**Practice Guidance for the Care Experienced Service Supporting Your Future**

Portsmouth City Council Childrens Social Care Guidance describes the responsibilities processes and expectations of Personal Advisors and their managers when working with Portsmouth Care Experienced Young Adult. All PCC staff are required to comply with and apply this guidance in their work.

This guidance is intended primarily for Care Experienced Young Adult and Personal Advisors, it will also assist other agencies who provide services to Care Experienced Young People.

**Legal Context and Definitions**

The guidance is based upon the legislative requirements and regulations set out in:

* The Children Act 1989
* The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
* Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
* Children and Social Work Act 2017

Care Experienced Young Adults who meet criteria of Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant below are entitled to support as follows:

***Eligible Child***

* Young person aged 16 and 17.
* Young Person will have been looked after for at least 13 consecutive weeks since the age of 14.
* Young person is still looked after.
* Entitled to a Personal Advisor, a Needs Assessment, a Pathway Plan, receive all the care and support they normally receive until they leave care.

***Relevant Child***

* Young person aged 16 and 17.
* Looked after by children’s services for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14.
* Looked after for a period of time after their 16th birthday.
* No longer looked after.
* Entitled to a Personal Advisor, a Needs Assessment, a Pathway Plan, accommodation, and financial support to meet education, training and employment needs.

***Former Relevant Child***

* Aged between 18 and 21 or between 18 and 25 if still in full-time education.
* Previously an eligible child and/or a relevant child
* Entitled to a Personal Advisor, a Pathway Plan, kept under regular review, Give assistance to the extent that the young adult's educational or training needs require it. The kinds of assistance are contributing to expenses incurred by the young adult in living near the place where s/he is, or will be, receiving education or training; or making a grant to enable the young adult to meet expenses connected with his education and training.

**Note:** Once a former relevant child becomes 21, they can choose whether to continue to have support and this can continue until they are 25.

***Qualifying child***

• Aged between 16 and 21 or between 16 and 25 if still in full-time education

• Looked after by children’s services on, or after, their 16th birthday and no longer looked after

• Spent less than 13 weeks in care since 14th birthday, i.e. do not fulfil criteria for eligible or relevant child

• Entitled to, Advice and assistance from Supporting Your Future Team which may, be financial help with living expenses and if they are in higher education, they may also help with securing vacation accommodation. There is not an entitlement to a Pathway Plan or Personal Advisor

***Qualifying Child: Special Guardianship Order***

• Young adult aged 18-25

• You were being looked after when a Special Guardianship Order was made

• Entitled to: Advice and assistance which may, be financial help with living expenses and if they are in higher education, they may also help with securing vacation accommodation. There is not an entitlement to a Pathway Plan or Personal Advisor

**Responsibilities of the Personal Adviser**

Section 3 Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires Local Authorities to provide access to Personal Advisors to care experienced young people from 16 until the age of 25. In Portsmouth City Council, Personal Advisors work with young people from 16 years up to 21 years, this continues up to 25 years of age if the young person remains in education or requires support under extended duties. Personal Advisors have statutory responsibilities to provide a service as follows:

• Support care experienced young adults with all aspects of the transition from care towards independence

• Keep in touch with care experienced young people and meet responsibilities for contact including visiting at least every 8 weeks or more frequently as needs or risks require. In some cases, young people may decline the support of the council. This will be respected where we feel this is safe; however periodic attempts will continue to be made to remain in contact so should a young adult's circumstance change they know support is still available. This will be done via phone calls, What's app, texting, or sending cards.

• To visit the young person in their accommodation within 5 working days of a move or change

• To maintain and review a Pathway Plan with the young person at least every six months and when there is a significant change in the young person’s circumstances or if there is a move that involves a significant change i.e., from supported accommodation to own flat

• To ensure the plan meets its purpose and achieve the aims and objectives set out in the plan

• To support the young person to access appropriate health, wellbeing or welfare services

• Co-ordinate the provision of services and take reasonable steps to ensure the young person makes use of such services

• To support the young person to develop skills to enable them to become independent

• To provide support to develop financial capability-how to manage day to day finances

• To support the young person to access housing options

• To support young people to access and maintain education, employment or training

• To identify and address risk, working with young people to manage risk taking behaviour and

develop resilience.

• To act as advocate or intermediary and if required refer to advocacy services.

• Provide high quality information, advice and guidance and signpost to appropriate provision

• To record work and interactions with young people

• To administer the young person’s Setting Up Home Allowance (SUHA)

**Note**: With effect from 1 April 2023 those turning 18 years old after this date will have their SUHA allowance increased from £2,000 to £3,000.

**Co Working Responsibilities of Social Workers and Personal Advisers**

The Supporting Your Future PA will be matched with a care experienced young person after their 16th birthday and commence work with the young person at a point agreed with the individual young person and the Social Worker. Until allocation to the PA the Social Work PA functions will be undertaken by the Social Worker. In Portsmouth all eligible young people will usually have both a PA and Social Worker allocated to them by their 16th birthday. The Personal Adviser will be introduced to the child by their allocated social worker and together start planning for leaving care The allocated Social Worker retains statutory case responsibility working together with a PA to ensure a supportive transition from adolescence to early adulthood for children as well as a smooth transition of case responsibility from the Children’s Social Worker to the PA at the age of 18 years. At 18 years old, the PA will become the allocated key worker for the Child and the Children’s Social Worker role will come to an end. The table below defines specific respective role responsibilities for 16 to 18-year-old Care Experienced Young Adults. There will be times when it is appropriate for there to be negotiation about some tasks dependent on the knowledge, expertise and capacity of the worker

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| **Social Worker Responsibilities** | **PA Responsibilities** |
| SW will undertake statutory CLA visits and  record on Mosaic  SW will keep the Personal Advisor informed of any significant changes or issues in the young person life.  SW will invite the Personal Advisor and /or their Team Leader to any strategy discussions/meetings | Initial Meeting  Personal Advisor will contact the social worker to arrange a date to meet the young person. At the meeting the role of the Personal Advisor will be explained to the young person, and they will have the opportunity to ask questions of their Personal Advisor.  Agreement of how the Personal Advisor and the young person will keep in touch will be decided at the initial meeting. This will be led by the young persons' wishes but there should be at least one contact every 8 weeks as a minimum even if there is not a face-to-face contact. If this is not being taken up then a meeting to be convened to think about what more we can do.  Any contact with the young person by the Personal Advisor will be recorded in mosaic case notes and an alert sent to the SW.    Oversight of these contacts will be provided by the Personal Advisor's Team Leader.  The Personal Advisor and /or their Team Leader will attend any significant review meetings. |

**Pathway Planning & Needs Assessment**

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| **Social Worker Responsibilities** | **PA Responsibilities** |
| SW will complete needs assessment and  pathway plan by the Child’s 16th birthday and  will update every 6 months or at the point of any significant change in circumstances until young person reaches 18. | The Personal Advisor will participate in all Pathway Plan reviews with the Social Worker and the young person from 16. This is to enable the Personal Advisor to develop a relationship with the young person. |
| Pathway Plans should be prepared by the Social Worker, signed off by their Team Leader and presented and discussed at each Children We Care For Review. | The Personal Advisor must attend the final Pathway plan review at 18 and if they are unavailable their Team Leader should attend |

