qualifying for advice and assistance*).

Entitlements

Eligible children

- All the provisions of the looked-after system
- A Personal Adviser
- A needs assessment
- A Pathway Plan

Relevant children

- A Personal Adviser
- A needs assessment
- A Pathway Plan
- Accommodation and maintenance (Section 23B(8))
- Assistance to achieve the goals agreed and set out in the Pathway Plan
- The responsible local authority must keep in touch

Former relevant children

- The responsible local authority must keep in touch
- A Personal Adviser
- A Pathway Plan
- Assistance with employment
- Assistance with education and training
- Assistance in general
- Vacation accommodation for higher education or residential further education if needed.

Qualifying children

- The same benefits as under Section 24 before amendment.

In addition:

- The responsible authority must keep in touch with care leavers as they think appropriate in order to discharge their functions under sections 24A and 24B
- Local authority care leavers are entitled to vacation accommodation for Higher Education courses or residential Further Education courses if necessary.

Exceptions

There are two specific groups who are treated differently in terms of financial support. These are young disabled people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and young people who are parents. Both groups will stay on benefit rather than receiving their financial support from Children's Services under the age of 18. This is because provision has already been made for them, which is over and above minimum benefit levels. This is not the case, however, with their Housing Benefit, so there is a duty for the local authority to meet their accommodation expenses, as for non-disabled people, up to the age of 18. For more information on financial support please see Section 4: Pathways in Practice.

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:**Children's Services:**

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- 1** Do all staff within your agency who work with young disabled people leaving care, know about the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000?

 - 2** Is there an understanding amongst staff of categories of eligibility and entitlement under the Act?

 - 3** Have you given your partner agencies information about the Children (Leaving Care) Act that is up to date and reflects the local arrangements made to meet its requirements?

 - 4** How have you ensured that young people are informed about the Children (Leaving Care) Act and understand their new rights and entitlements?

 - 5** How have you involved young people as service users in producing that information in an accessible and young person friendly format?

Other agencies:

- 1 Have you received information from Children's Services about the Children (Leaving Care) Act that is current and reflects local arrangements to meet its requirements?
- 2 Do you have an understanding of the different categories of eligibility and what young people are entitled to?
- 3 Is there access to training from Children's Services or the Leaving Care Team on the Children (Leaving Care) Act and the new requirements?



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:

Plymouth Inclusive Training Event

Plymouth launched the Children (Leaving Care) Act with a multi-agency training event, involving both statutory and voluntary services working with young people, some specialist and others generic. The interactive training offered challenges to adopt a rights-based approach, with assessments and service provision designed to be empowering to care leavers.

The practice model of Person Centred Planning was used to demonstrate this central theme, offering a style of working that would meet the needs of all care leavers and particularly those with a range of impairments, who are often the least well-served by traditional services.

Multi-disciplinary workshops explored a range of disadvantages and difficulties likely to be experienced by care leavers, and how these were compounded by impairments or special needs. The training attracted a high level of attendance with participants giving very positive feedback. In particular, they commented on:

- how beneficial it was to meet staff from other services
- the potential it offered to deliver more inclusive services through closer working
- their increased understanding of the multiple disadvantages faced by care leavers.

All participants were given a resource file containing details of the Children (Leaving Care) Act and its implications for care leavers, and copies of Person Centred Planning materials that could be used in direct work with young people.

For further details contact:

Planning & Development Officer
Plymouth 01752 307519

fact that at 16 they are in hospital, in a remand centre or young offenders' institution or other facility prescribed by the court.

Service policy statements should explicitly refer to young people with different needs and special arrangements developed accordingly. It is essential that guidance and training for Personal Advisers should include how issues relating to race, culture and identity should be addressed when planning for transition.

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1** Does your service policy statement refer to the needs of young disabled people from black and minority ethnic groups, young disabled people who are parents, in custody or who are unaccompanied asylum seekers, and identify how those needs are to be met?
- 2** Has your service developed the necessary links with local community organisations representing or providing specific services to these groups?
- 3** Do your management information systems identify these young people, enabling you to monitor outcomes and plan your services more effectively?
- 4** Has your staff team received training on meeting the needs of young people with different needs?
- 5** Are the necessary arrangements and protocols in place between service providers to meet different needs, including multi-agency training programmes to assist in identifying issues and ways of joint working?
- 6** Are there early mechanisms for identifying the funding that is required for young people with high support needs? Does this feed into the financial planning and commissioning process? (See Section 3: Protocols)

2 The Hillingdon Judgement held that four adult unaccompanied asylum-seekers, who had been provided with services under s.17 of the Children Act 1989, were entitled to leaving care services as “former relevant children”. The judge ruled that – as unaccompanied asylum seekers over the age of 16 were, by definition, arriving with no parental or family support, the starting point for the local authority, in these circumstances, was such that such young people would usually need to be accommodated under the provisions of s.20 of the Children Act 1989. This ruling supports the Department of Health Circular LAC 2003 (13). The judgement did not change the Children Act 1989 or the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 so the requirement to assess individual needs continues to apply equally to young unaccompanied asylum seekers as to other young people. The DfES has produced guidance setting out the arrangements for the payment of the unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) leaving care costs grant for 2005–06. This grant is intended to assist local authorities towards meeting the costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children leaving care. The guidance includes details about which UASC leaving care will be eligible to receive payments and is available at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/lookedafterchildren/leavingcare/uasc/>

Further reading and useful resources:



Ruth Townsley, David Abbott and Debby Watson, (2004) *'Making a difference?'*
Norah Fry Research Centre, University of Bristol.

