



# Housing and CYPS Joint Protocol Homeless 16 and 17-year olds

April 2019

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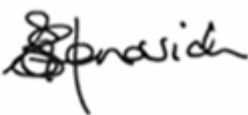
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## Document Control

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<b>Services:</b>	Children and Young People's Services, Homes for Haringey and Strategic Commissioning - Housing Related Support

## Approvals

The signatories below approved, this joint housing and CYPS protocol

Name	Role	Signature	Date	Version
Beverley Hendricks	Assistant Director – Safeguarding		03.09.19	V.02

## Version History

Version	Date	Author(s)	Summary of Changes
V0.1	05/02/2019	YD	First draft of protocol
V0.2	23/04/2019	YD	Full process write-up added & information on governance, escalation procedures and key contacts

## Protocol Review Dates

Date Due	Review Completed
03.09.2020	

## Introduction

Research has highlighted that 16 and 17-year olds who have faced homelessness are some of the most vulnerable young people in the borough, who often suffer from emotional and/or mental trauma as a result of their experiences. In recognition of this, both the Council and Homes for Haringey are united in their commitment to deliver person-centred support to ensure the best outcomes for all homeless 16 and 17-year olds.

Both agencies will aim to prevent homelessness, enable young people to return home where this is in their best interests and where necessary, ensure the young person is provided with safe accommodation and support to transition into adulthood.

To do this, both Homes for Haringey (HfH) and Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) have adopted a 'no wrong front door' approach, whereby 16 and 17-year olds will receive clear and consistent information about the procedures which will be followed after they present as homeless.

In addition to this, both Homes for Haringey and CYPS will work in a transparent manner, sharing information in line with statutory guidance, to ensure that 16 and 17-year olds in need get the right support at the right time.

This protocol is underpinned by a foundation of both Housing and Children's Services legislation. All the national policies which govern the stages, assessments and duties within this protocol are cited on page 2.

## Aims of the protocol

- To ensure an effective and coordinated response across Housing and CYPS services to prevent and quickly relieve homelessness amongst young people
- To ensure CYPS and Housing services have clarity on the Council's single process for homeless 16/17-year olds
- To ensure that CYPS and Housing staff have the knowledge to ensure that young people receive consistent information regarding the Council's process for homeless 16/17-year olds
- To ensure that both CYPS and Housing staff understand where to signpost homeless 16/17-year olds for impartial advice and guidance
- To prevent young people from being passed back and forth between services

## Principles of the protocol

- All services will work in a person-centred manner, focusing on achieving the best outcomes for each young person
- Both Housing and CYPS will communicate openly between services and where necessary, provide updates on joint-working cases to the other service
- To ensure appropriate support is given to young people presenting as homeless who have additional vulnerabilities including their sexuality or LGBTQ+ status,

their religious choices and young people who may have experienced domestic violence

## National legislative framework for working collaboratively to support homeless 16-17-year olds

Links are included below to the legislation which underpins this protocol:

- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act \(2017\)](#)
- [The Homelessness Reduction Act \(2017\)](#)
- [Housing Act 1996](#)
- [MHCLG and DFE Guidance: Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17-year-old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation 2018](#)
- [Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities](#)
- Case law including [R \(G\) v. Southwark \[2009\]](#)

## Local policy framework for working collaboratively to support homeless 16-17-year olds

- [Haringey Council Homelessness Strategy 2018](#)
- [Haringey Youth at Risk Strategy \(2019-2029\)](#)
- [Haringey Borough Plan \(2019-2023\)](#)

## Joint process for 16 and 17-year-old homeless young people

**Step 1:** If a young person first presents themselves for assistance to Homes for Haringey, they will be directed immediately to the Housing Needs team, who will:

- Inform the young person that they will be referred to Children and Young People's Services
- Refer the 16-17-year-old immediately to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in CYPS
- Refer the 16-17-year-old immediately to the Centrepont Family Mediation Service
- Maintain the 16-17-year olds safety until they are collected by a member of Children's Services

**Step 2:** On receipt of a referral, MASH will undertake an assessment which includes a discussion with the young person and their family, exploration if with support a young person can remain at/return home and a discussion with any other relevant agencies involved.

- If the young person is not imminently homeless and does not meet the threshold for a statutory assessment, the young person will be referred to the Targeted

Response Team (TRT) in Early Help to receive a tailored package of support to prevent future family breakdowns and instances of homelessness.

