



CabinetOffice
Social Exclusion Task Force

Realising young potential:

supporting care leavers into education,
employment and training

November 2009



department for
children, schools and families

national care
ADVISORY SERVICE
making the difference for young people in and from care aged 13-25

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1.1. This report aims to support local authority Leaving Care Teams and their partners to further assist young people who have left care to access education, employment and training (EET).

1.2. The report is part of the Socially Excluded Adults Public Service Agreement (PSA16) work programme. PSA16 aims to support more vulnerable adults into homes and jobs¹.

1.3. The Social Exclusion Task Force in the Cabinet Office led this project, with support from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the National Care Advisory Service (NCAS), Government Offices and local authorities.

Key messages

1.4. A number of key messages were apparent from this research:

- Access to continued good parenting during transition into adulthood must be needs and not age led;
- Services need to strive for greater consistency, local integration and higher quality;

- Sustaining education, employment or training (EET) places requires serious and transparent resource investment in young people's futures;
- Additional effort must be made to engage those on the edge of services – the relatively small group of young people with high needs;
- Care leavers need simple and transparent guidance on:
 - what type of help is available from Personal Advisers and other professionals;
 - the key steps they need to take to progress between current and future EET activities; and
 - what support is available at key stages of transition such as when care orders expire on their 18th birthday and when they turn 21.

Recommendations, agreed national actions and local practice examples

1.5. Policy recommendations and agreed national actions in response are summarised below, highlighted throughout the report and detailed at Annex A.

Local practice examples are highlighted throughout the report and are detailed at Annex B.

- 1.6.** The recommendations, national actions and local practice examples are intended to be considered by local areas to help inform their own service planning, commissioning and development to improve care leaver EET outcomes.
- 1.7.** The recommendations, national actions and local practice examples cover six key themes that emerged during this project as driving EET outcomes. These form the main chapters of the report:

Chapter 3: Housing as the foundation for EET

- Maximising housing options;
- Linking housing and EET services;
- Leaving Care and Supporting People Teams working together.

Chapter 4: Providing quality EET opportunities

- Local strategies to generate EET opportunities;
- Local authorities working with education providers and employers;
- Matching supply and demand.

Chapter 5: Workforce matters: skills and support

- Guidance and training for Personal Advisers and carers;
- Education professionals support for care leavers;
- Workforce support on benefit entitlement.

Chapter 6: Effective Pathway Planning

- Quality of Pathway Plans;
- Focus on EET within comprehensive support during transition to independence;
- Involving young people in their Pathway Plans.

Chapter 7: Joint working to strengthen transitions

- Corporate parenting to drive joint working on EET;
- Supporting care leavers who need a range of services;
- Children's and Adult Services working together.

Chapter 8: Embedding local learning

- Implementing good practice;
- Informed strategic commissioning and service development;
- Involving young people in evaluating services.

Policy recommendations and agreed national actions

1. Explore whether a Buttle Trust Quality Mark could be applied to further education:

the Frank Buttle Trust works with around 50 UK universities to develop how they provide tailored support for care leavers. Their Quality Mark is given to institutions that demonstrate a high level of commitment and outcomes. The Learning and Skills Council is providing England's contribution for 2009-10 to a project, led by the Trust, to explore whether this successful model could be adapted for UK further education institutions. The project is due to be completed by 2011, and is also being funded in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2. Mainstream and extend *From Care2Work*ⁱⁱ: this is a Government scheme that was launched in July 2009 to support care leavers into employment. By October 2009, 30 employers and 124 local authorities were signed up. The aim is for all local authorities to be involved by April 2010.

3. Improve guidance and training for Personal Advisers¹ on providing EET advice and support: the revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance to be published for consultation in December 2009 for implementation in 2010, will strengthen and clarify the Personal

Adviser role in providing EET support for care leavers. Each local authority will be responsible for providing the relevant training for Personal Advisers. It will reflect that Personal Advisers should be the principal source of support for individual care leavers so that they can access good quality information, advice and guidance.

4. Review benefits rules and practice to better support care leavers into EET: clear information will be provided for care leavers by NCAS by April 2010 on benefits entitlements and support available from local authorities; and the revised Leaving Care guidance will include a chapter on Finance Matters.

5. Improve the quality and consistency of EET actions in Pathway Plans: Chapter 5 of the current Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000: Regulations and Guidanceⁱⁱⁱ (2001) sets out the responsibilities of local authorities for conducting needs assessment and Pathway Planning for care leavers. Revised guidance will cover wider career planning i.e. pathways into work, apprenticeships and work experience. The Plan must be reviewed regularly, at least until age 21, or longer if the care leaver remains in a programme of education and training. Each review should involve an assessment of the young person's progress in achieving their educational and vocational aspirations.

¹ The function of the Personal Adviser for a care leaver is to provide them with individual advice and support – this will include support on developing the skills needed to make a successful transition to adulthood. There are not any specific qualifications prescribed for Personal Advisers but they will need to demonstrate that they possess the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively with vulnerable young people and have a sound understanding of the legal framework – including the Children Act and housing and welfare benefit legislation.

6. **Local authorities to develop clear partnerships for managing young people's transition to Adult Services:** Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of Lead Members and Directors of Children's Services requires them to be satisfied that effective arrangements are in place for transition to Adult Services for care leavers, including there being strong links between Children's Services, Adult Services, housing agencies and the voluntary sector^{iv}. The revised Leaving Care guidance will include direct reference to *Future Positive*^v, which includes best practice examples for effective planned transition between Children's and Adult Services.
7. **Increase support for local authorities to improve EET outcomes for care leavers:** Government Offices, with support from NCAS through regional networks and *From Care2Work* implementation, to agree how best to work with approximately 30 local areas to help develop action plans to improve education, employment and training outcomes for care leavers by March 2011.
8. **Dissemination of good and promising practice:** as well as working directly with a number of local areas (as per recommendation 7), good practice examples and learning from this report and other sources will be disseminated by the Social Exclusion Task Force from November 2009.
9. **Establish a clear evaluation role for young people to monitor progress on EET provision:** Existing NCAS regional care leaver participation forums will be engaged and supported to look at whether the recommendations and learning in this report are resulting in improved EET support and outcomes for care leavers. From 2010 an annual forum discussion on this issue will be organised with input from government. Feedback from young people will be prepared in time for the annual ministerial stocktake².
10. **Clarify the corporate parent role in providing EET support so that care leavers are clear on what provision should be available:** revised guidance aimed specifically at young people will be issued by DCSF in 2010. This will include information on what type of EET support is available to care leavers from Personal Advisers and other professionals, particularly at key stages of transition; and the key steps young people need to take to lead them from current to future EET activities.