Explores the impact of multi-agency working on disabled children with complex health care needs, their families and those that support them.



The report identifies key success factors and outcomes for professionals as well as the impact on families. It summarises key issues and makes recommendations for policy and practice:

www.bris.ac.uk/Publications/TPP/pages/rp054.htm

The Children Act 2004 can be found at:

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040031.htm>

Children's Trusts FAQ's:

www.dfes.gov.uk/childrenstrusts/overview/faqs.shtml

The Children and Young People's Plan (England) Regulations 2005 are available at:

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20052149.htm>

A printed version is also available and is published by The Stationery Office Limited ISBN 0110732081 at a cost of £3.

Guidance on the Children and Young People's Plan is available at:

http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/58A771D2F683214338B20DA1393F9B29.pdf

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) has developed a web-based toolkit to help local authorities and their local partners create and implement effective children's services workforce strategies. A consultancy service has also been introduced to support this work. This is available at:

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

- **Appendix 5:** Children's Trusts – Extract from 'Every Child Matters'
- **Appendix 6:** Future Positive: Fact Sheet – Special Educational Needs Regional Partnerships

See also

- **Appendix 1:** Future Positive: Policy map – Disabled Care Leavers.
- **Appendix 2:** Protocol – Leaving care and children's disability services, Brighton & Hove

2.2 Management information

Background information

Every Child Matters: Change for Children and the Children Act 2004 set clear requirements for good information sharing and communication between agencies providing services to children and young people. Both are vital to early intervention and the improvement of outcomes. The establishment of Children's Trusts is intended to overcome previous failings in information systems. Information sharing indexes or databases are to be implemented under section 12 of the Children Act 2004.

Good management information systems are essential to:

- Service planning and projecting future levels of service use
- Ensuring that all young people who are eligible for services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act are known
- Monitoring outcomes for young people in the manner of a good parent
- The effective evaluation and review of services.

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

1 Are there systems in place within integrated children's services including Health, Education and Connexions services, to identify young disabled people living in and leaving care?

2 Which data are used?

Do data systems include:

- Children in Need census data?
- School census data?
- The Looked After Children (LAC) notification register for children living out of the area?
- Data on disabled children?
- Client Caseload Information System (CCIS)?

3 Is management information used effectively to influence service planning and development? Does this include the use of CCIS data with regard to the assessment and recording of young people's aspirations?

4 What information is available about outcomes for this group, in terms of:

- Quality assurance?
- Ongoing progress?
- Meeting service targets for care leavers?
- Performance Assessment Framework?

5 Is explicit reference made to young disabled people in information sharing protocols?

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GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:

South Gloucestershire

In March 2003, we began the process of transferring all disabled children in care from our Child Health and Disabilities Team over to the Looked After Team (LAT). The LAT and our after care service, known as the Continuing Support Service (CSS) liaise closely as young people get nearer to leaving care. The CSS has established a working relationship with the Learning Difficulties Service which has focused particularly on establishing the accommodation needs of young people. This has enabled us to take a more holistic approach to care management for this group of young people.

A database has been set up to track all young people in scope of the Children (Leaving Care) Act. The database begins at 14 and runs through to 24/5, as required. It is co-ordinated by administrative staff in the LAT team up to the young person's 18th birthday when this role is taken over by the CSS.

The database is essentially a management tool that is updated each month and circulated to team and service managers. It includes details of placements outside the authority including those of disabled children. It also allows us to see if the Pathway Plan is in place and if reviews are taking place as they should.

Contact:

Peter Parry 01454 866228.

E-mail: Peter.Parry@southglos.gov.uk

See also **Appendix 8** for Cornwall Children's Trust Pilot Protocol on information sharing.

Further reading and useful resources:



Examples of tools and processes developed and tested by local areas are available for other local areas to use or adapt on the *Information Sharing and Assessment community website*:

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ISA/learnFrmLocalAuth/pmDissGroup.cfm>.



These cover:

- Toolkits and protocols for information sharing between agencies
- Staff training materials
- Consent forms and privacy statements for children, young people and families

Developing Identification, Referral and Tracking Systems: interim report of the evaluation of the trailblazer authorities:

www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR521.doc

The final report *Changing Working Practice in Children's Services: The experiences of ISA teams* will be available from www.dfes.gov.uk/ (the ISA Discussion Group and Resource Bank).

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

- **Appendix 7:** Future Positive: Service locations of young disabled people leaving care
- **Appendix 8:** Information sharing protocol: Cornwall County Council
- **Appendix 9:** Future Positive: Useful data fields for recording information about young people leaving care
- **Appendix 10:** 'A Framework for Disabled Care Leavers' (Department of Health)

2.3 Policy mapping/audit

Background information

Children's Trusts will bring key services together to support the work undertaken every day with children and families, underpinned by the duty to cooperate in Section 10 of the Children Act 2004. Specialist services for children and young people will be integrated and accessed through more universal services. Staff will work in multi-disciplinary teams and may often be co-located in children's centres or schools.

