

## **Practice Standards for Care Leavers.**

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- All Looked after children will be transferred to the care leavers team on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Every care leaver will be allocated a Personal Advisor by their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday or at 16 if a longer transition is needed.
- The Personal Advisor will work alongside the social worker and build a relationship with the young person which supports a smooth transition.
- A transfer meeting will take place 6 months prior to the care leaver's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday which is chaired by the care leaver's team manager. This transfer meeting gives the opportunity to discuss any specific needs and the tasks to be completed between the social worker and PA.

### **Health Passports**

- All Care leavers will receive a copy of their health passport prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This is provided by the LAC nurse and a copy put on the young person's file on ICS

### **Arrangements for Education/Employment.**

- Each care leaver will be allocated a dedicated Education and Employability Practitioner.
- An Education, Employment and Training (EET) Action plan will be completed for all care leavers between the age of 18-21 and will be updated every term or if there is a significant change in circumstances.
- The EET Action plan will be reviewed by Personal Advisors and also updated by the Education and Employability Practitioner and uploaded onto ICS.
- An EET panel will be held monthly to support care leavers at risk of becoming NEET (not in education or employment) and for long term NEET who are in need of more support.
- Financial support will be provided for all care leavers who enter into Higher education and for care leavers aged 19 and over who are in further education.

### **Independence Skills.**

- Personal Advisors will work with young people to assess and develop their independence skills. This will be reflected in their Pathway Plan

- Young people moving into their first home will receive intensive support until they are settled and feel safe. This may mean daily visits.

### **Statutory Visit – ‘Keeping in touch’.**

- The statutory timescales for visiting a care leaver is once every 60 days. This is the minimum requirement and must be adhered to, however it is fully expected that more frequent visiting would be completed if the young person needs /requests this. If a care leaver is placed in custody visits are increased to 2-6 weekly.
- Visits will be led by the young person however focus should be given by the personal advisor in respect of their emotional wellbeing, housing, finances and employment/education.
- The ‘keeping in touch’ visit will then be written up onto ICS with 3 days of the visit.
- Any safeguarding concerns relating to the visit need to be escalated to the team manager immediately after the visit.
- Young people in custody will be visited as far as possible on a monthly basis.

### **Pathway Planning.**

- Every care leaver will have a pathway plan that is updated every 6 months.
- The pathway plan will be updated also;
  - if a care leaver is at risk of losing their liberty, accommodation
  - their child is subject to safeguarding processes
  - 20 days before release from custody
  - Within 20 days of a move to unregulated accommodation
  - If it is requested by the young person.
- Pathway plans are reviewed every 6/12 months by the Care leaver’s team manager and will include multi agencies if this is agreed by the young person. The Pathway plan will be reviewed to make sure that plans continue to meet

the needs of the young person and are being progressed in a timely manner, while taking into consideration the wishes and feeling of the young person

- If the young person is able to understand and participate, they will be encouraged and assisted to participate in their Pathway Plan Review meeting. If they are unwilling or unable to attend their Pathway Plan Review Meeting, their wishes and feelings will be presented and taken into consideration at the review.
- The allocated Personal Advisor will contact relevant agencies (housing, education, employment, health professionals) for an update prior to review meeting and update if they are not able to attend.
- The Pathway Plan / Review meeting will be written up within 5 working days and uploaded onto ICS.
- A copy of the Pathway Plan / Review meeting will be given to the young person in a folder within 10 working days and a case note added to ICS.

### **Staying Put**

- All young people in foster care will be offered a staying put arrangement with their carer up until the age of 21.
- Staying put agreements will be reviewed annually in a meeting with the Personal advisor, Young person, supervising social worker and carer.
- The agreement will then be typed up by the Personal advisor within 5 working days and a copy given to the carer and young person within 10 working days.

### **Housing**

- All care leavers will be given priority housing in Knowsley.
- Care leavers who require their own accommodation will be presented at housing panel between 3 and 6 months before they leave care
- Care leavers will be supported with housing applications and welfare benefits as appropriate.
- Care leavers will be exempt from paying council tax.
- Care leavers will be offered additional support from housing support officers.

### **Setting up home allowance**

- All relevant and former relevant care leavers will be given a setting up home allowance of £2000.
- All young people setting up their first home will be given a starter pack up to the value of £50.
- Care leavers will be given engagement money in addition to money at Christmas and on birthdays up to the age of 21.

### **Activities**

- All Care Leavers will be offered the opportunity to participate in the Care leaver's forum also known as 'Tuesday club'.
- Seasonal events will also be arranged for care leavers such as Easter and Christmas celebrations.

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