² The White Paper, *Care Matters*, proposed that Ministers annually lead a national stocktake of the outcomes for children in care.

2. INTRODUCTION

Care leavers within the Socially Excluded Adults Public Service Agreement (PSA16)

2.1. The project that led to this report is part of the Socially Excluded Adults Public Service Agreement (PSA16) work programme. In 2007, PSA16 was agreed by seven government departments with the aim of improving the life chances of those who are most vulnerable in society. It was structured to tackle the barriers to a home and a job faced by four disadvantaged groups: adults in contact with secondary mental health services and on the Care Programme Approach; adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities; offenders under probation supervision; and care leavers at age 19.

2.2. There were a number of reasons why care leavers were prioritised within PSA16ⁱ:

- They are at considerably high risk of being excluded later in life. For example care leavers are over-represented in the homeless, prison, mental health and learning disabled population^{vi};
- They are a relatively small group (about 6,000 a year at age 19) who already receive support but where targeting could make a measurable difference;
- Lessons could be learned about improving public services for other vulnerable young people.

2.3. Local authority data used to measure PSA16 progress on care leaver outcomes shows that there has been a significant increase in education, employment and training (EET) outcomes for care leavers in England at age 19 in recent years from 49% in 2002/03 to 63% in 2008/09^{vii}. The rate has dipped from a high of 65% in 2007/8.

2.4. Despite the overall increase in EET for care leavers, there are significant variations in local authority performance. In 2008/09 the proportion of care leavers in EET at age 19 ranged from 26% to 94% across local authorities^{viii}. The number of care leavers aged 19 in local authorities varies considerably – from none to 179 in 2008/09. The small numbers mean that performance can change significantly from year to year.

Scope of this report

2.5. This report is aimed at local authorities and their partners who have responsibility for supporting young people who have been in care into EET. Each of the chapters highlights a key issue that this project found could increase the chances of care leavers achieving positive EET outcomes. It is hoped that this report will be used by Leaving Care Teams and EET partners to further drive achievements in supporting care leavers into EET.

- 2.6.** This report seeks to add to the understanding of why there is notable variability in the EET outcomes achieved by Leaving Care services across England, and how greater consistency in performance can be achieved. It is the result of small scale research, including fieldwork in nine local areas and consultation with sector experts. The project took place in the first half of 2009.
- 2.7.** The Social Exclusion Task Force is grateful to all those who helped with and took part in the project in local areas, Government Offices, National Care Advisory Service (NCAS) and DCSF.
- 2.8.** The project sought to answer three related questions:
- a. **What makes the difference** in helping care leavers into education, employment and training?
 - b. What **weaknesses/barriers** are there in delivery systems? Why?
 - c. What **changes** can local authorities, partners and central government make to increase the implementation of known good and promising practice in supporting care leavers into EET?
- 2.9.** The premise for this work was that a narrowing of differences in local performance resulting in overall improvement could be achieved through local areas learning from each others' experience of how to deliver a range of personalised EET services for care leavers. National policy across government departments would be used to provide additional leverage for improvements to local systems and practice.
- 2.10.** The nine local authorities who provided the majority of evidence used in this report (see Annex D) are not fully representative of all Leaving Care services. The aim was to explore service provision in these areas to provide a flavour of what works. The Leaving Care Teams and their partners were able to describe some of the barriers to good EET outcomes for young people in transition from care to independence, and how they have addressed them.
- 2.11.** The report illustrates a range of delivery challenges, particularly on joining up services and agencies at local and national level, and provides examples of how these can be overcome. The purpose is to show how interventions can make a difference despite some of the incredibly complex problems some young people face trying to further their education and get a career started.

Limitations of this review:

- The primary evidence drawn on in this review is illustrative, not representative. It is based on workshops held with 9 Leaving Care Teams and their local delivery partners with an interest in education, employment and training;
- Workshops were held with a mix of authorities whose performance was: consistently high; moderate but recent improvement; less than average;
- The practice examples in Annex B were developed through a survey tool and discussions with practitioners. They offer learning to be shared but are not evaluated best practice.

The policy context

2.12. As part of the Quality Protects programme from 1998, which included development of the Children (Leaving Care) Act, Government developed a series of indicators for children in and leaving care, to track local and national progress on health, safeguarding, education, and placement stability. These enabled the measurement of outcomes for children in public care at key stages in their pathway to adulthood.

2.13. The Children (Leaving Care) Act (2000) amended the Children Act 1989 and imposed new statutory duties on local authorities to provide better quality services to care leavers as part of their wider corporate parenting responsibility. Individual local authorities have significant discretion in the mechanisms they use to deliver their statutory responsibilities.

2.14. The period since the Leaving Care Act commenced in 2001 has seen considerable progress with the setting up of specialist services for young people in transition from care to independence. A wealth of studies, including two reports by the Social Exclusion Unit: *A better education for children in care*^{ix} and *Transitions: young adults with complex needs*^x identified a range of factors that left young people leaving the care system vulnerable.

2.15. *Care Matters: Time for Change*^{xi} aims to achieve a transformation in outcomes for looked after children and has developed through a Green Paper and White Paper. The Children and Young People's Act 2008 implements recommendations from the White Paper that required legislation. It will be necessary to revise the full suite of Children Act guidance as a result of this Act^{xii}.

2.16. A number of recently published reports, including one from a House of Commons Select Committee^{xiii}, have provided a wealth of evidence and recommendations that have both raised the profile of care leavers over the last year and set out recommendations for change that have informed this document.

Improvements are still needed in supporting care leavers into EET

Educational attainment

2.17. One of the starkest statistics from the Social Exclusion Unit's report in 2003 on educational outcomes of children in care^{viii}, was that less than 1% were going to university. Local authorities now report that over 10% of their care leavers are in higher education, with many more attending after their 19th birthday, and 7% of care leavers aged 19 are at university^{xiv}.

2.18. However there is still a notable gap between the educational attainment of care leavers and their peers. In 2008, by age 16, just 14% of looked after children achieved at least 5 A* – C grade GCSEs, compared with 65% of all children. Around half achieved no GCSEs or equivalents^{xv}. Government data for 2007-08 also indicates that 32% of young people in England (including care leavers) were likely to enter higher education by age 19^{xvi}.

