

MANAGEMENT ACTION NOTE 04: Leaving care and transition

CONTEXT

This document summarises and makes clear the expectations and requirements of practitioners and managers working with children in care and care leavers with regard to the need for an Assessment of Need and a Pathway Plan, both of which shall be updated at least as frequently as outline in our Leaving care and transition policy.

The full [Leaving care and transition](#) policy is available to read online.

A [quick reference guide](#) with links to other legislation and resources is also available.

Assessment of need

All young people - [Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant](#) - must receive a multi-agency assessment of their needs as to the advice, assistance and support they will need when leaving care.

The young person's social worker will be responsible for coordinating the Needs Assessment.

This assessment should be completed no more than 3 months after the young person's 16th birthday or after the young person becomes [Eligible or Relevant](#) if this is later. The timetable must take account of any forthcoming exams and avoid disrupting the young person's preparation for them.

The young person's Care Plan together with information from the most recent Assessment will form the basis of the Needs Assessment.

The young person's social worker will be responsible for recording the assessment information and conclusions as well as the outcome of any meetings held. The young person must be invited to any meetings held in connection with the assessment.

The Personal Advisor is responsible for ongoing needs assessment, in line with review of the Pathway Plan and or following any significant incident or safeguarding matter to support a risk assessment and safety plan.

Pathway plan

All young people will have a Pathway Plan in place within **3 months** of becoming [Eligible](#) and, wherever possible, a Pathway Plan will be in place by the young person's 16th birthday. This is informed by the assessment of need.

The Pathway Plan will be based on and include a young person's Care Plan and any Personal Education Plan or Careers advice service will inform and complement the Pathway Plan.

Young people must be engaged in preparing and completing the their own Pathway Plan setting the goals and identifying how we will help meet them, including any services being provided in respect of the young person's disability or needs arising from being in custody or as a result of entering the country as an unaccompanied asylum seeker.

It should be written in a way that meets the needs of the young person, capturing their aspirations and key messages. Young people with particular language or communication needs should be provided throughout the process with appropriate interpretation, translation or advocacy support.

The Pathway Plan must clearly identify the roles of each person who has a part to play in supporting the care leaver, with specific actions and timescales.

More detail on what should be included in the Pathway plan is provided in our [policy](#).

Pathway Planning for those Aged 21 and up to 25

We are required to offer all care leavers a Personal Adviser up to the age 25 and apply the [corporate parenting principles](#) when continuing support is agreed or requested.

However, the duty at this stage of a young adult's life is seen as different from the age 18 - 20 in that it enables us to offer support to some individuals who may need continuing support in the transition process. The level of support and intervention will vary considerably; many at this stage of their lives will not require, or want, ongoing help and will not have a Pathway Plan. However, for others:

- There may be multiple issues which will require a Pathway Plan being fully completed and regular contacts, planning/co-ordinating meetings with partner agencies, etc.
- Care leavers may have single or specific issues where they require support and guidance, e.g.
 - Pregnancy or becoming a parent;
 - Release from custody;
 - Mental health issues;
 - Risk of homelessness;
 - Debt, including rent arrears;
 - For advice or guidance on commencing education or training;
 - For advice or support following experience of domestic or sexual violence/abuse.

Where care leavers require support with single or specific issues, the Pathway Plan should be completed only in the relevant part that reflects the issues being dealt with.

Reviews of Pathway plans

The Pathway Plan must be reviewed **at least every 6 months for care leavers up to age 21**. Thereafter, until the care leaver reaches the age of 25, the issues that have arisen which affect the care leaver will dictate how often Pathway Plans will need to be reviewed and updated. **However, as a minimum this should be at least every six months.**

Reviews should take place more often if requested by the young person or the Personal Adviser or where there has been a significant change in the young person's circumstances or safeguarding incident, the pathway plan should be reviewed.

The purpose of the review is to check that the goals and milestones are still right and that they are being met. All levels of support should be reviewed to ensure that they are adequate and delivered according to plan.

For an **Eligible** Young Person, the date for the first review of the Pathway Plan will be set to coincide with the young person's next Looked After Review after the Pathway Plan has been drawn up.