**Transition Planning**

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| **Social Worker Responsibilities** | **PA Responsibilities** |
| Social worker will consider the needs.  assessment and identify if the young person will need post 18 support from adult services including the learning disability services or mental health services.  Any continuing health care needs will also need to be considered and planned for.  This must start by the age of 14. | Personal Advisor to be fully aware of the transition plans and support the work of the Social Worker, ensuring close relationships are developed with post 18 providers. This could include visiting the young person at home if they are Staying Put to get to know the carer, or working with Staying Close staff |
| Social Worker to ensure by 16 years the young person has a:  • Bank / Savings account  • NI number  • Passport  • Birth Certificate  Team Lead will ensure this is completed as close to the young person16th birthday as .  possible | The Personal Advisor should be informed at the 17.5 years review of the total of savings a young person has so they can help the young person plan what they want to do with their savings.  The Personal Advisor can apply for NI number but cannot do the passport |
| Social Worker will continue to provide life story work as appropriate. | The Personal Advisor will complete a PATH with the young person as appropriate |
| Social Worker will update Chronology every six months until the age of 18, ensuring it is up to date at the time of the Child’s 18th birthday. | The Personal Advisor will continue a Chronology post 18 for the duration the young person remains open to them. |
| Social Worker will agree and arrange payments for pocket money, savings, transport, and clothing allowance whilst the young person is under the age of 18 | The Personal Advisor will support young person to claim benefits (if applicable) in preparation for turning 18 years.  If the young person has No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), the Personal Advisor will take over payments from their 18th birthday. |
|  | The Personal Advisor will lead on allocation of the Setting Up Home Allowance (care leavers grant). This will be utilised post 18 when the young person moves to independent living. The Personal Advisor will ensure the SUHA tracking form is created and maintain this with each spend. |
| Social Worker will ensure Christmas and  birthday presents are provided up until and including 18th birthday | The Personal Advisor will provide an allowance for birthdays and a named festival from 19 years in line with the Care Experienced Young Adults Offer |
| Any change of accommodation (planned or  unplanned) whilst under the age of 18 will be managed by the Social Worker. They will be responsible for completing the placement referral and managing any physical moves. Social Worker will discuss potential placements with the Personal Advisor so they are aware of  how any placement fits with the young person's preparation for independent living. |  |
| Social Worker & Personal Advisor will work  together on post 18 housing options. This should begin at age 16 via Pathway Planning. | The Personal Advisor can advise the young person on accommodation options post 18 years.  The Personal Advisor will support with a housing register application if appropriate.  In line with the joint working protocol with housing, all Children We Care For will have a meeting with a housing officer and their Personal Advisor at 17 to inform and explore their accommodation options post 18 |

**Preparation for Independent Living and Housing**

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| **Social Worker Responsibilities** | **PA Responsibilities** |
| Social Workers will attend placement reviews and ensure young people are being given opportunities by providers to develop their independent living skills | Personal Advisors will work with young people and providers to assess and encourage the development of key independence milestones. They will introduce the Independence Checklist at their first review at age 16. This will be used inform where the young person will live post 18 |

**Health**

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| **Social Worker Responsibilities** | **PA Responsibilities** |
| Social Worker will refer for health assessment and gain young person's consent for this. Social worker to ensure young person is registered with dentist and GP. Social Worker to ensure young person is provided with health summary by relevant Health Practitioner | At the transition meeting the Personal Advisor will be informed of any future appointments in order to support the young person |
| SW to lead on PEP/POP planning and reviews and ensure PEP/POP pre 18 years is completed and up to date. | The Personal Advisor will attend the transition and final POP meetings in conjunction with the Education Worker, Foster carer and social worker and advise and support with  • Education/training/employment  • University/college/training applications  • Support to attend open days/interviews  • Provide letter to college advising of care  leaver status  • Provide letter of support for 16-19 bursary application  Personal Advisor to advise on financial support in relation to education, training and employment.  Personal Advisor to make referral to progression advisor and support with progressions meetings |
| Social Worker will ensure every Child we Care for has Health Passport by the age of 17. Consent will be sought to hold the document on file, if not given it will be recorded on child's file that they have Health passport once confirmed by health | PA and TL will ensure that every young person has Health Passport as they transfer to Supporting Your Future Service. |

**Children We Care For Seeking Safety and Asylum additional responsibilities to above**

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| **Social Worker Responsibilities** | **PA Responsibilities** |
| Social Worker to ensure Personal Adviser is aware of current asylum status and future milestones post 18. Social Worker to ensure that Pathway Plan is triple planned for all possible asylum outcomes. | PA to ensure they are fully informed of any actions to be taken post 18. |

Prior to transition at 18 there will be a meeting with both Team Leaders, the Social Worker and Personal Advisor - Team Leaders to liaise to arrange this.

It is expected that the social worker ensures the Personal Advisor is made aware of any significant changes in the young person's life and they invite them to LAC reviews. The Personal Advisor can support with some activities as outlined above but the statutory responsibilities remain with the social worker until the young person is 18.

Team Leaders in Building Your Future and localities will audit each case to ensure prior to transition of the case to Supporting Your Future that:

* Pathway Plan is complete.
* Actions set at the final LAC review are either complete or clearly handed over.
* Chronology and SAF is up to date.
* LAC medical has been completed.
* Supervision is up to date.
* Passport has been obtained.
* All open episodes are completed.

At the young person's 18th birthday, the Personal Advisor will then become the allocated worker on mosaic if all the above is completed they will end the LAC status and create care leaver tab.

TO BE COMPLETED IN MOSAIC

* Looked After Tab - End LAC status.
* Registrations - Add Care Leaver registration.
* Develop Pathway Plan - Must be completed to enable Care Leaver Contact tab.
* Address tab - End "Care" address and add "Care Leaver" address.
* End Previous workflow tasks - i.e Lac Planning/LAC visits/ Residential notes/ LAC Reviews tabs
* 18th Birthday contact is completed.
* Transfer checklist to be completed and signed off by outgoing Team Leader and the receiving Supporting Your Future Team Leader.

**Personal Advisors are required to complete the following records**:

Assessments, Pathway Plans, and Reviews, wellbeing assessment, risk assessments where applicable, Transfer Summary, Case Closure Episode, Chronology, Case Notes, Update Personal details, Upload documents, OOH Significant Information Episode. Care Experienced Young Adults and other professionals will request access to their files and their recording should be written with this in mind.

**Management Oversight**

On transfer of young person to Supporting Your Future Team Leaders are to complete case note confirming transfer and allocation of young adult. Management oversight must be evident across decision making records and the young person’s case file. Case supervision by Team Leaders, should be no less than bi-monthly for under 21s and three monthly for those aged over 21. It is the responsibility of managers to have oversight on a regular basis and monitor the regularity of completing the supervision record on the case tracker. All managers will demonstrate quality assurance activities and management oversight.

• Case discussions, including critical decisions and discussions about young people

• Quality Assurance of assessments and plans prior to sign off

• Quality Assurance of transfer and closure decisions and records

• Case supervision

• Audits

• Clear actions and learning in response to audits

The Service Leader keeps track of all high-risk cases which are RAG rated Purple through the weekly high-risk tracker and puts oversight on the case every fortnight as a minimum.