Service provision

2.19. Supporting a vulnerable young person to access and stay in good quality education, employment or training can be challenging and require a significant investment of resources. To develop an individual's aspirations, motivation and resilience, a high degree of aspiration and commitment is needed from parents, teachers, other professionals and other adults young people have contact with.

2.20. Research and consultation on EET for care leavers finds examples where adults have few and low expectations for care leavers^{xvii}. Another challenge is that too often immediate crisis management takes precedence over long-term career planning in Pathway Planning with young people.

Care leavers' experience of services

2.21. Some care leavers complain that local services don't join up in a way that is easily understood. This presents a risk that care leavers will be less prepared for the transition into independence than young people who can rely on support from their families. A lack of rounded support has a negative impact on young people's ability to cope and their outcomes, including their education, employment and training prospects.

2.22. This risk is higher for care leavers who are more vulnerable due to their personal experiences before entering care, and for those who experience poor care planning and poor quality relationships with carers and professional staff. Crucially, research shows that due to a range of factors many young people leaving care are less resilient than their peers when things go wrong: few formal qualifications, poor decision making about EET, low social capital, and attachment issues^{xviii}.

3. HOUSING AS THE FOUNDATION FOR EET

Suitable accommodation as a basis for positive EET outcomes

- 3.1.** PSA16 was developed around the twin interrelated themes of helping vulnerable adults get a home and a job because success in one is so dependent on the other. In most cases, having somewhere settled and suitable to live is a precondition of being able to be successful economically.
- 3.2.** There are a number of initiatives within and outside of government that have recently focused on improving accommodation outcomes for care leavers, in particular a recent good practice report, *Journeys to Home* by NCAS, focused on strengthening housing outcomes for young people in transition^{xix}. In interviews, workshops and other consultation with young people and Personal Advisers for this report, the point was made that without somewhere decent to live, it was unlikely that young people leaving care would be able to sustain a course of study or a job. In the Norfolk workshop for example, 75% of the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) cases discussed were directly related to young people being in unsuitable housing such as hostels.

- 3.3.** Some Leaving Care Teams have made a conscious decision to make housing placements post-16 their priority, as the basis for supporting care leavers into EET activities, whether or not the young person is still formally under a care order.

Local practice 1: Supported Lodging Scheme to support EET outcomes, Cornwall

Cornwall's EET outcomes were low five years ago for a number of reasons, but the local authority decided that improving the quality and choice of housing was key to improving stability and engagement of care leavers. It set up a new Supported Lodging Scheme, converting some foster care places, and ran a structured set of activities for young people and landlords that helped prepare for and support the transition to independence. As the placements are managed directly by a Leaving Care accommodation specialist worker, there is considerable flexibility. If rules are broken the young person is given a second or third chance. Critically if the placement does breakdown, the young person is not deemed intentionally homeless and can be found another lodging. The housing department is now keen to implement a similar scheme for other vulnerable young people.

Contact: droose@cornwall.gov.uk

Joint working between Leaving Care and Supporting People Teams

- 3.4.** Variability in the quality of relationships between local authority Leaving Care Teams and Supporting People Teams is one of the factors affecting housing provision for care leavers. It was an issue identified in the fieldwork for this project and in *Journeys to Home*^{xix}, the recent report from NCAS on securing housing for care leavers.
- 3.5.** Supporting People services provide support to a range of disadvantaged groups through specialised housing projects and floating support services. Some local authorities have made care leavers a priority group for Supporting People provision in their area. This means that when these young people move to independent living they have regular contact with a key worker who can provide support on a range of issues e.g. managing their finances and resolving problems when they arise.
- 3.6.** The Supporting People ringfence has now been removed which gives local authorities greater flexibility in how they use this budget. It is hoped that this increased flexibility will further incentivise joint and innovative working within local authorities to better meet the housing support needs of local people, including care leavers.

Local practice 2: Accommodation Pathways Service to improve stability and EET activities for care leavers, Birmingham

St Basil's, a homeless charity, was commissioned by Birmingham local authority in 2007 to deliver an Accommodation Pathways Service (APS) to young people leaving care. The objective was to improve young people's plans for independence, reduce the use of B&Bs and hostels, and prevent homelessness. St. Basil's works alongside Birmingham's Leaving Care Team and contributes to a number of their young people's strategies, consulting with young people on their educational and employment aspirations as well as housing issues.

Contact: chris.p.bush@birmingham.gov.uk

4. PROVIDING QUALITY EET OPPORTUNITIES

Local strategies to create meaningful EET options for care leavers

- 4.1. Young people leaving care are a small fraction of those with poor educational attainment and low rates of participation. Children's Services can struggle to find dedicated resources or suitable activities for this group. Care leavers are often spread across a number of schools, colleges, and a wide geographic area, particularly in rural two-tier authorities. Local authorities will also be responsible for supporting care leavers who were looked after in placements out of their local authority area.
- 4.2. Fieldwork for this report showed that the result can be that services find it difficult to share information and targets are rarely aligned, making it extremely complex to develop a coherent EET strategy for this vulnerable group.
- 4.3. Areas such as Cambridgeshire have met the need for an EET strategy for care leavers by making this group of young people a priority within their overall NEET strategy. Other areas have focused on developing partnership working to enable care leavers to access positive EET activities.

Local practice 3: Local partnership working and joint targets to reduce care leavers who are NEET, Sheffield

Sheffield Leaving Care Team has made considerable effort to develop relationships with the 16-19 Team within the education and skills department and with the local Connexions service (Sheffield Futures). This has begun to pay significant dividends with a focus on care leavers as a priority NEET group, and additional resources being made available, including a specialist EET worker within the 16-19 Team.

This increased partnership working has resulted in data being regularly shared between Children's Services, the education and skills department in the council and Connexions. This has allowed successful targeting of support and has led to a reduction in NEETs over the last few years.

Contact: dee.desgranges@sheffield.gov.uk

Joint working between local authorities and education providers

- 4.4. A number of authorities now have sophisticated financial and personal support available for young people to help them enter and sustain further or higher education. Since September 2009, £2,000 has been available for every care leaver in higher education. The relationships many Leaving Care Teams have developed with local colleges and universities have been critical to boosting successful participation of care leavers in available opportunities.