- The young person may also receive up to 12 weeks of support from the Centrepont Family Mediation service to prevent future instances of homelessness as a result of familial relationship breakdowns.

**Step 3:** If the young person has nowhere safe to stay, MASH may choose to immediately accommodate the young person under section 20 of the Children's Act. The young person would therefore become Looked After. This may occur particularly if the young person has complex needs, previous histories of being in care or is in a high-risk situation. In this case the CYPS brokerage team will source an appropriate placement for the young person. The placement may be in foster care, in semi-independent provision or within Homes for Haringey's Young People's Supported Housing Pathway. If the young person requires immediate emergency accommodation, Children's Services and Homes for Haringey may jointly agree to place the young person in the 7-day young people's crash-pad (to come online in May 2019).

**Step 4:** If further information is required regarding the young person's situation, the young person's case may be referred to the Children and Young People's Assessment Team who will conduct a Children and Family Assessment. The assessment may take up to 45 days.

- Whilst the assessment is taking place, Children and Young People's Services will place the young person in appropriate interim accommodation. This may include placements in the community, placements with extended family members or Homes for Haringey Pathways provision (including the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway or the 7-day stay crash-pad, where appropriate)
- At the end of the assessment the young person will either be found to not require further support from social services, at which point they will be referred to early help for ongoing support
- Alternatively, CYPS will identify that there is a duty to support and accommodate the 16 or 17-year-old under section 17 or section 20

**Step 5: If a duty is owed under Section 17 and Section 20:**

- Social workers will discuss assessment outcomes and options for the future with the young person, ensuring that they have the opportunity to make a fully-informed decision on whether to accept the offer of assistance under section 20 section 17
- Young people will be offered independent advocacy and advice to make this decision