**Evidencing Wishes and Feelings of our Care Experienced Young Adults**

Working in a child centred way is an essential part of good practice. Communicating and listening to young people helps practitioners understand what life is like for them, what needs to change and how best to promote their wellbeing and development. The young person’s views and wishes are central to good practice and alongside the views of carers and other key professionals, are considered in as part of the help and support offered. Young people are involved as much as possible in the decisions being made and the help being offered. Feedback is be sought from young people, and carers about their views of how helpful the support they are receiving is and this information will inform and influence how services are provided. Practitioners will promote relationship-based practice with young people their networks and other professionals. We understand what difference the help provided has made to the young person and what has improved for them through our Feedback February annual survey.

We have a monthly Care Experienced Voice group where young people can meet the managers who run Supporting Your Futures and the Director of Childrens Social Care and Education and put their views directly to them. We also run regular Connect activities where young people can meet managers if they don’t fancy a formal meeting. The Connect activities provide an opportunity to try something new, play some sport or music and meet other young people.

**Visits to our Care Experienced young adults**

Regulation requires that when a Care Experienced young adult moves to new accommodation, the PA must see them at that accommodation within 5 working days of the move and complete a care leaver contact episode recording the suitability of the accommodation. Subsequently they must see the young person when Pathway Plan will be first reviewed, after 28 days and then visit (Keep in touch) the Care Experienced young adult at no less than two monthly intervals. These are statutory minimum requirements; visits should regularly be scheduled to take place at the accommodation where the young person lives. On each occasion the PA must consider whether this accommodation continues to be suitable for the young person and recorded in the care leaver contact episode. The PA will need to observe the general state of the property and check how well the young person is managing in their accommodation and their financial commitments for rent, utilities, etc. Where a young person is living in semi-independent accommodation linked to the provision of housing related support, the PA should monitor how well the accommodation, with its related support, is meeting the young person’s needs. They should liaise closely with the young person and any key work staff. We must keep in touch with the young person. Contact should take place as specified in the Pathway Plan. Keeping in touch between visits might involve a large range of communication methods, for example: calls, texts, social media, e-Mails and Whats App. Sometimes a young person may ask for a visit outside of working hours and in this case the Personal Advisor must agree this with the Team Leader. All young people should be seen regularly, irrespective of, communication or cognitive abilities and language barriers.

The guide to the Guide to the SSDA903 collection can be found at:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1153549/CLA_SSDA903_2023-24_Guide_Version_1_1.pdf>

**Pathway Planning**

A Pathway Plan must be prepared for all Eligible and Relevant children and continued for all Relevant and Former Relevant children. The plan will be based on the initial Pathway Assessment and the previous Care Plan and done alongside the young person. It will set out the actions that must be taken by the local authority, young person, their parents, carers and agencies involved with the young person. The purpose of the plan is to ensure the young person is provided with the support and services they need to make a successful transition to adulthood. The Pathway Plan should be prepared as soon as possible after the age of 15 3/4 by the Social Worker in collaboration with the PA if involved. The plan will be updated in line with needs and considered at each statutory review chaired by the young person’s Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). From the age of 18 the PA is responsible for writing the plan with Team Leader sign off. The Social Worker or Personal Adviser preparing the Pathway Plan must engage with the young person to obtain views to help focus the plan. Pathway plans must be developed with the young person. In addition, they should consider consulting if appropriate with:

• The young person’s parents, other adults with parental responsibility and relevant members of their wider family network with the young person’s consent

• The young person’s current carer and any provider of housing and accommodation support

• The young person’s designated teacher, college tutor or other educational professional familiar with the young person’s learning needs and educational objectives

• Any independent visitor appointed for the young person

• Designated nurse for Looked After Children or any other medical professional providing health care or treatment named in their health plan.

PAs and Social Workers will use Pathway Planning Guidance available <https://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Pathway-Plans.pdf> .

The Guidance provides specific wording for key aspects Pathway Plans. The Pathway Plan should include details of how we will meet the young person’s needs and be explicit about the timescale by which any action required to implement any aspect of the plan will be carried out, and by whom. The Pathway Plan should always include a contingency plan. The plan should include details about the support that the young person might expect their PA to provide. The kinds of issues where the PA will be the young person's initial source of advice might include:

• The level of contact and personal support to be provided, and by whom

• Housing options potentially available to the young person and how to access accommodation and advice

• The plan for continuing education or training when they cease to be looked after

• Assistance to obtain and sustaining employment or other purposeful activity

• Support to develop and sustain appropriate family and social relationships

• Support to develop the practical and other skills needed to live independently. How they will support the young person to develop their confidence and decision-making capacity

• The financial support to be provided to meet accommodation and maintenance costs. Information about financial capability - how to manage day to day finances, how to take up any entitlements to benefits

• Health care needs, including any physical, emotional or mental health needs and how they are to be met when they cease to be looked after

• Information about leisure, sporting and cultural opportunities and how to participate in community life

• Contingency plans for action to be taken if the Pathway Plan ceases to be effective for any reason

• If Team Leaders have agreed alternative methods of contact this should be recorded or if the frequency of visits/ contact has been reduced or increased.

The Pathway Plan must be recorded in Mosaic and once signed off a copy sent to the young person. A case note should record when and how this was done. The young person should be asked for consent to share the Pathway Plan with other relevant professionals. The plan should be signed by the Personal Adviser Line Manager, the young person and their PA, as evidence of their commitment to achieving the plan's objectives.

**Pathway Plan Reviews**

The PA must make sure the Pathway Plan is reviewed at 6 monthly intervals and convene additional reviews to ensure plans address changes in circumstances or needs. e.g., where there is a real risk of eviction from their accommodation, the PA convenes a review involving all relevant professionals and the young person, to develop a plan to enable the young person to maintain their accommodation or move in a planned way. Given the serious implications for a young person’s future, the PA should hold a review in these circumstances:

a. Where a young person has been charged with an offence and there is a possibility of the young person being sentenced to custody, which will risk losing their (suitable) accommodation.

b. Where a young person is at risk of being evicted from their accommodation or otherwise threatened with homelessness.

c. Where professionals are concerned about the parenting capacity of a relevant or former relevant young person, with there being a possibility that their own child may need to become the subject of a multi-agency safeguarding / child protection plan.

The PA should also hold a review in the following circumstances:

d. If requested to do so by the young person.

e. For young people in custody, it will be good practice wherever possible to carry out a review of the Pathway Plan at least a month before release in order to give enough time for pre-release planning. PA's should schedule reviews at a maximum of 5 months intervals to allow for cancellations. The review will consider progress and impact of the plan and revise and update accordingly.

**Immigration Status, Pathway and Transition Planning**

A child’s immigration status has no bearing on a local authority’s duties to provide care leaving support. Unaccompanied children must be provided with the same support as for any care experienced young adult. A child’s status as an unaccompanied or trafficked child must be considered in the assessment of needs undertaken as part of the pathway planning process, and by the independent reviewing officer in any review of the pathway plan.

Transition planning will need to consider the challenges and issues, such as education or preparing for independent living. Planning for a care leaver that has recently entered the UK from overseas may need to cover additional support in understanding the institutions and systems. Unaccompanied children can be at particular risk of becoming isolated on leaving care. When planning for transition, the local authority must ensure that language or cultural factors are considered to reduce this risk.