Local practice 4: Close working relationships with further and higher education support services, Devon

Devon Leaving Care Team, in partnership with the council's education team, have created strong links with a number of further education colleges. One of the key improvements to the quality of support for care leavers was getting a named contact in each of the colleges of further education. These were usually student welfare officers. The Leaving Care Team was able to share basic information with them, highlighting particular skills or talents the young person had as well as potential risk factors. The student welfare officers were then able to work with the tutors to look at how they could best support the young people. This helped to ensure that Personal Advisers and carers were informed of any problems at an early stage, allowing them to be addressed and enabling more young people to remain in education. Contact: ian.stewart-watson@devon.gov.uk

Recommendation 1: Explore whether a Buttle Trust Quality Mark could be applied to further education

The Frank Buttle Trust works with around 50 UK universities to develop how they provide tailored support for care leavers. Their Quality Mark is given to institutions that demonstrate a high level of commitment and outcomes. The Learning and Skills Council is providing England's contribution for 2009-10 to a project, led by the Trust, to explore whether this successful model could be adapted for UK further education institutions. The project is due to be completed by 2011, and is also being funded by Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Joint working between local authorities and employers

- 4.5. Too many care leavers end up in low skilled work or on benefits into their early twenties. In response the Government announced a new employability initiative in the New Opportunities White Paper in January 2009. *From Care2Work*ⁱⁱ was launched in July 2009.
- 4.6. The scheme aims to provide a range of opportunities, including: taster sessions, work experience, internships, apprenticeships and permanent jobs. A national team of advisors based in NCAS will provide support and advice to help Leaving Care Teams get senior management leverage and work with local partners to develop action plans.

Recommendation 2: Mainstream and extend *From Care2Work*

From Care2Work: creating opportunities and raising aspirations is a Government scheme which was launched in July 2009 to support care leavers into employment. By October 2009, 30 national employers and 124 local authorities were signed up. The aim is to sign up all local authorities by April 2010. The National Apprenticeship Service will work with NCAS, which host *From Care2Work*, to ensure that from September 2009 all suitably qualified care leavers will be offered an Apprenticeship place and intend to make this a legal entitlement from 2013.

Local practice 5: Provide a range of quality employment opportunities, Sheffield

Sheffield has established an employability scheme where care leavers have work placements in the council or with private employers. The type of work done on these placements has included general administration, participation work in the Leaving Care Team, construction and finance. Sheffield has struggled to find and sustain jobs even within their council, so *From Care2Work* is providing a range of tools that will help teams strengthen packages of support and learn about what is working in other areas.

Contact: Mark.Barratt@sheffield.gov.uk

Local practice 6: Improved access to flexible courses, Derby

Derby has successfully placed a large number of its care leavers on the local University's Alexis access course. This provides a pre NVQ level 2/3 qualification, but more importantly a supportive environment in which young people are able to engage in independent learning, including a number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children with mixed experiences of school. Almost all those who register go on to complete the two year course, which has only minimal entry requirements.

Contact: Beverley.fearn@derby.gov.uk

Matching supply and demand of EET activities

- 4.7.** In addition to providing the right kind of support for care leavers to access EET, another common challenge raised was the supply of suitable courses. Barriers ranged from a lack of supply of those courses most in demand such as construction, courses having September only start dates and high qualification requirements.

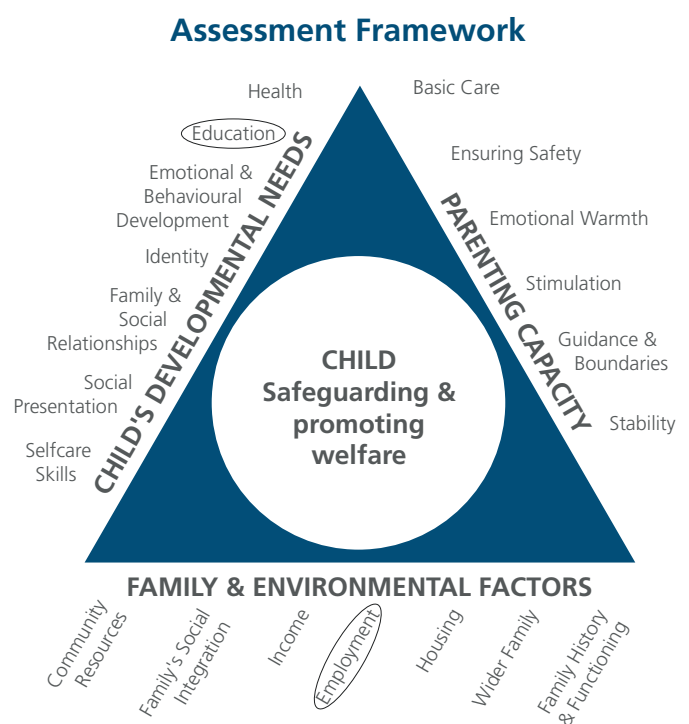
5. WORKFORCE MATTERS: SKILLS AND SUPPORT

Equipping Leaving Care Teams with EET expertise

- 5.1.** Guidance issued when the Children (Leaving Care) Act commenced is clear that the function of supporting care leavers may be carried out by a number of individuals (e.g. foster carer, teacher, social worker). The majority of authorities have set up specific Leaving Care Teams staffed by a mixture of social workers and Personal Advisers, who generally act as 'lead professionals'³ for care leavers.
- 5.2.** It is challenging to build statutory guidelines that capture what makes the difference in the quality of staff supporting care leavers into EET. Fundamentally it is about having ambition for the young person's EET ability.
- 5.3.** There were some clear messages from staff and care leavers about what enables staff to succeed or not in supporting young people into EET. Personal Advisers in Salford and Derby were adamant that stability and continuity, not only of staff but the service itself, was key to building proper relationships with young people, as well as developing the depth and range of knowledge required.

Recommendation 3: Improve guidance and training for Personal Advisers on providing EET advice and support

The revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance will reflect that Personal Advisers should be the principal source of information, advice and guidance for care leavers. It will be made clear that Personal Advisers require knowledge and understanding about young people's developmental needs and how these may change as individuals mature and adapt to the challenges of assuming greater responsibilities into adulthood. The Personal Adviser will also need to be familiar with and have the necessary skills in assessing the impact on the young person of the other dimensions set out in the *Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*^{xx} (see below).



³ A lead professional is the person who takes responsibility for ensuring that a client's needs are identified and met as fully as possible.

- 5.4. As well ensuring that all members of Leaving Care Teams have a basic level of knowledge to provide support on EET, some teams have a dedicated EET worker to further improve support for care leavers.