Children's Trusts will be supported by integrated processes like the Common Assessment Framework or by locally developed strategies to cover area priority needs, needs assessments and resource identification and allocation.

As part of the Government's programme aimed at reducing social exclusion many of the statutory agencies are already developing services to improve outcomes for young people in, and leaving, care. Integrated Children's Services should ensure that clear procedures and agreements are in place for meeting the needs of this group including agreements for information sharing that will allow the identification and tracking of all young disabled people. This will allow the development of a comprehensive planning tool to meet the needs of all young disabled people in and leaving care.

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

1 Do the policy and plans of each service/partner agency make specific reference to the needs of young people leaving care and within that, the needs of young disabled people as a discrete group?

2 Are the financial resources identified to ensure their support?



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:

South Gloucestershire

South Gloucestershire Council Children's Division handbook has three sections for care leaver procedures – the third section is specific to disabled care leavers. It covers general principles, (based on the social model of disability), highlights the purpose of the database and reminds people of the legislative framework as well as taking people through the stages in the planning process. Currently, we are working with the Education Department and Connexions to agree the transitions procedures for this group. Please see the flow chart (Appendix 12) for the approach being proposed in South Gloucestershire.

Contact:

Mike Connolly Tel. 01454 865970

Mike.Connolly@southglos.gov.uk

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

See

- **Appendix 5:** Children's Trusts: extract from 'Every Child Matters'
- **Appendix 12:** List of providers/agencies likely to be involved in providing services to young disabled people leaving care

2.4 Young people's and carers' involvement in planning, improving and developing services

Background information

The need for a young people's views to be heard in the development and monitoring of the services they receive is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children Act 1989. All relevant major policy initiatives stress the importance of young people's views. The involvement of young people in service development and delivery is essential to providing quality services. Local authorities are expected to show a commitment to young people's participation and reports like 'People Like Us'¹ demonstrate the important role of young people's views in safeguarding children looked after. Guidance to the Every Child Matters programme of reform underlines the importance of listening to children and young people both in terms of setting priorities at a strategic level within Children's Trusts and in how service delivery impacts upon individuals.

It is therefore important to develop a strategic approach to young disabled people's involvement in service planning and delivery. It will be essential to provide young people with good information and to develop effective feedback processes; also to dedicate the appropriate resources to ensure that young people's needs are adequately supported.

The development of a culture of listening to young disabled people is a task that requires training across the range of service providers and involves the active engagement of young people in their own individual care and pathway planning, as well as service evaluation. Providers should be trained in the use of such tools as person centred planning to assist with this (see Section 3: Pathway Planning).

1 1997: Sir William Utting

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1** How does your service ensure the ongoing and sustainable involvement of young disabled people and their carers in planning, improving and developing services?
- 2** What mechanisms are in place for this to continue to happen?
- 3** Do you have arrangements in place for providing the personal support necessary for meaningful involvement?
- 4** Do you provide information to user forums in an accessible form, appropriate to need?
- 5** How do you support diverse communication needs?
- 6** Are you able to reward/formally acknowledge user involvement?
- 7** Do you have the mechanisms in place to ensure that users' views are not only listened to, but also acted upon?
- 8** How do service users' complaints inform service evaluation and the development of new services?

**GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:****Plymouth**

“We are reviewing ways to enable children with disabilities to be included in consultation exercises such as ‘the voice of our young people’ by building on the ‘total communication project’ a nationally acclaimed local research project that introduced new and successful ways of consulting adults with learning disabilities.”

Contact:

Total Communication Project
 Barnstaple Library, Tuly Street, Barnstaple, Devon
 Tel: 01271 850116

Example taken from *Putting Young People at the Centre: Developing service for care leavers* (2003)
 First Key. Copies available from Rainer, National Leaving Care Advisory Service
 E-mail: nlcas@raineronline.org

Further reading and useful resources:



Every Child Matters

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/participation/>

“Hear by Right is a tried and tested standards framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. The ‘What’s Changed?’ tool provides a template for mapping the impact of participation activity. Examples of completed templates are provided to celebrate the work and share good practice. Contributions are organised under the Every Child Matters Outcomes to which they relate.”

<http://www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/home.asp?cid=180&cats=215>

Ready Steady Change at <http://www.crae.org.uk/cms/>

DfES (2004) *Working Together: Giving Children and Young People a Say*
www.dfes.co.uk

Dickens, M (2004) *Listening is a Way of Life – Listening to Young Disabled People* (NCB)

Kirkby, P., Lanyon, C., Cronin, K., Sinclair, R (2001) *Building a Culture of Participation Handbook*, National Children’s Bureau.

Morris, J. (1998) *Don’t Leave Us Out: Involving disabled children and young people with communication impairments*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York

Morris, J. (2002) *A Lot to Say: A guide for social workers, personal advisors and others working with disabled children and young people with communication impairments*: Scope, London.

Cutler, D. and Taylor, A (2003) *Expanding and Sustaining Involvement – A Snapshot of Participation Infrastructure for Young People Living in England*. Carnegie Young People Initiative.

Hazlehurst, M. and Shalom, O. (2002) *Involving Young People: A help or a hindrance?* In Wheal, A. (ed) *RHP Companion to Leaving Care*. London: Russell House Publishing.