A trafficked child may still be at risk of exploitation from their traffickers on leaving care. This risk should be considered, particularly about arranging accommodation. Planning transition to adulthood for unaccompanied children is a particularly complex process that needs to address their care needs in the context of wider asylum and immigration legislation and how these needs change over time.

Pathway planning to support an unaccompanied child’s transition to adulthood should cover all areas that would be addressed within all care leaver’s plans as well as additional needs arising from their specific immigration issues. Planning may have to be based around short-term achievable goals whilst entitlement to remain in the UK is being determined. For unaccompanied children who do not have permanent immigration status, transition planning should initially take a triple planning perspective, which, over time should be refined as the young person’s immigration status is resolved. Planning cannot pre-empt the outcome of any immigration decision and may be based on: - a transitional plan during the period of uncertainty when the care leaver is in the United Kingdom without permanent immigration status; - a longer-term perspective plan should the care leaver be granted long-term permission to stay in the UK (for example through the grant of Refugee Status); or - a return to their country of origin at any appropriate point or at the end of the immigration consideration process, should that be necessary because the care leaver decides to leave the UK or is required to do so.

Claiming asylum is a complex process. Social workers and personal advisors should work with the care experienced young adult's legal representative and the dedicated decision-maker at the Home Office to ensure the young person understands the process and the possible outcomes, and to provide them with necessary support. There are four possible outcomes of the asylum claim:

1. Granted Refugee Status (i.e., granted asylum). Leave to remain for five years.

2. Refused asylum but granted Humanitarian Protection. Leave to remain for five years. This is most commonly granted when the person is at some risk of ‘ill-treatment’ in the particular country they left but does not meet the criteria of the Refugee Convention. This is a rare category for unaccompanied children.

3. Refused asylum but granted Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) Leave. This is normally for 30 months or until the age of 17½, whichever is the shorter period. Once the child reaches 17½ years of age their case will be reviewed. UASC Leave is granted if at the time of the decision adequate care and reception arrangements are not in place in the country of origin (i.e., a return cannot be effected safely).

4. Refused asylum with no grant of leave. In this case the unaccompanied child must return to their country of origin. Those found to require Refugee Status or more rarely, Humanitarian Protection, are usually granted leave to remain for five years. Although it is not guaranteed that further leave to remain will be granted at the end of the five-year period, it is certainly a strong likelihood and care and pathway planning should primarily focus on longer term residence in the UK, in the same way as for any other care leaver.

5.Support for UASC who are Appeal Rights Exhausted Planning for a return home may be difficult, but care and pathway plans should include contingencies for durable and best interest plans for unaccompanied children and young people who are likely to have to return to their country of origin.

Pathway plans should always consider the implications for the care experienced young adult if their application for asylum is refused without a grant of leave; or their application to extend their leave to remain, or their appeal against refusal of that application, is dismissed. In such circumstances, the person will become unlawfully present in the United Kingdom and be expected to make plans for return to the country of origin. Use of Translators If the young person’s comprehension and use of English precludes them from being able to fully participate in assessments pathway planning or other key meetings, then a translator should be used. This is particularly important for significant events i.e. if we are withdrawing Care Experienced Adults support. If professionals are choosing not to use a translator or the young person declines the rationale this must be documented.

**Young People at Risk of Harm**

PA must liaise with the Social Worker to understand the needs of the child including any risk to the young person and risks they may pose to themselves or others. Until the young person reaches 18 years the Social Worker will lead on safeguarding and child protection and safety planning matters and may present young people at the weekly Missing Exploited and Trafficked meetings. The Supporting Your Future Team Leader/Personal Advisor will work with relevant Team Leader/Social Worker to support the safety plan. Three months prior to the young person will be considered at the Young Adult Safeguarding Panel to understand what safety planning is required as part of transition including any involvement with Adult services and/or Adult Safeguarding Procedures. When the young person reaches 18 the PA has a responsibility to understand risks and undertake assessment of risk of serious harmful behaviour utilising all sources of information available including work with other agencies.

If young person Is at risk the MARM framework should be used to support working with the young adult where there is a high level of risk and the circumstance sits outside the statutory adult safeguarding framework but where a multi-agency approach would be beneficial.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the 4LSAB Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policy and Guidance (www.hampshiresab.org.uk) and the 4LSAB related guidance Information Sharing and Prevention and Early Intervention. The guidance does not replace single agency risk management arrangements and instead seeks to build on and complement these by providing a multi-agency dimension. Professionals must also refer to relevant statutory frameworks and operational policies which they are required to follow.

Risk Assessment Template



The terms of reference and referral form can be found here

**Out of Touch Young People**

Firstly, it is important to note the difference between young people we have ‘lost touch’ with and where we are ‘out of time with statutory care leaver contacts’: The latter is where the agreed visit frequency (of 8 weeks, 12 weeks, or 6 months) is overdue. We know where these young people are living and what they are doing; and we may be in touch with them via text or phone or via other intelligence. This scenario is not covered in this section. Lost touch is where we do not know where the young person is or their circumstances, we are unable to contact them and they are not responding to the efforts we make to contact them.

Young People under 18 cannot be regarded as out of touch, they are missing and required actions are set out in Portsmouth City Council's Missing Children Protocol.

There are a range of reasons why we might lose touch with a young person. Some deliberately go “missing”, for example young people may leave accommodation to avoid actual or perceived actions by the United Kingdom Border Agency to detain them for removal from the UK. Young people may refuse to engage and make themselves unavailable and some will refuse the service and request to ‘sign them out of service’. If the young person is out of touch the PA must discuss this with their manager at the earliest opportunity. The PA and their manager will assess the level of risk and always consider making a missing person’s report to the Police via 101. The outcome of this decision with the rationale must be recorded on Mosaic and be reviewed weekly for the first 4 weeks and at every case supervision thereafter. Missing reviews should be recorded by a Team Leader in case notes. The Police will decide whether to open a missing person report based on the basis of the information provided, their advice and any strategies they will use must be recorded on the system. PAs must continue to make all reasonable attempts to contact the young person and attempt to re-engage them, recording all attempts on Mosaic in case notes. Good practice will use all the following strategies where appropriate:

* Weekly call to the last known number
* Phone known family of friends (refer to relationships listed on Mosaic)
* Monthly letter to the last known address
* Monthly knock on the door at the last known address where it is safe to do so (not applicable if placement provider has confirmed they have left)
* Contact last known school / college or employer
* All attempts to contact the young person should be documented on Mosaic and the young person should be discussed at supervision until they are found and have re-engaged. In addition to the steps above, when Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers young people go missing, the UK Border Agency and/or Home Officer should also be informed. The young person’s solicitor should be contacted to request current contact details if held and to notify them that the young person is missing.

Where the young person goes missing, refuses to engage or makes themselves unavailable; this must be considered a significant event and a Pathway Plan review should be developed which details what steps will be taken over the next three months to find and re-engage the young person.

The Pathway Plan review will document the agreed strategy to locate the young person and also be written with the most recent information we have available for each section. It should be written in the words of the PA as opposed to the first person. Ideally three monthly reviews should then take place to review those actions and/or develop fresh ones. This must be done at least every six months. The Pathway Plan should also detail what services would be available should the young person be in touch, so that if they came to the attention of the Out of Hours Service or duty they know how to respond. Once located and engaged a new plan will be required to detail the services and support to be provided.