Local practice 7: Create a dedicated specialist EET worker role, Derby

Even though the aftercare team in Derby is relatively small (6 Personal Advisers for 120 care leavers over 18), one Personal Adviser is a dedicated specialist Education, Employment and Training adviser to all care leavers. One of the benefits has been a single point of contact for all of the local schools, colleges and the university.

The most significant improvement in how the team functions is the adviser's scope and depth of knowledge about EET opportunities and how to overcome barriers. It would be very difficult for one Personal Adviser to develop this EET expertise alongside the demands of the rest of their role. The EET adviser also attends interviews with young people, including at the Job Centre, to boost confidence.

This has helped to push Derby's performance on care leaver EET outcomes to one of the best in the country.

Contact: Beverley.fearn@derby.gov.uk

of foster carers' and other key adults' perspectives in the preparation before leaving care^{xxi}. The project explored the attitudes and beliefs of adults on the prospects of their young people succeeding in higher education, and considered how to raise both groups' expectations. Early results show that interventions specifically developed for foster carers could be effective in raising aspirations and knowledge levels for both carers and care leavers. Training materials will be developed into an online training resource in 2010.

- 5.6. Revised National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes and Fostering Services^{xxii} were issued by DCSF for national consultation at the end of September 2009. These standards are structured around the child's journey through care and set out requirements for carers to support looked after children to help them to develop the capabilities they will need to achieve economic well-being. This includes supporting Pathway Planning, so that young people are well prepared for further education and the world of work.

Supporting carers to help care leavers into EET

- 5.5. Most of the direct support to young people during transition is provided by their residential or foster carer rather than their Personal Adviser or social worker. There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the importance of carers in shaping aspirations and outcomes of looked after children. Wolverhampton University undertook a study of the impact

Local practice 8: Independence training for foster carers, Warwickshire

Warwickshire have begun to roll out a programme of training for foster carers looking after 13-15 year olds. To provide a better quality and consistency of training, it is an NVQ level 3 qualification. The course explores factors that help or hinder transitions to independent living and how looked after young people are supported to access a positive route into education, employment or training.

Contact: brendavincent@warwickshire.gov.uk

Education professionals supporting care leavers

- 5.7.** One of the successful DCSF pilot schemes within Care Matters has been the creation of 'Virtual Heads' to ensure that children in care have the right support from teachers and a greater focus is kept on educational outcomes. This is particularly important for those children who have to move school when their placement changes. Around half of all areas now have a Virtual Head^{xxiii}.

Local practice 9: Extend remit of Virtual Head to cover care leavers up to age 21, Salford

It is the Government's policy intention that the Virtual Head initiative should include as a minimum all looked after children in years 12 and 13 at school – including all care leavers. Salford local authority used the early success of the Virtual Head pilot to justify extending their responsibility beyond 16. It now includes all those young people in education up to the age of 21. As well as improving GCSE results for all looked after children, the extended Virtual Head has been particularly important for those young people placed outside Salford, where they were able to advocate directly with local education providers. *"The role has opened access to parts of the education support services, Aim Higher and mentors, previously under utilised by social workers in supporting their young people."*

Contact: Michael.Kelly@salford.gov.uk

- 5.8.** During the work for this report, many examples were given of young people who continued their course or employment despite some extremely difficult problems. Even a short time away from college can

be very difficult to catch up on. When care leavers looked back on what made the difference to sustaining their participation in college, it was having someone, whether it was a Personal Adviser, former foster carer or teacher, who kept in touch and asked how their day had been.

Workforce supporting care leavers to access benefits as an enabler to EET

- 5.9.** A large percentage of care leavers at age 19 receive benefits, principally Job Seekers Allowance and Housing Benefit. The combination of their particular circumstances and how the systems are set up, means that many care leavers have problems accessing the right benefits at the right time. This can reduce the stability in their life and their ability to plan for EET.

Local practice example 10: Reduced delay in receiving benefits, Government Office West Midlands and Jobcentre Plus

The Government Office West Midlands began a pilot in 2008 to make it easier for care leavers to apply for benefits two weeks before their 18th birthday using paper forms. A partnership with Jobcentre Plus (JCP) in the Black Country has resulted in 95% of benefit claims now being processed by the young person's 18th birthday. A key outcome has been better engagement by young people in other services offered by JCP. Initially some Personal Advisers were not comfortable in helping to fill out benefit claims forms. Some basic training was offered to overcome this.

Contact: mandy.smith@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

5.10. The National Care Advisory Service has worked with a range of stakeholders to look at the evidence base on benefits issues for care leavers and is working with government departments to remove perceived and actual barriers to support EET activities. A report including recommendations for improvement will be published soon.

Recommendation 4: Review benefits rules and practice to better support care leavers into EET:

clear information will be provided for care leavers by NCAS on benefits entitlements and support available from local authorities; and the revised Leaving Care guidance will include a chapter on Finance Matters. DWP officials are currently working with colleagues in DCSF, Cabinet Office and NCAS colleagues to explore what more can be done to help support young people making the difficult transition from care. This includes looking at any process and system changes that could help young people navigate specific areas highlighted as being particularly challenging.

6. EFFECTIVE PATHWAY PLANNING

Positive Pathway Planning

6.1. One of the key foundations of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 was that every care leaver should have an agreement about their next steps towards independence, based on discussion between themselves, their Personal Adviser, and other professionals responsible for their wellbeing. Pathway Plans must set out the services needed to support the young person in seven needs areas, including 'education, training and employment'.

6.2. Despite clear guidelines on the process and content of Pathway Plans, including a legal requirement for their completion within three months of a care leavers' 16th birthday, it was clear from consultation with Personal Advisers and care leavers that these Plans were not always the 'living documents' intended:

- some young people do not think their Pathway Plans are relevant to their lives;
- Plans are sometimes only partially completed;
- the views of key individuals can be missing in Plans;
- Plans do not always include long-term education, employment and training (EET) aspirations or goals.

6.3. A number of Leaving Care Teams had made extensive efforts to improve Pathway Planning, including introducing a more open-ended short question sheet, developed with and by those in care or who have recently left care. Unfortunately, many Personal Advisers have struggled to match the intent of this ongoing assessment and planning tool within the Integrated Children's System (ICS). DCSF are addressing these concerns through revisions to the Leaving Care regulations and guidance, and through the Social Work Task Force review which has led to some flexibility in how the ICS will be fully implemented^{xxiv, xxv}.