Care Leaving Strategies: *A Good Practice Handbook: p 47–50 Improving the Participation of Care Leavers* (2002). Department of Health and Centrepoint.

Ask Us. CD-ROM.

Copies are available at £5 each from the Children’s Society, Publishing Department, Edward Rudolph House, Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL:
www.childrensociety.org.uk

Two Way Street: Training video and handbook about communicating with disabled children and young people

Copies of the handbook available at £9.50 and the handbook and video at £55 each from NSPCC National Training Centre, 3, Gilmour Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester LS4 1EZ. Tel: 01162347223. The work was led by Triangle and the NSPCC. Triangle offers training and consultancy on services for children with complex needs:

www.triangle-services.co.uk

2.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Background information

Systems for monitoring and evaluating performance are essential to the provision of quality services. This can be achieved in part through the use of performance indicators, either those internally identified or those determined by Government. These should include as a minimum:

- The level of service provided
- The quality of the service provided
- The level of user satisfaction with the service
- Outcomes for young people

Vital to the delivery of effective service is the involvement of service users (see above). One way of ensuring that service users' views are incorporated is developing a responsive complaints procedure that is easily accessed and young people friendly:

Complaints

The Children (Leaving Care) Act introduces an amendment to the 1991 Representations Procedure (Children) Regulations 1991 whereby complaints from young people in respect of leaving care should reach informal resolution within fourteen days. If this is not possible then the full complaints procedure should be invoked. All young people should have access to advocacy services throughout this process. Young people should also be made aware of the other services' complaints procedures.

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1** How do you determine if your service is successfully meeting its objectives in relation to young disabled people in and leaving care?
- 2** Do you include young disabled service user views when evaluating your service?
- 3** Do you have a model or set of service standards against which to evaluate your services?
- 4** Is your service subject to external performance monitoring in relation to young disabled people in and leaving care?
- 5** How do you feed back to young disabled people about what is and what is not working well for them as service users?
- 6** How does your service work with other agencies and services to monitor and evaluate the outcomes for young disabled people in and leaving care?
- 7** What evidence is there that your Comments and Complaints service meets the needs of young disabled people?

**GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:****The National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum**

The National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum was established in 2000 as a national network of local authorities. Its aim is to compare services to young people leaving care with a view to promoting the development of good practice in member authorities. The Rainer National Leaving Care Advisory Service provides co-ordination and support.

The Forum has developed its own methodology for the benchmarking of services. This has five stages:

- Development of service standards and performance indicators
- Collection of information
- Comparison between authorities
- Identification of issues for service improvement and action planning
- Action plan review

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Benchmarking takes place against seven sets of service standards and performance indicators, reflecting the different leaving care service areas. The standards are on accommodation, education training and employment, financial support, health, through care, young people's involvement, advocacy and complaints and managing diversity.

Core members meet together four times a year for two days. These meetings are used to compare services, plan and review progress in service development. They are also an opportunity to discuss issues in leaving care and share experiences. Other network members take part in benchmarking but do not attend the residentials.

Contact:

nlcas@raineronline.org

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Further reading and useful resources:



The National Service Framework for Children includes specific standards with regard to services for disabled children and young people. The framework addresses the themes of promoting inclusion, changing societal attitudes and the removal of disabling barriers, the multi-agency provision of services, high quality and seamless transitions and young people's participation both in individual care planning and in the development and evaluation of services. Standard 4 addresses Growing up into Adulthood and Standard 8 Disabled Children Young People and those with Complex Health Needs.

www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance

Hear by Right is a standards framework for organisations to assess and improve practice and policy on involving young people.

<http://www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/home.asp?cid=180&cats=215>

The Learning Disability Quality Network:

<http://www.bild.org.uk/quality/QNsiteoldlogo/index.htm>

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

- **Appendix 10:** 'A Service Framework for Disabled Care Leavers' (Department of Health)

2.1 CHECKLIST: Multi-agency strategic planning and commissioning

1 Which multi-agency fora are addressing the issues affecting young disabled people leaving care?

2 How well are they integrating national policy development into local strategy?

3 Do strategic planning processes support the delivery of a comprehensive, cross-agency service?

4 What mechanisms are in place to ensure that the views of young disabled people are appropriately represented in these fora?

KEY QUESTIONS

2.2 CHECKLIST: Management information

- 1** Are there systems in place within integrated children's services including Health, Education and Connexions services, to identify young disabled people living in and leaving care?

- 2** Which data are used?

Do data systems include:
 - Children in Need census data?
 - School census data?
 - The Looked After Children (LAC) notification register for children living out of the area?
 - Data on disabled children?
 - Client Caseload Information System (CCIS)?

- 3** Is management information used effectively to influence service planning and development? Does this include the use of CCIS data with regard to the assessment and recording of young people's aspirations?

- 4** What information is available about outcomes for this group, in terms of:
 - Quality assurance?
 - Ongoing process?
 - Meeting service targets for care leavers?
 - Performance Assessment Framework?

- 5** Is explicit reference made to young disabled people in information sharing protocols?

KEY QUESTIONS

2.3 CHECKLIST: Policy mapping/audit

- 1** Do the policy and plans of each service/partner make specific reference to the needs of young people leaving care and within that, the needs of young disabled people as a discrete group?

-
- 2** Are the financial resources identified to ensure their support?