Those young people who are over 18 years and have been missing for more than 6 months will be reviewed by the Service Leader and relevant Team Leader. If the actions and process above have not identified any information which could locate their whereabouts then the Service Lead may agree that young person will no longer have a Pathway Plan, until located. The decision-making process and rationale must be recorded by the Service Leader and signed off by the Head of Service. The TL and PA will ensure we continue to make enquires on whereabouts on a six-monthly basis with any relevant adults and services including Home Office, legal representative, and Police who know the missing young person, if those agencies involvement remains. The findings of these enquiries must be recorded on mosaic and shared with the Service Leader who will then review, consider and record if a PA and Pathway Plan are required or not.

**Young People who refuse Leaving Care Service**

The government's planning transition to adulthood for care leavers document states *“The responsible authority must continue to keep in touch with the young person. This contact should take place as specified in the pathway plan and at least within the specified intervals (see para. 3.38). As with relevant young people, it will be necessary for some visits to take place at the accommodation where the young person is living, so that the PA can assess whether their accommodation remains suitable. Keeping in touch between visits might involve a range of communication methods, for example: email, phone and text message contact.*

*It will of course be important that the responsible authority respects the privacy of a young adult and their right to decline support. However, the responsible authority will remain under a duty to attempt to remain in contact with a young person in the same way that a reasonable parent might try to resume contact with an estranged adult child. The best guarantee to maintain contact with care leavers who have reached legal adulthood is for their PA to have established a positive and meaningful relationship with them. Individual local authorities as  good corporate parents will need to develop services that are flexible to the needs of young care leavers that ensure they remain engaged.”*

You may be working with young people who refuse to engage with their PA and say they do not want to receive a service. This can be for a variety of reasons, and these should be considered to explore the best approach. It may be that that the young person is very settled and independent and feels they need very minimal support, or it could be they have difficulty building trust with professionals and relationship will take longer to build. Whatever the reason may be, our statutory duty remains to keep in touch with this young person until they are 21 and attempt to visit every 8 weeks or demonstrate that contact is being made. Whilst we cannot force a young person to see their PA, every attempt should be made to engage with that young person, build a relationship and keep in touch. All attempts at contact must be clearly recorded on Mosaic. If you have a young person who is refusing support, you must discuss this with your team leader who will record an agreed plan to re-engage the young person.

**Support for Care Leavers in Custody or Secure Estate**

The responsible authority must liaise with criminal justice services to support the young person emotionally, practically, and financially whilst in custody.

When a young person is placed within a HMP, it is recommended their PA review the establishments most recent inspection report, via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk) , so they are aware of any concerns and developments required. This will give them greater insight into the areas that require monitoring and additional support.

Should there be any concerns for welfare in custody, an Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork should be requested, providing a care plan to manage the risks of suicide and self-harm.

Where a Relevant or Former Relevant care leaver enters custody, pathway planning must continue, and be reviewed within ten working days of entering the establishment. Should further transitions happen during their stay, to alternative establishment, additional pathway plan reviews and professionals' meetings to be held, to inform planning and support. Meetings and reviews to include all relevant professionals, including those in custody, and named SPOC

The young person must be visited on a regular basis (minimum 8 weekly) by their PA, with the first visit taking place within ten working days of them being placed, where possible, subject to availability with the establishment. The establishment should facilitate the visits, and PAs should be afforded the same status as legal visitors. The PA can also maintain contact between visits via email a prisoner service, this service is more readily available, and it would be recommended this is used between visits, to ensure contact can be maintained. Where needed, the LA to ensure young people has access to funds to maintain contact with their PA, family, and significant others.

Portsmouth City Council will make payments of £40 per month will to any young person placed in prison, who do not have financial assistance from family, to ensure they have access to necessities. Exceptional financial requests may also be considered, should a need be identified i.e. positive interests/educational resources.

Payments of £75 will also be provided upon entry and leaving the establishment, to ensure young people have the necessities required, i.e. clothing, toiletries. Please be mindful of seasons, they may require a top up of clothing for summer/ winter.

All young people will require the responsible authority to contribute to the plan for their resettlement on release. This will be via a pathway plan at least 12 weeks before release, in order to give sufficient time for pre-release planning. This will be shared with the young person, and referenced to prior to release, to ensure the young person and professional network know the following:

• who is collecting them or plans for travel

• where they will be living

• the reporting arrangements with probation or other services

• arrangements for education or employment

• arrangements for meeting continuing health needs

• arrangements for financial support

• the roles and responsibilities of support services – including Probation, Childrens Service - PA, Housing, Education and Employment, Health, Universal Credit.

Should a young person be at risk of homelessness, a duty to refer to be submitted to housing 56 days prior to release.

Should a young person turn 25 whilst serving a sentence, recommendation to refer on to support services, such as, Rees Foundation, to ensure they have ongoing support during their sentence, and upon release. Where possible their final pathway plan to outline ongoing support whilst in custody, and preparation and post release. Should the young person not have yet accessed their care leaving grant whilst in custody, consideration be given to this being paid to them once released.

Further guidance published by the government on how prisons, probation and local authorities can work to provide consistent and appropriate support for people with care experience whilst they are in prison, upon release, or under community supervision can be found at:

Can be found at [care-experience-matters.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1141299/care-experience-matters.pdf)

**Community Support and Supervision from Youth Justice/Probation**

Supporting Your Futures must remain involved during any period of supervision by the YJS/Probation Service (assuming whilst eligible for services - up to 25). The supervising YJS or Probation Officer involvement will be determined by the length of any order and the care leaver’s offending behaviour rather than their wider needs. Young people are vulnerable in the early days after release and will need help to:

• re-adjust to living away from custody

• meet the requirements for reporting and surveillance.

• sort out finances

• settle into accommodation

• negotiate work or college

• re-establish relationships with family and friends

• avoid situations where offending may occur.

It is helpful to have some joint appointments with the care experienced young adult, supervising YOT/Probation Officer and the allocated PA, so information is shared, and services are delivered in an integrated manner.

The PA and supervising YJT/Probation officer should keep each other informed of significant events, including any changes in service delivery or plans revising the risk assessment and risk management plan. Whilst the care experienced young adult continues to be supervised by criminal justice services, it is good practice to include the supervising YJT/Probation officer in reviews of the pathway plan. It is important to involve the young person in deciding who should participate in their review. However, should they wish to exclude their supervising YJT/Probation officer, the PA would need to understand and agree their reasons and rationale and, in any event, ensure the information from supervising professionals is included in a review.

**Safeguarding and Child Protection**

PAs have a significant and valuable part in the prevention of harm to children and young people, along with safeguarding and promoting their welfare. All staff must know: the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to respond to a child or young person who makes a disclosure; and what to do if they are concerned about a child or young person. PAs must work to the Portsmouth City Council Safeguarding Procedures. For all Supporting Your Future Service staff these procedures are mandatory. The link to the Portsmouth safeguarding procedures is:

<https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>

PAs are required to recognise and respond to different types of harm including Exploitation, Neglect Physical Emotional and Sexual harm relating to care leavers who are under 18 years and children they come in contact with as part of their role including the children of care leavers. The link to the Portsmouth threshold document is:

<https://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/PSCP-Threshold-Document-v7-October-2022.pdf>.