Improving the quality of Pathway Plans

6.4. Personal Advisers and young people reported that sometimes Pathway Plans are completed late, are not regularly reviewed, and do not include much of a forward look beyond age 18 such as aspirations for university or a career. One Personal Adviser commented that 'we should know them all personally but we don't...few care leavers know what is planned for them beyond 18'. Reviews of Pathway Plans are statutory for all care leavers until they reach 21, or longer if they continue in education. For those continuing learning, their Pathway Plan must be maintained for as long as they remain in a programme of education or training.

6.5. One of the key safeguards for children in care is the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). IROs have a duty to check that the care plan which should include the Pathway Plan for all looked after children is up-to-date. This function only applies whilst children remain looked after.

6.6. Local authority Leaving Care services are responsible for the quality of Pathway Planning once care leavers reach legal adulthood. Some Personal Advisers reported difficulty in maintaining a thorough Pathway Planning process up to age 21 or 25 due to caseloads and lack of time.

Strengthening the emphasis on EET in Pathway Plans

6.7. Perhaps the strongest message from young people and professionals alike was that what mattered most in successful Pathway Planning was ensuring that EET is a key priority.

Recommendation 5: Improve the quality and consistency of EET actions in Pathway Plans

The revised Leaving Care guidance will provide detailed, clear expectations on the quality of Pathway Plans. On EET, this will cover education and training and wider career planning i.e. pathways into work, apprenticeships and work experience. It will also cover process including the importance of record keeping and requirements for reviewing Pathway Plans. The Plan must be reviewed regularly at least until age 21 or longer if the care leaver remains in a programme of education and training. Each review should involve an assessment of the young person's progress in achieving their educational and vocational aspirations.

Also, a career planning tool currently being developed by NCAS will be promoted to Personal Advisers via the revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance and *From Care2Work*.

Pathway Plans supporting the transition to independence

6.8. A strong focus on EET in Pathway Plans needs to sit alongside broader actions to cover the support young people leaving care need, to make a successful transition to independence. Care leavers often have to become independent much more quickly than their peers. However, frequent moves of placements and schools mean that many are still trying to become settled between age 16 and 18, at a time when some will become responsible for their own accommodation and finances. Some young people were critical that Pathway Plans include a 'tick box' approach to independence planning, rather than a proper assessment of their skills.

Local practice 11: Finance and independence training for young people, Tower Hamlets, London

In 2006, Tower Hamlets produced a clear and comprehensive booklet about the financial and other support available for care leavers. This is regularly reviewed and updated. In tandem, the council undertook an extensive training programme, working in partnership with Connexions to help young people increase their learning potential by improving key skills. The council also ensured that young people's independent living skills were assessed rigorously before accessing permanent accommodation.

Contact: Jo.bird@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Kevin.mcandrew@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Local practice 12: E-mentoring to improve self-confidence, Confident Futures, North Lincolnshire

The Brightside Trust had been matching students at university with less advantaged school children using the internet for around 7 years, before it began a programme targeted at young people in and leaving care. Now running in two pilots in North Lincolnshire and Norfolk, the main benefits for mentees are: higher self-esteem; better engagement with school; and an outlet for their concerns about all aspects of their lives, such as choosing a course. Mentors are often recruited through word of mouth from previous users of the scheme.

Contact: suzanne.maskrey@thebrightsidetrust.org

Supporting care leavers to be central in developing their Pathway Plan

6.9. The Social Exclusion Unit's (SEU) 2005 report *Transitions: young adults with complex needs*^{ix} and other studies have highlighted that vulnerable young people, including care leavers, lack the strong social networks necessary to enable them to consider and make smart choices about their future. One way that care leavers can be supported to develop these skills is through mentoring.

6.10. There are a number of innovative approaches to structuring the relationship and planning positive interventions between key workers and clients. Much of the challenge to secure young people's input into their Pathway Plan can be met by building their confidence and self-esteem.

Local practice 13: Positive Pathway Planning, Bristol

Bristol has contracted Fairbridge, a charity that specialises in working with young people disengaged from EET, to work with a number of care leavers. Following a short induction period, the participants go on a five day outward bound style course, the purpose of which is to develop not only confidence in their own abilities but also how to draw on relationships with others. The Fairbridge model has demonstrated excellent outcomes through young people's improved self confidence and self esteem. The young people follow a personal development programme which they build with their key worker, around their needs and interests. This is reviewed on a regular basis by the young person and the key worker to ensure progress is being made.

Contact: joan.iceton@bristol.gov.uk

7. JOINT WORKING AT TRANSITION TO STRENGTHEN EET OUTCOMES

Corporate parenting to drive joint working on EET outcomes

7.1. This report has already shown that local authorities need to maximise partnership working to give care leavers the best chance of accessing the services they need. Joint working is particularly important in ensuring that young people get the support they need at points of transition. These points can be when young people move between different services due to their needs which will change over time, and when responsibility for providing support changes to a different service, for example due to the age or location of the young person.

7.2. As previously shown, there are a whole range of partners that can help to support care leavers to access EET – for example Personal Advisers, Connexions workers and mentors⁴. It is important for local authorities to build networks to ensure that these young people have as many support options as possible.

Local practice 14: Virtual School Parent Teachers Association: Corporate Parenting, Warwickshire

Staff from Children's Services and other parts of the local authority set up the 'Tiffin Club' to improve the lives of looked after children, in part by offering them real opportunities to develop their confidence and skills. Members meet informally to find out what each other are doing, to improve how they work together and come up with tangible ways to make a difference, from being mentors to finding apprentice placements. This has meant that despite the lower levels of statutory responsibility post 18, care leavers are not 'lost in transition' but continue to have priority and access to services within the authority. Contact: hughdisley@warwickshire.gov.uk

Supporting care leavers with high needs that cross service boundaries

7.3. The challenge to more effectively manage the 'cross-over' when individuals fit into more than one disadvantaged group and service was one of the drivers of the Government's PSA on socially excluded adults. One of the aims was to tackle barriers where services did not effectively join up to work with people with complex needs, who themselves may not be able to co-ordinate different professionals, benefits or information.

⁴ Link Up Link In government website supports joint working among frontline professionals who work with vulnerable people, helping them into employment and accommodation. On the website you will find case studies, guidance and other useful information about collaborative working. Go to <http://www.hmg.gov.uk/linkuplinkin.aspx>.