KEY QUESTIONS

2.4 CHECKLIST: Young people's and carers' involvement in planning, improving and developing services

- 1** How does your service ensure the ongoing and sustainable involvement of young disabled people and their carers in planning, improving and developing services?

- 2** What mechanisms are in place for this to continue to happen?

- 3** Do you have arrangements in place for providing the personal support necessary for meaningful involvement?

- 4** Do you provide information to user forums in an accessible form, appropriate to need?

- 5** How do you support diverse communication needs?

- 6** Are you able to reward/formally acknowledge user involvement?

- 7** Do you have the mechanisms in place to ensure that users' views are not only listened to, but also acted upon?

- 8** How do service users' complaints inform service evaluation and the development of new services?

KEY QUESTIONS

2.5 CHECKLIST: Monitoring and evaluation

- 1** How do you determine if your service is successfully meeting its objectives in relation to young disabled people in and leaving care?

- 2** Do you include young disabled service user views when evaluating your service?

- 3** Do you have a model or set of service standards against which to evaluate your services?

- 4** Is your service subject to external performance monitoring in relation to young disabled people in and leaving care?

- 5** How do you feed back to young disabled people about what is and what is not working well for them as service users?

- 6** How does your service work with other agencies and services to monitor and evaluate the outcomes for young disabled people in and leaving care?

- 7** What evidence is there that your Comments and Complaints service meets the needs of young disabled people?

KEY QUESTIONS



Pathways in practice

- **This section addresses the complex process of transition including a mapping of the services likely to be involved, their roles and responsibilities and how these may be effectively dovetailed into the pathway planning process. It contains a number of sub-sections each with their own checklist of questions and useful resources:**
 1. **Transition processes**
 2. **Protocols and working arrangements**
 3. **Young people living out of authority**
 4. **Leaving care Personal Advisers**
 5. **Needs assessments**
 6. **Person centred approaches to pathway planning**

3.1 Transition processes

Background information

The Government report 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' focuses on improving services to young disabled people in transition by concentrating on individual need. It aims for a smoother transfer from children's to adult services and more effective planning mechanisms in providing real and appropriate opportunities and choices in adulthood. The introduction of individualised budgets will be central to these developments (see Section 4.4: Financial Support and the Use of Direct Payments).

A Social Exclusion Unit report addressing Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs looks at the effectiveness of services for young adults with complex needs as they make the transition to adulthood and sets out 27 agreed, cross-government action points.

One of the intentions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act is to improve and lengthen the transition of leaving care. For young disabled people, 'transition', as a planning process delineating the move from children's to adult services, can often overwhelm and obscure the developmental process that is occurring as the young person moves towards adulthood and developing autonomy.

Good transition processes should commence at the appropriate time to meet the young person's needs. They should place the young people at the centre in order to ensure that any plans made genuinely reflect the individuals' wishes. Throughout the process, it is vital to provide the young people and their parents and carers with good information, both about the stages in the process and the range of options for the future.

As a planning process, transition is complex and involves numerous service providers. It is important that the pathway planning incorporates, rather than duplicates, the Year 9 review process, making use of existing assessment information and building upon existing support networks, without duplication of the Connexions role and Personal Adviser role under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:

The TransPlan CD-Rom

The TransPlan CD-Rom, produced in the North East Region, is a comprehensive guide to the process of transition planning as it impacts on young people with special educational needs. It contains information for young people, parents/carers and services and agencies involved in the process of transition planning. A multi-agency group contributed to the production, which was nationally funded. The CD-Rom was distributed widely in the North East Region and on request outside the region. The Department of Education and Skills and Department of Health have funded an evaluation of TransPlan – copies of both the full and summary reports are available to download as Word documents from the Connexions website as below:

There may still be a few copies of the CD-Rom available from Prolog (Tel 0845 6022260 E-mail dfes@prolog.uk.com), quoting TRANSPLAN 1.

N.B This information was downloaded from www.connexions.gov.uk

CHECKLIST OF KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1 Do you have a comprehensive pathway planning system, which is multi-agency, includes the Year 9 review process, and carries through to adulthood?
- 2 Is it promoted and applied to all young people including those with mild to moderate learning difficulties and those who are in placements out of the local authority area?
- 3 Is everyone in your agency clear of your role and responsibilities within the transitional review and pathway planning process?
- 4 How do you formally incorporate the views of young people and their carers as service users in ensuring that transition processes are working for them?

Further reading and useful resources:



Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce. Chapter 4 Supporting Transitions
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/commoncore/transitions/>



Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People (2004) Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit
 Available from http://www.strategy.gov.uk/work_areas/disability/

Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Health Needs (2005) Social Exclusion Unit
 Available from <http://www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/>

The Transition Information Network is managed by the Council for Disabled Children. It produces a magazine entitled *My Future Choices* and signposts other sources of support and information.

<http://www.myfuturechoices.org.uk/index.php>

DfES Report – *Seven Principles for Inclusive Transition Planning. The Final Report of an East of England Project on Assessment and Transition Planning*

Available from:

www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/publications/connexpubs/index.cfm?Fuseaction=DocumentDetails&DocumentID=321

Department for Education and Skills (2002) *Information To Support Connexions Partnerships In Their Work With Young People With Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.*

All Change: transition and young people with learning disabilities. An information guide.