PAs have clear lines of reporting for any safeguarding issues. through their line manager who will act as a source of support, advice and expertise in making appropriate timely and good quality referrals to MASH/Children’s Social care. All safeguarding issues need to be brought to the attention of a manager as soon as possible and in no case should this be longer than 24 hours. This should include following up referrals via phone not only sending a email to ensure the manager has received the information and can respond appropriately. Referrals to Children Social Care should made via Interagency referral as outlined in the referral pathway. Team Leaders will offer advice to PAs as to whether they should complete an Early Help, S17 referral or S47 referral.

<https://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk/2-worried-about-a-child/inter-agency-contact-form-iacf-guidance-samples/>

The Supporting Your Futures PA Training Pathway identifies the appropriate level of child protection training for the role and sets out in the training requirements. Training at the identified appropriate level is mandatory for staff. The manager must ensure all staff have accessed have read and understood the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The safeguarding children procedures manual can be found at:

[Welcome | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (hipsprocedures.org.uk)](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/).

**Care Leavers who are Parents to be or Parents**

PAs will support and help young people prepare them for parenthood and ensure they access all appropriate universal services. Whilst we do not pre-judge parents to be, the outcomes for babies and children of a parent who are disadvantaged including those who are care experienced can be less favourable. Alongside support for Care Experienced Young Adults staff need to be aware of any risks to their children both pre and post birth. The PA should discuss with their line manager all cases where a young person is an expectant parent to ascertain and agree what actions are needed based on risk. This may require the PA to refer the mother or the father to Children’s Services MASH as soon as the PA is aware of the pregnancy- but it is not automatic because they are care experienced. The MASH will make a decision based on the referral and background information if threshold is met for a S.17 Child and Family Assessment which would be undertaken by a Social Worker.

The PA should make the young person aware of the referral; however, we do not require consent for the referral to happen if there are serious safeguarding concerns for the baby/child. The Personal Adviser should continue to inform their line manager through supervision and regular discussion regarding the progress of the pregnancy as it progresses. If MASH determine that threshold is met for a Child and Family Assessment, then the PA may be required to provide information for the assessment. If MASH decides that threshold is not met for S.17 intervention then they may refer to Early Help and the unborn / new born child may be subject to an Early Help plan. The PA should not be involved in meeting direct responsibilities regarding children of care experienced young adults that are subject to Child in Need or CP plans i.e. completing and reporting visits to the child as part of their visits to Parents. The PA must be mindful of risks of harm and if they have concern regarding a child to immediately raise this with their Line Manager and Children’s Social Worker or MASH.

At the point the PA is aware of the pregnancy alongside making a MASH referral the PA must notify the Early Help Hub lead Family Nurse Partnership (FNP for Young Parents to inform them of the pregnancy. The link to the Young parent's pathway in Portsmouth is <https://cpsc.org.uk/application/files/3316/4432/7469/2022_02_08_Portsmouth_Young_Parent_Pathway.pdf>.

**Care Experienced Young Adults with Children subject to Care Proceedings**

When a Local Authority is concerned that a parent or carer is not meeting their child's needs safely, they may be made subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan. PA's will typically be involved in such plans and in the regular review meetings in their role as providing services to the Care experienced parent. In some circumstances where concerns have increased and progress is not being seen on a Child Protection plan the decision may be taken to go into pre proceedings. These are initiated by a letter before court proceedings or ‘public law outline letter’ to the parent or carer and followed by a PLO meeting. PA's should not offer or attend any pre court meetings or court hearings with care experienced parents with children in proceedings. PAs needs to be clear with young people and other professionals that they are unable to undertake this role. PAs will support the young person in accessing advocacy and support here.

A PA working with a Care experience parent going through care proceedings is in a difficult position; it is important they continue to work with Care Experience Parent regarding their Pathway Plan. The advocacy service and legal representative is best placed to support the Care Experienced parent in proceedings. A PA must keep their line manager informed about their involvement with Care Experienced parents with children in proceedings. PA's are members of Portsmouth City Council and therefore must not accept any requests by parents or children or other professionals to provide reports or statements. Any requests must be made to the Head of Service through Legal Services. Should PA / Team leaders receive such requests these must be raised and discussed with the relevant Service Lead and Legal Services. PA's should also not have any form of communication with parent's legal representation and all communication with solicitors needs to go through the local authority solicitor.

**Stable and Safe Accommodation and Prevention Homelessness**

This is a fundamental requirement of young people and a priority. Long term accommodation needs should be planned at an early stage with effective information sharing and joint planning meetings between Supporting Your Future Service, Local Housing Authority and the young person.

We aim to offer a joined up response to care experienced young adults at risk of becoming homeless and prevent the use of unsafe and inappropriate accommodation Where a risk of breakdown in accommodation is identified, the PA will contact the Local Housing Authority (LHA) to work together to prevent homelessness, typically this will be a joint meeting with the relevant authorities and the young person and identify both preventive actions and consider alternatives. Homelessness legislation places duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas and provide homelessness services to all those affected. Care leavers under the age of 21 are automatically in priority need, unless they are 'relevant students' The JWPCL defines an accommodation crisis for care leavers are over 18 as a same or next day eviction or accommodation breakdown.

**Bed and Breakfast Accommodation Children**

Portsmouth City Council should not place care leavers in B&B accommodation or endorse this practice. Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities updated 2/6/2020 states B&B’s including hotels and nightly let accommodation with shared facilities, are not considered suitable for care leavers under 25 and should only be used in exceptional circumstances and for short periods.

If a Local Housing Authority (LHA) offers B&B this this should be escalated to Team Leader to take up with Senior Housing officer in line with the protocol to identify an alternative. If this is not resolved Supporting Your Future Team may make a referral and request suitable emergency accommodation from Portsmouth City Council Children’s Commissioning and encourage young people to take up such accommodation. If there is no suitable accommodation this should be case noted by Service Lead.

If a care experience young adult is placed in B&B by a LHA (including those who presented independently to a LHA and placed) then the following actions are required.

• The PA to notify their line manager or in their absence another manager and record on Mosaic same working day and alert Service Lead who will add immediate oversight to case notes and inform Head of Service.

• PA to contact the Local Housing Authority and notify them the young person is a care experience young person and request joint work to pursue a move on for them

• PA to visit them in their accommodation within 3 working days and with LHA officer identify any risks / issues and mitigation and agree a move on plan within an agreed timescale.

• A summary of any risks, their mitigation and move on plans be recorded and shared with young person and relevant partners placed on Mosaic as a Case Note and endorsed/ signed off by the Team leader

• The young person circumstances, the plan and the progress of move onto suitable accommodation will be updated regularly by the PA in discussion with the young person and LHA and other key partners

• Team Leader oversight and review of plan and the progress will take place weekly and recorded as a Management Case Note. TL will escalate if required

• Service Leader will review plan and progress with Team Leader and PA at least 2 weekly and record as a Management Case Note and escalate to Head of Service.

