



Centre for Professional Practice

Practice Briefing Note 76

Title:	Dudley Children's Services Housing Protocol for Young People Aged 16 – 17 Years.
Effective From:	29th June 2020

Practice Note:	<p><u>Housing Protocol for 16-17 Year Olds Who are Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness</u></p> <p>If it is deemed that a young person is homeless or at risk of homelessness, a call/referral (followed by a MARF) should be made to the MASH/Emergency Duty Team.</p> <p>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ MASH will make initial enquiries to determine threshold in co-operation with MASH Housing (this will include making daytime enquiries of emergency EDT contacts).○ If the young person is not homeless or at risk of homelessness, then MASH will refer the young person to Dudley Council Plus to complete a housing application and / or to Early Help if further support is required.○ If the young person is homeless or at risk of homelessness: <i>Threshold Level 4 and case progression on to the Duty and Assessment Service.</i>○ If agreed Level 4 Threshold is met: <i>MASH Housing will notify the Homeless Prevention Resource Team (HRPT) on 03005552345.</i> <p>Emergency Duty Team (EDT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ EDT may place the young person in to emergency accommodation overnight under Section 20 Children Act 1989. EDT Contacts will be referred to MASH by 9am the following working day.○ EDT will follow their processes when placing a young person out of hours. <p>Initial Accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Initial accommodation is to be provided by Children's Social Care under Section 20 Children Act 1989. Only on refusal of Section 20 by the young person is initial accommodation to be provided by Dudley Children's Services under Section 17 Children Act 1989.
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- In deciding whether a young person has capacity to consent, it must be determined that they can understand the nature, purpose and possible consequences of the proposed decision. Only if they are able to understand, retain, use and weigh this information - and communicate their decision to others - can they provide valid consent.
- The information leaflet ['Help if you are Homeless – A Guide for 16/17 Year Olds'](#) should be provided to the young person within **one working day**.
- A CART referral is made within **one working day** of the referral coming in to the Duty and Assessment Service; or within **one working day** of the decision to accommodate on an open case for reunification work (where safe to do so) or to stay connected to family members.
- The young person's case is booked on to the next available Achieving Early Permanence Panel within **one working day**.
- If the young person is accommodated under Section 20, then their case is to be presented to Legal Gateway Panel within **five working days**, or **the next available meeting**.
- The Young Person is to be supported to complete a Housing Application within **five days** of being accommodated. Dudley Council Plus will offer Band 1 Priority Need if accommodated under Section 20, and Band 2 if accommodated under Section 17.
- A [Gateway Referral](#) will be made within **five working days** for housing related support. This is to support the Young Person to develop confidence and live independently, and become tenancy ready.
- A Family Group Conference will be convened within **five working days** to support the Young Person to return home or to the care of family members, if safe to do so.
- A Child and Young Person's Assessment (CYPA) should be undertaken in collaboration with the Homeless Prevention Response Team. If the young person is 17.5 years old, then the CYPA is to be completed **no later than 20 days from referral**.

28 Day Cooling Off Period

- There will be a **28 day 'cooling off' period**, to allow the young person who may have been in a state of crisis when initially requesting accommodation, to gain emotional and psychological stability to support them in making informed choices about their lives. The Young Person will gain independent legal advice from the Citizen's Advice

	<p>Bureau at Dudley Council Plus within 28 days of being accommodated regarding their choice of status i.e. Section 20 or Section 17.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the young person remains accommodated under Section 20, then Children Looked After procedures are to be followed. If the young person remains accommodated under Section 17, then Child in Need procedures are to be followed. The young person will remain on a Child in Need Plan until they no longer require accommodation, or they reach the age of 18 years. In such cases, Children’s Services and Housing Services will need to work together with the young person to ensure that they are not placed at risk of homelessness as they approach 18 years. <p><u>16 – 17 Year Old Housing Flow Chart</u></p> <p>A Flow Chart has been developed to support staff with understanding the protocol for 16 – 17 year olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>16 – 17 Year Old Homeless Workshops</p> <p>CPP are delivering workshops to support staff with understanding the Housing Protocol. Book on to a workshop by accessing the Training Programme on the CPP website: https://www.dudleycpp.org.uk/courses-index or by e-mailing CPP at cpp@dudley.gov.uk.</p> <p><u>Care Leavers Move On Procedure</u></p> <p>The Care Leavers Move On Procedure aims to ensure that priority for re-housing is given to those Care Leavers ready to move on to alternative accommodation; and to ensure that appropriate advice is given to those leaving care to secure suitable move on accommodation. Housing Options and Young Person Advisors need to work together efficiently in pursuit of these shared aims.</p>
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