Information pack for parents, professionals and young people available from Pavilion Publishing, Brighton 2003, Tel: 01273 623222 or www.pavpub.com

Hendey, N. and Pascall, G. (2002) *Disability and transition to adulthood: Achieving independent living*. Brighton: Pavilion Publishing.

Heslop, P., Mallet, R., Simons, K. and Ward, L. (2001) *Bridging the Divide: The experiences of young people with learning difficulties and their families at transition*. Bristol: Norah Fry Research Centre, University of Bristol.

Morris, J. (1999) *Move on up: Supporting young disabled people in their transition to adulthood*. Barnardo's.

Morris, J. (1999) *Hurling into a Void: Transition to adulthood for young disabled people with 'complex health and support needs'*. Brighton: Pavilion Publishing.

Morris, J. (2002) *Moving into Adulthood: young disabled people*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

National Foster Care Association (2002) *Rights of Passage: young disabled people: the transition from foster care to adult life, a study of people with learning difficulties*.

Rabiee, P., Priestley, M. & Knowles, J. (2001) *Whatever Next? Young disabled people leaving care*. Leeds: First Key.

Relevant appendices (see Section 5):

- **Appendix 11:** Integrated Transition Planning: Transition pathway for disabled young people

Also, see

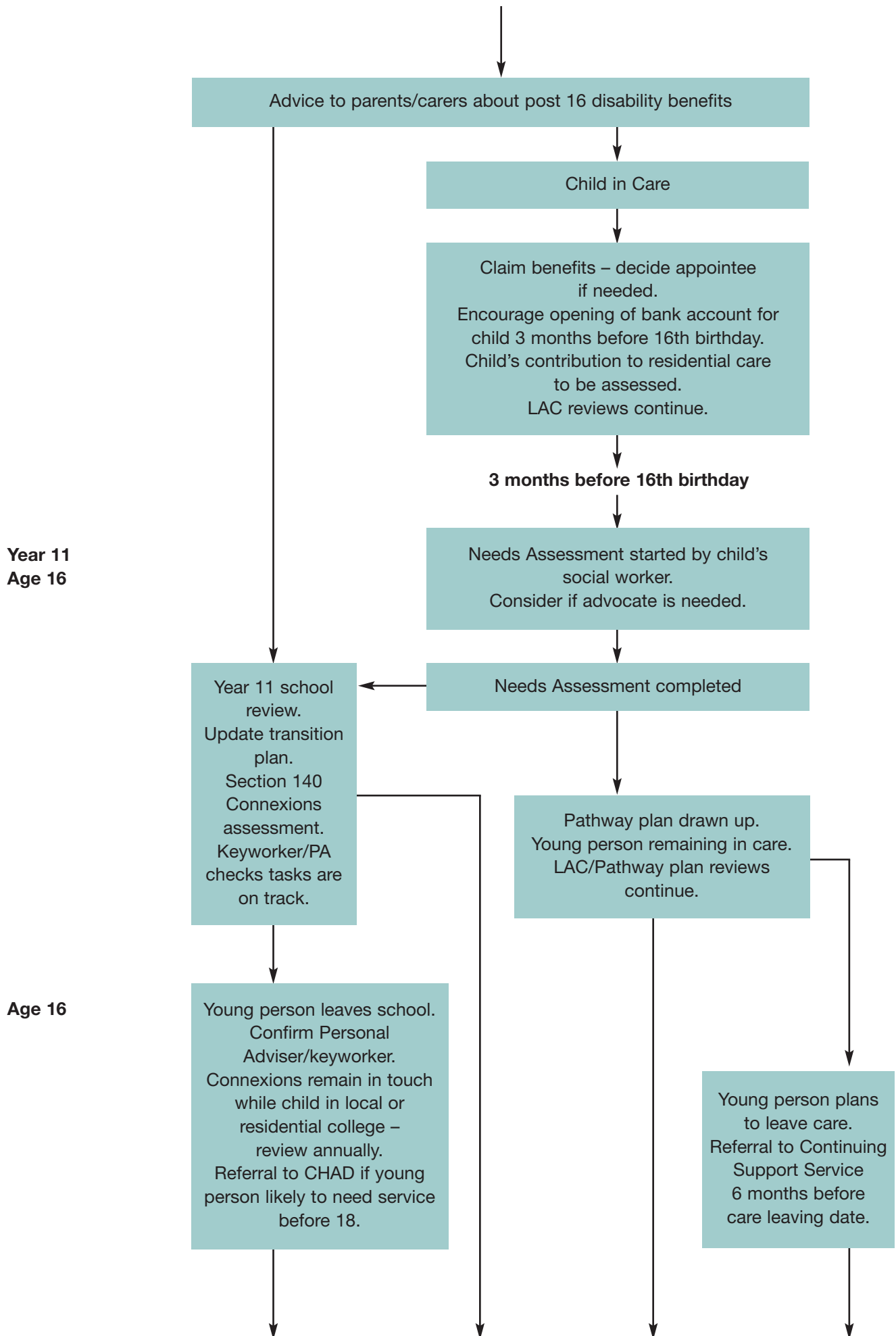
- **Appendix 2:** Protocol – Leaving care & children's disability services, Brighton & Hove