If the commissioning service are unable to find accommodation for the young person and B&B is the only emergency option and Housing have placed young person in B&B the TL will send summary of any risk, the mitigation and move on plan to the Service Leader who will review and send to Head of Service. This will need to be signed off by Deputy Director and case noted as such. The PA will need to visit the B&B within 5 working days and record this as a Care Leaver Contact. The Service Leader will review all young people placed in B&Bs on a weekly basis with housing colleagues at the Housing Panel and case note planning to progress the young person moving into suitable alternative accommodation.

The template for requesting B&B accommodation can be found at:

[​docx icon B and B request form.docx](https://portsmouthcouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/SP_CFE_AandYA/Shared%20Documents/Supporting%20Your%20Future/Information%20and%20TEMPLATES/Forms/B%20and%20B%20request%20form.docx?d=w11dad325834b4111baaceca080567ad8&csf=1&web=1&e=ioUjOI)

**Support under Extended Duties**

If a young person requires extended support or is continuing in education past their 21st birthday then they can remain open to the service and receive support up until their 25th birthday. The criteria for receiving support under education is that the young person is on an accredited course that is a minimum of 12 hours a week or more. As the young person approaches age 21, their PA will discuss with them whether they wish to continue to receive support beyond age 21. Where the young person does want PA support to continue the pathway plan should be reviewed and updated to reflect their current needs. PA support should continue to be provided for as long as it is requested and required or until they reach age 25. The level of support that each care experienced young person will need will differ depending on their circumstances. If the young person does not want or require support on an ongoing basis, the case will be closed until the care experienced person makes another request for support. The Personal Advisor will discuss the exit arrangements, including ongoing contact, with their line manager and the case will be closed.

Care experienced young adults may return to the local authority at any point after the age of 21 up to age 25 and request PA support. (Extending Personal Adviser support to all care leavers to age 25 statutory guidance for local authorities, February 2018) While the local authority is not under a duty to provide PA support where a care experienced young adult has not accepted the offer, there may be cases where a PA considers that a young person needs support to avoid experiencing harm to themselves or placing others at risk of harm. In these cases, a plan to monitor will be agreed by the team leader, with the appropriate agencies.

Portsmouth City Council's current Care Leaver offer can be found at:

[Portsmouth-135968a0a19433d191fd51af1fe61aae.pdf20210202-12757-p5dyc5.pdf (careleaveroffer.co.uk)](https://www.careleaveroffer.co.uk/uploads/careleavers/file_attachment/file/24567/Portsmouth-135968a0a19433d191fd51af1fe61aae.pdf20210202-12757-p5dyc5.pdf)

**Pathway Planning for Extended Duties**

In all cases where the Supporting Your Futures Service is approached for support, a record should be produced and recorded on mosaic, setting out the issues discussed, so that the service can demonstrate what action they have taken in response to the young person’s request for support. Once a needs assessment has taken place, details of any support that the local authority has agreed to provide will be recorded in a Pathway Plan format.

As with care leavers aged 21 or over who are currently receiving support because they are in education and training, it may only be necessary to complete the relevant section of the pathway plan. This approach can be used where a young person requests support that relates to only one aspect of their life. Where a young person is experiencing a number of problems and is likely to require on-going support, a full pathway plan may be completed.

**Frequency of Contact under Extended Duties**

The frequency of contact between PAs and care experienced young adults will vary depending on the nature of each individual’s circumstances. The issues which have arisen that are affecting the person will dictate how often pathway plans will need to be reviewed and updated, but as a minimum this should be at least every six months.

**Financial Support under Extended Duties.**

Extended duties does not introduce new responsibilities in relation to finance or accommodating care experienced young adults. Any support already provided by other local authority departments, such as Housing and Adult Social Care, should therefore continue to be provided and funded by the relevant service. We will work with the person to access relevant funding.

**Former Children We Care For Seeking Asylum Extended Duties**

Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 makes particular categories of people ineligible to receive leaving care support, because of their immigration status. If a former UASC care leaver has not been recognised as a refugee or been granted any other valid form of leave to remain and becomes “appeal rights exhausted” (ARE) they will fall into a category of “ineligible person” listed in Schedule 3. The Home Office ceases to provide leaving care funding to the local authority three months after the individual becomes ARE. In these circumstances, the local authority will only be able to continue to provide support to the extent necessary to avoid a breach of the person’s rights under the European Convention on Human Rights. Therefore, the new duty does not automatically apply to all UASC.

**Case Closure**

All case closures should be discussed with the relevant line manager and agreed well in advance. Personal Adviser should ensure that the pathway plan is reviewed within the final six months to agree what needs to happen in this final period and what the PA and young person will do to identify appropriate support for the young person going forward. Under no circumstances should it be rushed, or the young person is made to feel that they are reaching a cliff edge. It is good practice to plan an ending session with the young person to celebrate the end of their relationship with the personal adviser. When appropriate to cease services and close the young person, the PA will provide a personal letter from them, detailing any specific arrangements for how the young person can access support going forward and who from. It will state they can return for support up until age 25 and how to do this The Personal Adviser is responsible for closing the case on Mosaic. The Service Leader is informed prior to closure and reviews the case and puts oversight on mosaic confirming that closure is appropriate.

**Financial Support for Care Experienced Young Adults**

A copy of the financial offer for Care Experience Young Adults can be found within the Care Experienced Offer.

**Client Engagement Expenses**

PA’s are expected to meet the young person in their placement/ home or at locations that do not incur a cost to the authority and are private to enable confidential discussions to take place while adhere to our lone working guidance and meet the needs of the young person. When this is not possible it may be appropriate to meet that YP in a public location such as a café. In these circumstances Personal Advisers may purchase refreshments for young people. Refreshments are defined as a drink and something to eat. The PA may also purchase themselves a drink (not food) when meeting with a young person. PA’s are issued with Purchase cards enabling them to pay for items. Alternatively, PA’s can pay in cash and claim back through the expenses system. We do not hold petty cash to reimburse PA’s directly. If the young person requires emergency sustenance, a meal may be purchased for the young person up to the value of £7. If further food is required, please refer to the financial guidance document. PAs should inform the Team Leader when they have made such arrangements.

**Compliments and Complaints**

Every young person has the right to make a formal complaint and if this happens, they should be directed to the complaints procedure which is available on Portsmouth City Council website. If you receive a complaint this should be discussed with your manager, the complaint logged and responded to within the required timeframes. Staff may have compliments written to them in the form of a letter or e-mail these should be sent to the Team Leaders for us to celebrate and to be logged.

For further information on how a young person can make a complaint, please open the complaints leaflet using this hyperlink: [4838 Child complaints Leaflet.indd (portsmouth.gov.uk)](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Comment-compliment-or-complaint-leaflet-for-children-supported-by-social-care-1.pdf)

Complaints policy:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/your-say/complaints/corporate-complaints-policy-2021/>

**Advocacy**

Personal advisers must consider the use of the advocacy service for young people which can be a useful resource to help them articulate concerns and find a mediated way forward.

