



Northumberland County Council

Accommodation Service

Northumberland Adolescent Services Supported Tenancies

Contingency Planning

August 2023

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Authorised:	
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 As a service we are committed to providing a high-quality service to young people that is compliant with Ofsted regulations for supported accommodation. However, in the advent of an adverse Ofsted Inspection that results in a closure notice being placed upon on the service (whether this is temporary or permanent). It is appropriate for have a contingency plan in place that outlines the actions that will be taken to minimise the disruption to the young people in placement.

2.0 The following actions need to be undertaken by the Registered Manager:

2.1 Initial Steps in the Plan

- Discussions held with the Senior Manager to advise of the situation and confirm if the closure notice is a temporary notification pending improvements to the service or a permanent closure notice.
- Initial meeting to be held with the staff team to advise of the decision reached by Ofsted, providing context to the closure notice and the actions that will be put in place. It is paramount that staff are effectively supported and are given clear guidance
- Referring services with young people in placement to be contacted by the registered manager to advise of the closure and what this means for the young people currently in placement. This will require discussions to determine how best to advise the young person of the situation and reasons for the closure of the service.
- Young people to be provided with information, support and reassurance to be provided.
- The registered manager, the wider accommodation service and the referring service for the young person will work together with colleagues in the family placement team, wider supported accommodation providers and colleagues in housing to look at the move on options for the young person, taking into account the young person's views and wishes.
- Any disruption for the young person must be kept to a minimum and the accommodation service will support with any transitional arrangements and move on plans for the young person.

3.0 Discussions with Alternative Supported Accommodation Providers:

3.1 Once provisions are in place to secure alternative accommodation for the young people in the service, staff will support to move the young people into their new placements, ensuring all of their belongings are transported appropriately.

3.2 The Registered Manager will:

- Work alongside the referring service to share information deemed appropriate with the receiving accommodation provider to ensure that they have all relevant information pertaining to the young person, that will enable an effective handover between services and ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum for the young person (subject to Information governance protocols outlined by Northumberland County Council)
<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Contact/Information.aspx#:~:text=Personal%20information%20retained%20by%2C%20or,kept%20accurately%2C%20safely%20and%20securely.>
- Be part of any transfer meeting with wider professionals in respect of the young person

4.0 Discussions with Young People:

4.1 Any disruption to the placement of a young person within the service should be kept to a minimum, however in the event of a closure the following actions should be undertaken:

- A joint meeting between the young person's social worker/Leaving Care Support worker, accommodation support worker and the young person, should take place as soon as possible to advise of the situation
- The young person should be reassured that alternative placement arrangements will be made taking into account their views and wishes
- The young person should also be assured that the placement ending is not their fault

5.0 Temporary Closure of the Service

5.1 Where Ofsted has implemented a temporary closure notice subject to improvements needed, the following actions will be undertaken by the Registered Manager:

- A Service Improvement Action plan will be implemented based on the feedback received from Ofsted with clear tasks and timescales identified to address the service deficiencies identified by Ofsted
- A meeting will be held with staff to outline the issues identified by Ofsted and the relevant action plan shared with staff. Staff views around how improvements can be made will form part of the wider action plan
- The Registered Manager and Snr Manager will be responsible for overseeing the progress of the action plan, ensuring all actions are progressed
- The Registered Manager will liaise with Ofsted as to the progress of the Action plan and agree a timeframe for re-inspection

6.0 Staffing

6.1 Where the closure is of a temporary nature, subject to improvement, staff may be redeployed to other tasks within the services whilst service improvements are made and a subsequent reinspection of the service takes place.

6.2 Where the closure notice is a permanent arrangement, consultation processes will take place with staff alongside Senior Management and HR and the unions, where applicable.

6.3 Where possible, staff will be supported to be redeployed into other appropriate roles, however, where this is not possible, formal redundancy procedures will be implemented and staff will be taken through the redundancy consultation process

6.4 During these processes, the registered manager will ensure that staff have appropriate support and access to the staff well-being service.

7.0 Closure of the Properties

7.1 Where a permanent closure notice has been put in place by Ofsted, the Registered Manager and the service lead will work with Senior Management and our

partners in housing to close down the current properties and make arrangements to terminate any existing tenancy agreements.

7.2 As part of the closure of properties, the following actions will need to be undertaken:

- Formal notice to terminate the tenancy will need to be implemented with an identified hand back date
- Finance Team to be made aware of last date for payments
- Utility companies to be made aware of the termination of the properties and all utility accounts to be closed down and closing bills sent to the service
- All furniture and white goods need to be removed from the properties – discussion as to whether these items can be moved with the young person need to be considered where appropriate.
- Once the properties are empty – all keys are to be handed back to the relevant landlord and a final handover inspection completed

8.0 Data and Information

8.1 All data and records relating to the young people in placement, should be archived and retained, in line with the council's procedures relating to the retaining of documents and information held by the council and be in line with GDPR requirements

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Contact/Information.aspx#:~:text=Personal%20information%20retained%20by%2C%20or,kept%20accurately%2C%20safely%20and%20securely.>

Case Records and Retention Procedure