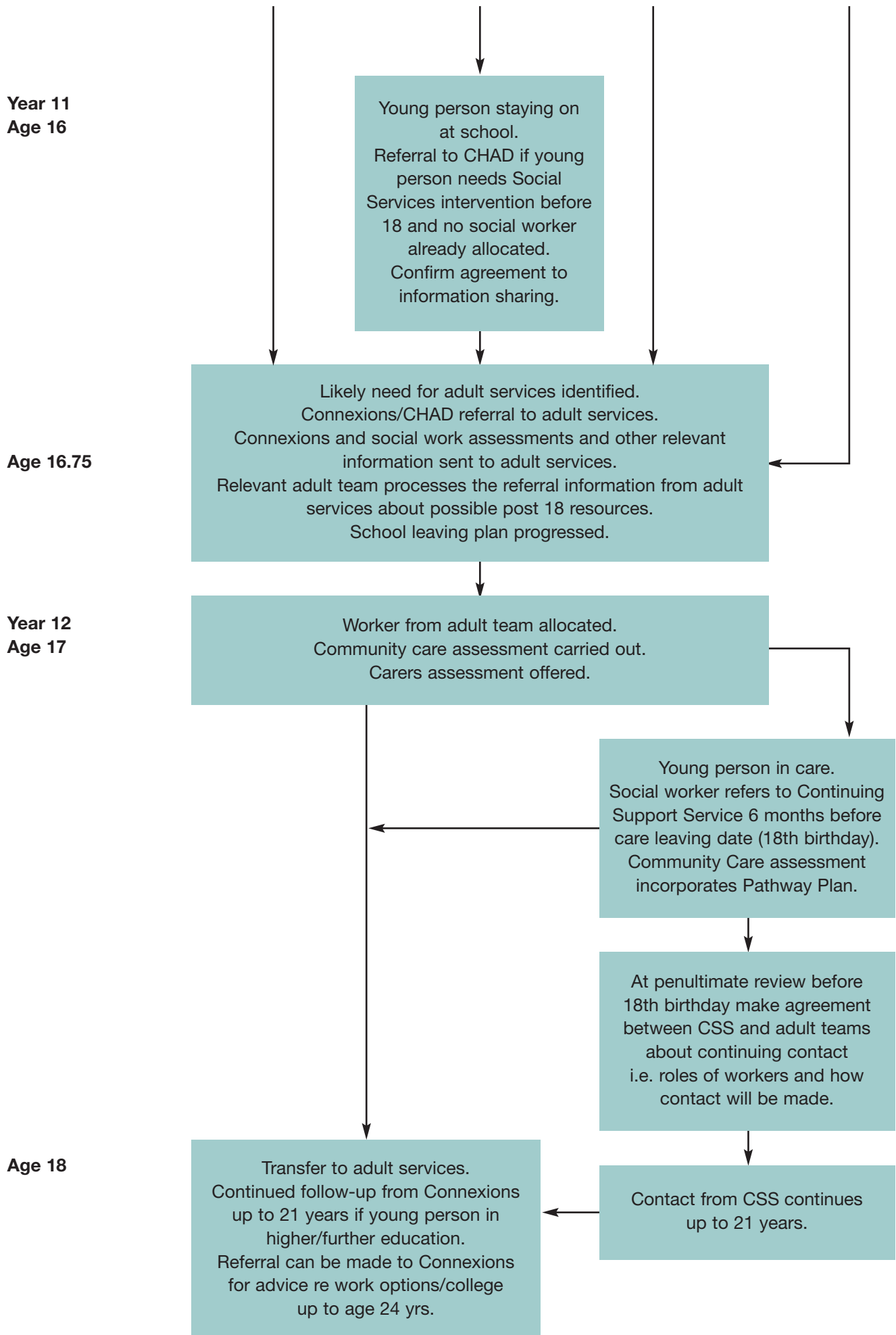
3.2 Protocols and working arrangements between service providers

Background information

The development of strategic planning processes through senior multi-agency fora (see Section 2: Multi-agency Strategic Planning and Commissioning) will need to be reflected at an operational level between providers. The dovetailing of Year 9+ review processes with pathway planning will require collaboration between all the relevant children's services.

Working arrangements will also need to be developed with those providing services to young people who are relevant/becoming former relevant (see Section 1: Eligibility, Rights and Entitlements). This includes the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), further education providers, the council's housing department and local





Appendix

12

FUTURE POSITIVE:

The following is a list of those service providers, agencies or individuals that may need to be involved in the support of young disabled people leaving care:

- Children and adult services in Health and Social Service
- Multi-agency transitions teams
- Aftercare support services
- A Personal Adviser (under the C(LC)A)
- Connexions
- Primary Care Trusts
- Health Promotion services
- Jobcentre Plus Disability Service
- Learning Skills Councils
- FE colleges
- Schools
- Special education providers (including residential education)
- Training providers
- Intermediate labour market organisations
- Local employers, including the council
- Youth Offending Services
- Foster carers
- Supported accommodation providers
- Residential providers
- Private landlords
- Accommodation support – outreach/resettlement teams, etc.
- Supporting People
- DWP/benefits agency
- Relevant voluntary or community organisations, local disability groups
- An advocate/independent visitor, and
- Family/parents/social support network

Appendix

13

Local Authority Social Services Letter – LASSL(2004)20

To: The Chief Executive
 County Councils)
 Metropolitan District Councils) England
 Shire Unitary Authorities)
 London Borough Councils
 Common Council of the City of London
 Council of the Isles of Scilly