[**About Me Advocacy\_.pdf**](file:///C:\Users\pc37zm\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\PRH3WAMM\About%20Me%20Advocacy_.pdf)

**Access to Records**

The Data Protection Act 1998 says all personal information must be dealt with properly, however collected, recorded, and used, whether on paper, in a computer, or on other material. The Act gives anyone the right to find out about the information held about them. Portsmouth City Council provides access to files and records for care experienced young adults, to enable their understanding of their personal history, the reasons for their care and increase their sense of identity. At 18 a young person can request to access their social care records by putting in a request in writing. Personal adviser's can support this process, the request form which needs to be sent it to

To access the referral form and additional information, please open the following hyperlink:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Access-to-personal-records-form.pdf>

Personal Advisers must be aware that the narrative which social work records contain could be emotive for young people and careful planning will be required when they are provided their records. It is recommended that the Personal Adviser should ensure adequate support is in place for the young person with this to support them to understand what they are reading and to answer any questions they may have.

**Information Sharing**

Sharing information with other agencies is vital in keeping children and young people safe. All staff have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and young people. Where possible, we share information with consent, however under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. All staff must be aware of the 'Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services' 2018 and will apply the seven golden principles of information sharing. Namely it is Necessary and Proportionate, Relevant, Adequate, Accurate, Timely, Secure, Recorded. Personal advisers are not authorised to share social care records with young people or other agencies without following process which is to notify the Team Leader and advise MASH of requests.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

**Staff Conduct Personal and Professional Boundaries**

Portsmouth County Council set out expectations of all employees regarding code of conduct and requirements that apply to how we work. All Personal advisers have a responsibility to comply with behaviour in the workplace by maintaining clear professional boundaries regarding relationships and take steps to understand and apply these. Areas of risk and vulnerabilities should be discussed with your manager, appropriate control measures put in place. Maintaining personal and professional boundaries is a crucial consideration when working with young people. Remaining “in role” at all times minimises the likelihood of false, or unfounded allegation and ensures that professional codes of conduct are adhered to. Respecting the personal space and privacy of all young people is critical, examples to avoid include:

• Unwarranted or unwanted touching

• Initiating, permitting, or requesting inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a young person (hugs, kisses, tickling, or facilitating situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact

• contact with care leavers outside of reasonable working hours, including by telephone unless with prior consent from a manager.

• Inviting, allowing, or encouraging care experienced young adults to attend your home.

• allowing care experienced young adults access to personal social networking internet locations and personal devices

• Personal advisers should ensure that any risk of violence, abuse etc. is recorded on Mosaic using the alert function and that team leaders are made aware under Safer Working Practice.

For additional information of professional code of conduct, please refer to the Portsmouth code of conduct policy which can be found by opening this hyperlink:

[**Constitution (portsmouth.gov.uk)**](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Part-4C-Employee-Code-of-Conduct.pdf)

Safe Working Practice The safety of both staff and young people is of the highest priority. All staff have a shared responsibility to ensure safe working practices. Staff have a legal responsibility for their own health and safety and others who may be affected by their actions or your failure to act. Staff must co-operate with the policies, codes of practice and other rules put in place. The Portsmouth lone working policies should be applied when Personal advisers are working alone in any location. Working with children and young people can carry potential risks, which could arise from a range of sources such as young people, parents/carers and other family members, a young person’s peers and associates, or members of the pubic. Personal adviser's will use their training, service guidelines and professional judgement to reduce the potential exposure to those risks and to maximise personal safety. Personal advisers should plan visits and consider available information before a visit. This should include a check on the relevant recording system. When planning to visit a young person of concern contact other agencies involved in their case, particularly youth justice or probation to ascertain if a young person is assessed as a risk to staff and how this can be managed. Details of the visit must be written on the personal adviser's electronic diary sheets (client initials; location; expected time of return). When there is a safety concern personal advisers must speak to a manager to make a joint decision on whether to complete the visit, and if the meeting should take place in a safe office location. When undertaking any home visit at any time, personal advisers should observe the following:

• Always carry your identity card on visits outside the office.

• Always carry a charged mobile phone.

• Where possible, give the young person reasonable advance warning of your visit and the reason for it.

• If you get an aggressive reception at the door, do not enter.

• During the visit, if necessary, ask for dogs and other pets to be secured and excluded.

• Be aware of the layout of the house and exits, try to sit in a chair closest to an exit (preferably the front door of the property) in case you need to leave quickly).

• Stay calm and try to ensure that you remain in control. If you feel you are losing control, prepare to leave before the situation becomes too difficult.

• Be mindful about where you put your belongings as you may need to leave quickly,

• If you are threatened or attacked, withdraw if possible and seek appropriate assistance. Once you are safe please let a manager know straight away and they will debrief with you and when you feel able, will support you to complete a violent incident report form, record the incident on the case file while the incident is still fresh in your mind.

If Personal adviser's find themselves in a dangerous or threatening situation, they should remember that their safety is paramount. The advice therefore is not to restrain the person causing the threat and to remove themselves from the situation as quickly as possible. Personal advisers should then use their professional judgement to call the police or their manager or a duty manager.

If personal advisers have had a difficult experience where they have been threatened or assaulted, they should immediately contact their line manager to discuss appropriate support. An Incident Form should be completed, and updates should be placed on Mosaic at the earliest opportunity either by the personal adviser or their manager. A risk assessment will need to be completed before any personal adviser is able to work with that client again. Personal adviser's will be supported following a dangerous or threatening situation.

For additional information on Portsmouth City Council's Lone working policy, please open the hyperlink:

[https://portsmouthcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/SP\_CFE\_AandYA/\_layouts/15/viewer.aspx?sourcedoc={7c1380d4-d8a3-527e-92bf-11f4f40ce53b}](https://portsmouthcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/SP_CFE_AandYA/_layouts/15/viewer.aspx?sourcedoc=%7b7c1380d4-d8a3-527e-92bf-11f4f40ce53b%7d)

**Co Working Safety Systems.**

A safety system should be used for visits to young people outside of normal working hours. Personal advisers are to inform their line manager or duty manager if line manager is not available, about the visit before leaving for the home visit and to ensure they have the full address of where the visit will be and the estimated time of the visit. Once the visit is completed the personal advisor will ensure to call her/his manager to update them of this this and sign out. If the personal advisor doesn’t sign out: The manager should contact the PA and leave a message if no response. If there is still no response after 10 minutes, then the manager should try any alternative contact details they have for the location or young person. If still unsuccessful then the manager is to contact the service lead immediately.

**Emergency Contact Details**

It is the responsibility of the Personal Adviser to ensure their line manager has up to date contact details for them and their next of kin, including current address, personal telephone, and mobile phone numbers. Personal contact details will be kept securely and will only be used when absolutely necessary, e.g., an emergency situation or to keep in contact during a period of sickness or during maternity leave.

**Transporting Care Leavers**

When transporting young people or their children in a car you should ensure the following:

• Ensure your car is safe and insured for business use.

• That where appropriate you have obtained parental consent (under 18, if this is not possible, please discuss with your line manager)

• If transporting an infant with his/her parent then the parent must supply you with a British Standard approved car-seat, you cannot use your own for this.

• Everyone within the car must wear a seatbelt at all times.

• Ensure you adhere fully to the Highway Code i.e., speed limits and traffic signals.

• If you have a convertible the roof must be up when transporting clients

• Ensure you are driving legally and safely (no mobile phone use whilst driving)

• Should an incident occur, you should call your manager when safe to do so.

**Storage of Belongings**

We are unable to store young people's belongings long term

Please see our storage policy at

C:\Users\CFL0283\Portsmouth City Council\Adolescents and young adults - Documents\Supporting Your Future\Policies and Guidance