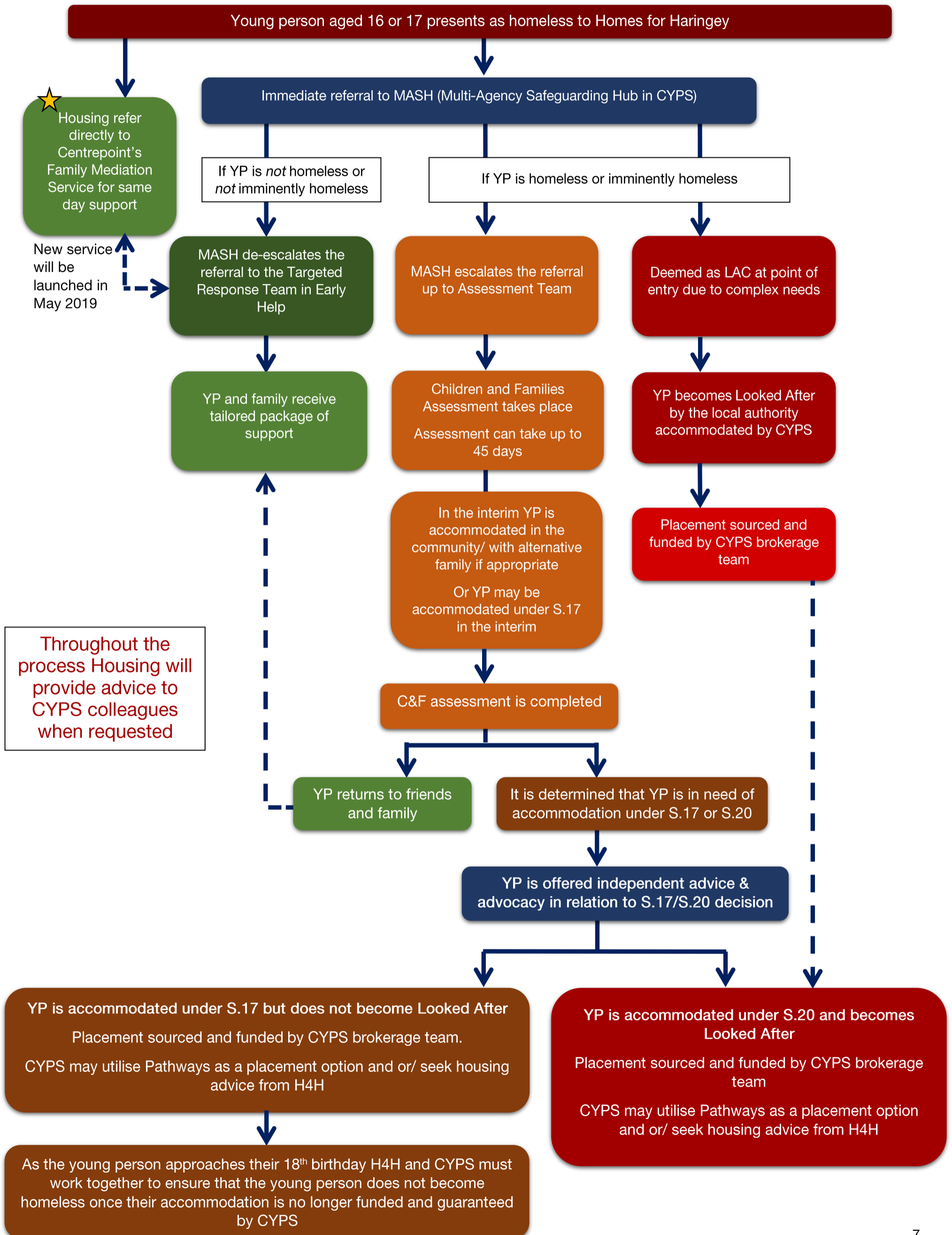
**If a duty is owed under Section 17:**

- CYPS will offer the 16 or 17-year-old accommodation under section 17 and develop a Child in Need (CIN) plan. The young person will not have Looked After status. Children and Young People's Services will provide accommodation until the young person no longer requires accommodation or until they reach the age of 18. The young person may be placed in semi-independent provision or the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway. When the young person is approaching the age of 18, CYPS and Housing must work together with the young person to ensure that they are not placed at risk of homelessness as they approach age 18 and their placement under CYPS ends.

**If a duty is owed under Section 20:**

- CYPS will source a placement in suitable accommodation and will commence Looked After Children procedures. The accommodation sourced by CYPS may include foster care, semi-independent units or placements in the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway.

## Protocol Flowchart – Process for Homeless 16-17-year olds





## Accommodation and shared resources

Homes for Haringey has access to a range of accommodation options which may be used to accommodate homeless 16 and 17-year olds whom Children Services have identified a duty towards. These include, but are not limited to:

- The 7-day stay Young People's Crash Pad
- The Young People's Supported Housing Pathway – containing a mix of self-contained flats for females, shared mixed gender and same gender houses/flats, hostel provision and a high support, mental-health specific house (the latter will come online in June 2019)

Alternatively, Children's Services may utilise semi-independent accommodation or foster care placements through CYPS brokerage.

## Governance arrangements – review and monitoring

This protocol will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the commissioning service, in conjunction with management from both Homes for Haringey and Children's Services.

At the quarterly reviews, cases of 16-17-year olds presenting as homeless will be randomly selected and jointly reviewed to ensure the protocol is being adhered to. This process will serve to highlight any barriers there may be in implementing the protocols.

This protocol will be reviewed formally in 9 months to assess its impact on the joint working arrangement between all partners.

Once this protocol is agreed, joint training will be provided for CYPS and Housing staff. Any change in legislations will be updated in the protocol as required and this will be a living document which reflects the changes in government guidance and national best practice.

## Escalation process

Legislation, Case Law and Government guidance emphasise the importance of joint housing protocols as a means by which statutory services will be held account to homeless and vulnerable young people for the services they provide.

This protocol is designed to reduce conflict between agencies to ensure the best possible outcome for homeless 16 and 17-year-olds. As evident from this policy, there are a number of strategies and policies alongside which this protocol must work, and it is important to recognise that there may be conflicts between different agencies' duties, policies and practices.

Where conflicts occur and there is no clear resolution, staff will be expected to arrange a multi-agency meeting with all the relevant parties to identify a way forward and

ensure the young person's needs remain the central focus.

Minutes should be taken at the meeting which state the solutions proposed and the barriers to implementing them.

Where a solution cannot be reached through a Multi-Agency Meeting, the staff members involved should jointly refer the case to the appropriate senior managers (details listed overleaf) in Homes for Haringey and Children and Young People's Services.

## Key contacts for the homeless 16 and 17-year olds joint working protocol

<u>Homes for Haringey</u>				
<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Email Address</u>	<u>Contact Number</u>	<u>Location</u>
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<u>Children and Young People's Services</u>				
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