Copy: The Director of Social Services

28th July 2004

NATIONAL PROTOCOL – INTER-AUTHORITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEGOTIATING SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS RESIDENT OUTSIDE OF THEIR RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

SUMMARY

1. This letter introduces the National Protocol about inter-authority arrangements for negotiating support for care leavers who are resident outside the area of their responsible authority. This advice included in the Protocol has been agreed between DfES and the Association of Directors of Social Services as providing a sound basis for negotiations between local authority leaving care services about how support might be best provided for care leavers who live well away from their responsible authority's area.
2. This Protocol has been produced in response to concerns that care leavers who live away from their responsible authority may be least able to access the services to which they are entitled and risk losing touch with the authority that has a legal responsibility towards them.
3. The processes outlined in the Protocol are intended to offer care leavers living way from their authority access to support in emergencies and to support more consistent service delivery for young people who are “harder to reach”.
4. The advice included in the Protocol is intended to support councils with social services responsibilities achieve their targets for care leaving services. The procedures outlined in the protocol should improve services to care leavers who, for whatever reason, live outside their responsible authority area as they only involve following a simple process for obtaining information and advice from local leaving care services. Authorities should be enabled to better “keep in touch” with young people who have left their care so that

they can receive the necessary support to achieve the objectives that will have been set out in their Pathway Plans.

ACTION

5. Authorities are asked to take the following action –
 - Note the advice and information included in the Protocol.
 - Make their Leaving Care services and any other relevant agencies aware of the Protocol.
 - Nominate a lead officer from their leaving care services to be responsible for having an overview of services for their care leavers who live outside the local area and for care leavers who are the responsibility of other councils who live within the local authority, Further details about the lead officer's role can be found in Section 5 of the Protocol.
6. The North West Aftercare Forum has agreed to take responsibility for holding and updating the national list of lead officers. Authorities should send the name and contact details of their lead officer to Keir Parsons, North West After Care Forum, Frederick Street, Oldham, OL8 1SW net@nwacf.com

ENQUIRIES

7. Enquiries about this letter should in the first instance be made to:
Mark Burrows/Sara Cooper
Department for Education & Skills
Children, Young People & Families Directorate
Looked After Children Division
Room 125 Wellington House
133–155 Waterloo Road
LONDON SE1 8UG

Tel. 020-7972-4284
E-mail: Mark.Burrows@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

NATIONAL PROTOCOL

Inter-Authority Arrangements for Careleavers

1. Status of this Protocol:

- 1.1 This Protocol has been agreed by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Leaving Care Project Group and the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) as a model for managing joint working arrangements between local authorities where a care leaver who is the responsibility of one authority is residing in another authority.
- 1.2 Those local authorities which have established protocols may obviously retain those protocols at their own discretion and subject to their acceptance by partner authorities. This document is designed to support authorities where one or other of the respective agencies does not have such an agreement. DfES and ADSS consider that this Protocol represents a minimum standard of joint working required of authorities to implement the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

This National Protocol is being issued in July 2004 and will be reviewed after one year.

2. Statement of values:

- 2.1 Local authorities working to this Protocol recognise that care leavers deserve the same standards of care that reasonable parents would provide for their own children. This means that they agree to:
 - make sure that young people know what our responsibilities towards them are;
 - make sure that young people know what their entitlements are;
 - have the highest expectations of them;
 - strive to ensure that they are not discriminated against; and
 - offer as much support as reasonably possible throughout the transition to adulthood and independence.

In short, the values which underpin this Protocol reflect those which underpin the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

3. Aim of this protocol:

- 3.1 The Children (Leaving Care) Act firmly established the principle that a local authority should retain responsibility for its own care leavers (see definition of responsible authority below). This Protocol is predicated on that principle and affirms that wherever reasonably possible the responsible authority should continue to ensure the direct provision of services to those care leavers for whom the authority holds responsibility.
- 3.2 This Protocol is intended to offer guidance to local authorities to ensure minimum standards of leaving care services for care leavers who have moved between authorities. It also describes a process that the authorities should follow in circumstances where it is not practicable for the responsible authority to provide a full care leaving service to

EXTRACT

Promoting the health of looked after children (2002): Department of Health

Appendix 4: The content of a health assessment

Adolescence and leaving care – 11–18

For secondary school age children and young people the focus will be on:

- ability to take appropriate responsibility for own health, including management of specific health conditions e.g. asthma, diabetes;
- communication and interpersonal skills;
- educational and social progress;
- lifestyle including diet and physical activity;
- mental and emotional health including depression and conduct disorders;
- understanding of issues relating to sexuality and sexual activity including its role in relationships; contraception; sexually transmitted infection and the particular risks of early sexual activity;
- access to sources of information and advice about a range of health issues including the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other substance use and access to sources of advice on modifying health risk behaviours;
- ensuring that immunisations are up to date;
- ensuring care leavers have a full copy of all social care health records (including generic background and details of illness and treatments) and be equipped to manage their own health needs.

Copies of **Promoting the Health of Looked After Children** are available from Department of Health Publications. PO Box 777. London SE1 6XH
Tel: 08701 555 455 E-Mail: doh@prolog.uk.com