For a **Relevant** Young Person, the date for the first review will, if possible, be set at the last Looked After Review before the young person ceases to be looked after and in any case within six months of becoming a relevant young person.

For a **Former Relevant** Young Person, the date for the first review will take place within six months of the young person's 18th birthday.

Whilst the young person is Eligible their Independent Reviewing Officer will chair reviews or support the young person to chair.

Otherwise, the P & T Team Manager or their nominee will chair the Pathway Plan reviews or support the young person to chair.

Reviews when using unregulated accommodation

If the Relevant Young Person or Former Relevant Young Person moves to 'unregulated' accommodation (i.e. accommodation that is not regulated/inspected by OFSTED), we must:

- i. Arrange a review 28 days (or as soon as practicable thereafter) from the time the accommodation is provided; and
- ii. Determine at what intervals (not exceeding 3 months) subsequent reviews will be carried out;
- iii. Reviews should be brought forward where there is an assessed risk that a crisis may develop in a young person's life, for example:
 - o Where a young person has been charged with an offence and there is a possibility of their being sentenced to custody, which will risk losing their accommodation;
 - o Where a young person is at risk of being evicted from their accommodation or otherwise threatened with homelessness;
 - o 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 be the subject of a multi-agency safeguarding plan;
 - o Where a young person requests a review.

Pathway planning for young people in custody

Where a Relevant or Former Relevant Young Person enters custody, pathway planning **must** continue.

More detail on reviewing Pathway plans is provided in our [policy](#).

Actions and responsibilities

Actions Agreed	Manager Responsible
<p>Assessment of Need.</p> <p>All Eligible, Relevant, and Former Relevant young people will have a multi-agency assessment of need completed not later than 3 months after their 16th birthday and updated at least annually.</p>	<p>Permanency and Transition Team Manager</p>
<p>Pathway plans</p> <p>All young people will have a Pathway Plan in place within 3 months of becoming Eligible and, wherever possible, a Pathway Plan will be in place by the young person's 16th birthday.</p>	<p>Permanency and Transition Team Manager</p>
<p>Reviews of Pathway plans</p> <p>The Pathway Plan must be reviewed <u>at least every 6 months for care leavers up to age 21.</u></p> <p>Thereafter, until the care leaver reaches the age of 25, the issues that have arisen which affect the care leaver will dictate how often Pathway Plans will need to be reviewed and updated.</p> <p>As a minimum this should be <u>at least every six months.</u></p>	<p>Permanency and Transition Team Manager</p>
<p>Reviews of pathway plans (when using unregulated accommodation)</p> <p>Pathway plan will be reviewed as soon as possible after moving into the unregulated provision (and not later than 28 days after the move), and thereafter at intervals not exceeding three months.</p>	<p>Permanency and Transition Team Manager</p>
<p>Review of Pathways plans (unsuitable accommodation or if homeless / at risk of homelessness)</p> <p>Pathway plan will be reviewed as soon as possible after moving into the unsuitable accommodation (and not later than 28 days after the move), or immediately after they become homeless or at risk of homelessness, and thereafter at intervals not exceeding three months.</p>	<p>Permanency and Transition Team Manager</p>
<p>Review of pathway Plans (Eligible young people)</p> <p>Whilst the young person is Eligible their Independent Reviewing Officer will chair reviews or support the young person to chair.</p>	<p>Independent Reviewing Officer (QARSS)</p>
<p>Quality of Assessments and Plans</p> <p>Quality is the responsibility of everyone concerned in the preparation and completion of assessment and plans and</p>	<p>Personal Adviser, Social Worker, Team Manager, Independent Reviewing</p>

those involved in reviews. Additional Quality Assurance will be provided through thematic audit.	Officer; Area Manager (Corporate Parenting), Senior Manager (Corporate Parenting); Quality Assurance team
<p>Performance and management information</p> <p>The Corporate Parenting service will provide performance and management information on the timeliness and quality of assessments and plans at practitioner, team and service level.</p>	Permanency and Transition Team Manager, Area Manager (Corporate Parenting), Senior Manager (Corporate Parenting)

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