7.4. Public service reform to improve outcomes for socially excluded groups must always strike a balance between making universal services more flexible to take account of some individuals' complex needs, and setting up new specialist programmes. Leaving Care services are an example of the latter that have been largely successful. Yet, Leaving Care professionals continue to find it difficult to secure EET and other outcomes for a small group of particularly chaotic and disadvantaged young people.

7.5. Care leavers who have significant support needs are in greatest need of effective, co-ordinated interventions. In cases where this does not happen, individuals are at risk of being further disadvantaged. These high risk groups include young people with: mental health conditions, learning disabilities, emotional and attachment difficulties, substance misuse problems, as well as young offenders and young parents. Leaving Care Teams spend a disproportionate amount of time with young people with one or more of these support needs, yet many continue to not be in EET.

7.6. However, when Personal Advisers lead increased joint working, progress can be made on achieving EET outcomes for the most vulnerable care leavers. As the lead professional for care leavers, Personal Advisers need to ensure that all of a young person's needs are assessed and met. This involves co-ordinating provision by working with a range of service providers to ensure that young people access

all of the services they need. Personal Advisers need to ensure that providers are clear on what support they and others are delivering for each young person. This can be achieved through a range of joint working methods including case conferences, Service Level Agreements and joint needs assessments.

Local practice 15: Joint needs planning, Salford

Salford, like many local authorities, has a number of high needs, high cost care leavers, many of which are placed outside the borough. It can be very difficult for social workers and Personal Advisers to co-ordinate the various council services (principally housing, health and adult social care services) needed to assist somebody to make the transition into independence when the individual lives out of the area. In these cases, it is preferable to aim to bring the young person back to their home authority, where links with the aforementioned services can be more easily established, rather than relying on brokering arrangements with another authority.

Salford's Leaving Care Team requested a joint needs assessment by Salford's adult learning disability team and adult mental health services to best determine the appropriate resources needed to meet the needs of a vulnerable young person.

Whilst neither of the adult services felt the young person met their criteria for a service, an agreement was made under local arrangements that as the young person was a vulnerable care leaver, all parties, working under the umbrella of 'corporate parent' would work together to achieve the best outcome for the young person.

The young person is now back in Salford and learning to cope with a greater degree of independence.

Contact: michael.kelly@salford.gov.uk

Supporting vulnerable care leavers to move from Children's to Adult Services

- 7.7.** Once they reach legal adulthood at age 18, care leavers are entitled to the same mainstream services as other young people. The local authority in the area where a care leaver is ordinarily resident (which may not be the authority previously responsible for their care) is responsible for assessing their entitlement to Adult Community Care Services. Young people eligible for support from Adult Services also continue to be entitled to support from their responsible authority's Leaving Care service until they are 21 years old.
- 7.8.** The ongoing support that some care leavers need as they get older includes help to engage with Adult Services when they take responsibility for providing support that may have previously been provided by Children's Services. It is particularly important that support through this transition is available to more vulnerable young people.

Care leavers with a disability

- 7.9.** One of the concerns highlighted in the fieldwork for this report and in other research^{xxvi}, is the position of disabled young people. Clear plans need to be in place for supporting care leavers with a disability to access the Adult Services they need as they get older.

Local practice 16: Strategy for transition to Adult Services, Cornwall

Cornwall has funded a small team dedicated specifically to work with those from care with learning disabilities. The team is jointly funded by Children's and Adult Services and has close links to mental and other health teams. The team has a clear transitions protocol which is enforced by an operational and management group. Clear Pathway Planning processes have led to better EET and health outcomes for young people with learning disabilities and have resulted in a smoother transition to Adult Services. Contact: droose@cornwall.gov.uk

Care leavers with mental health support needs

- 7.10.** Usually Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provision ceases at age 18 and young people move into Adult Services. However some services involved in treating young people and vulnerable adults have varying age limits for the services they offer which can affect the range of services available to the young person who moves from CAMHS to Adult Services. This variability means that young people can experience inconsistent and unco-ordinated approaches in their transition to Adult Services. This can be overcome by effective joint working between Children's and Adult Services.

Recommendation 6: local authorities to develop clear partnerships for managing young people's transition to Adult Services

Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of Lead Members and Directors of Children's Services requires them to be satisfied that effective arrangements are in place for transition to Adult Services for care leavers, including there being strong working links between Children's Services, Adult Services, housing agencies and the voluntary sectorⁱⁱ.

8. EMBEDDING LOCAL LEARNING: NOT REINVENTING THE WHEEL

Implementing good practice

8.1. Since 2001, Leaving Care services have been established in all local authorities. The Children (Leaving Care) Act as part of the wider Quality Protects programme, sparked a great wave of innovation in how best to provide guidance and support to help young people move from care to independence. Between 2005 and 2007 the What Makes the Difference (WMTD) project, a large partnership involving 60 organisations from national and local government, voluntary and independent sectors, led by the charity Rainer, captured some of this best practice. This included projects and interventions that had improved education, employment or training outcomes for care leavers^{xxvii}.

8.2. Consultation with NCAS and Leaving Care Teams uncovered two limitations of the excellent examples showcased by WMTD:

- the regional Leaving Care networks, the NCAS Benchmarking Forum^{xxviii}, regional events and NCAS support were reaching a significant but only partial group of local authorities – a ‘coalition of the willing’ – with the learning from WMTD. This was resulting in good practice not being implemented in all of the areas where it could make the biggest difference;

- despite considerable national and local resources, there remained remarkably few high quality evaluations of the measurable impact that specific EET interventions had made.

8.3. One of the key aims of the work leading to this report was to understand the range of (mostly institutional) factors that prevented Leaving Care Teams learning from other areas and find ways to overcome these barriers so that implementation of good practice becomes more widespread.

Recommendation 7: Support local authorities to improve EET outcomes for care leavers

Government Offices, with support from NCAS through regional networks and *From Care2Work* implementation, to agree how best to work with approximately 30 local areas to help develop action plans to improve education, employment and training outcomes for care leavers. Action planning process to be led by regional Care Matters leads with assistance from NCAS.

8.4. To further support implementation of good practice, the Social Exclusion Task Force is undertaking a project to disseminate good and promising best practice through a range of channels.

Recommendation 8: Dissemination of good and promising practice

As well as working directly with a number of local areas (as per recommendation 7), practice examples and learning from this report and other sources will be disseminated by the Social Exclusion Task Force from November 2009.

there was considerable optimism in a number of authorities visited that there has been a significant increase in local and national strategic prioritisation of this group. However many managers and staff expressed concern that these gains could easily be lost as budgets tighten in the coming years.

Informed strategic commissioning and service development for care leaver EET services

- 8.5. A strategic plan, governance structure and outcome focus are required to ensure long-term resources and high level support for improving EET outcomes. Effective strategic planning and commissioning of Children's Services and the flexible use of pooled budgets is important to successfully support care leavers into EET.
- 8.6. There are many benefits to effective strategic planning – primarily success in meeting identified needs through provision of appropriate services. Other benefits include ensuring that commissioned services are having the desired impact, preventing the waste of resources and reducing siloed provision of services. Achieving effective strategic planning relies on a number of factors, for example a comprehensive needs assessment and monitoring of outputs and outcomes ^{xxix}.
- 8.7. Eight years since the Children (Leaving Care) Act and half way through the PSA16 national priority on education, employment and training for care leavers,

Use of data in strategic planning

- 8.8. Data is key to strategic planning and monitoring of care leaver EET services. During fieldwork and consultation, the national indicator on education, employment and training at age 19 was seen as positive, as it demonstrated not just DCSF's but wider government commitment to improving outcomes beyond the period spent in care. Its simplicity meant it was easy to record, track progress and communicate with other partners outside of Leaving Care, even to share targets with Connexions, as many teams were doing. Some reservations were made that by measuring outcomes at age 19, later education or employment success was not captured.

Local practice 17: Data gathering and outcome monitoring to inform service commissioning and evaluation, Bristol

To provide a more comprehensive picture of the population of care leavers, Bristol have developed a sophisticated system for tracking EET at age 16 – 18 to help understand current issues and predict needs for the following few years. Using exam results and exclusion data, the local authority is beginning to predict future need for care leaver accommodation and specialist support.

Contact: Joan.iceton@bristol.gov.uk

Recommendation 9: Establish a clear evaluation role for young people to monitor progress on EET provision

Existing NCAS regional care leaver participation forums will be engaged and supported to look at whether the recommendations and learning in this report are resulting in improved EET support and outcomes for care leavers. From 2010, an annual forum discussion on this issue will be organised with input from government. Feedback from young people will be prepared in time for the annual ministerial stocktake.

Young people's participation in service evaluation

8.9. Under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), Ofsted now inspects the quality of Children's Services, including Leaving Care services for young people over age 19. The Children's Rights Director undertook a survey of young people's perceptions of care at local authority level^{xxx}, which will inform the inspection of area arrangements for safeguarding and looked after children which in turn will feed into the CAA.

8.10. One of the first aspects of the Care Matters agenda to be implemented is the creation of local 'pledges'. Authorities have consulted with young people on what they think are the most important services for care leavers, to include in the pledge. Most pledges include a specific focus on better educational aspirations and opportunities.

Recommendation 10: Clarify the corporate parent role in providing EET support so that care leavers are clear on what provision should be available

The revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance to be published for consultation in December 2009 for implementation in 2010, will strengthen and clarify the Personal Adviser role in providing EET support for care leavers. Also, revised guidance aimed specifically at young people will be issued by DCSF in 2010. This will include information on what type of EET support is available to care leavers from Personal Advisers and other professionals, particularly at key stages of transition; and the key steps young people need to take to lead them from current to future EET activities.

ANNEX A: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND AGREED NATIONAL ACTIONS

Recommendation	Agreed action	Timescale	Led by
1. Explore whether a Buttle Trust Quality Mark could be applied to further education	The Frank Buttle Trust works with around 50 UK universities to develop how they provide tailored support for care leavers. Their Quality Mark is given to institutions that demonstrate a high level of commitment and outcomes. The Learning and Skills Council is providing England's contribution for 2009-10 to a project, led by the Trust, to explore whether this successful model could be adapted for UK further education institutions. The project is due to be completed by 2011, and is also being funded by Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.	2009 to March 2011	DCSF and BIS ⁵
2. Mainstream and extend <i>From Care2Work</i>	<i>From Care2Work: creating opportunities and raising aspirations</i> is a Government scheme which was launched in July 2009 to support care leavers into employment. By October 2009, 30 employers and 124 local authorities were signed up. The aim is to involve all local authorities by April 2010. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will work with the National Care Advisory Service, which hosts <i>From Care2Work</i> , to ensure that from September 2009 all suitably qualified care leavers will be offered an Apprenticeship place. NAS intends to make this a legal entitlement from 2013.	From July 2009	DCSF and NCAS
3. Improve guidance and training for Personal Advisers on providing EET advice and support	The revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance will strengthen and clarify the Personal Adviser role in providing EET support for care leavers. It will reflect that Personal Advisers should be the principal source of support for individual care leavers so that they can access good quality information, advice and guidance. Guidance will be clear that Personal Advisers require knowledge and understanding about young people's developmental needs and how these may change as individuals mature and adapt to the challenges of assuming greater responsibilities into adulthood. Personal Advisers need the supervision and support necessary for them to signpost care leavers to appropriate EET services.	Draft guidance due December 2009 for implementation in 2010	DCSF

⁵ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

Recommendation	Agreed action	Timescale	Led by
4. Review benefits rules and practice to better support care leavers into EET	<p>NCAS will provide clear information on benefits entitlements for care leavers and support available from local authorities, and the revised Leaving Care guidance will include a chapter on Finance Matters.</p> <p>Also DWP officials are currently working with colleagues in DCSF, Cabinet Office and NCAS to explore what more can be done to help support young people making the difficult transition from care. This includes looking at any process and system changes that could help young people navigate specific areas highlighted as being particularly challenging.</p>	<p>NCAS guidance due April 2010</p> <p>Finance Matters guidance to be implemented in 2010</p> <p>DWP to agree actions with DCSF, CO and NCAS by December 2009</p>	<p>NCAS, DCSF and DWP</p>
5. Improve the quality and consistency of EET actions in Pathway Plans	<p>Chapter 5 of the current Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000: Regulations and Guidanceⁱⁱⁱ sets out the responsibilities of local authorities for needs assessment and Pathway Planning. Revised guidance will cover wider career planning i.e. pathways into work, apprenticeships and work experience. It will also cover process including record keeping and requirements for when Pathway Plans must be reviewed. The Plan must be reviewed regularly at least until age 21 or longer if the care leaver remains in a programme of education and training. Each review will have to assess the young person's progress in achieving their educational and vocational aspirations.</p> <p>Also, a career planning tool currently being developed by NCAS will be promoted to Personal Advisers via the revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance and the implementation of <i>From Care2Work</i>. They will be encouraged to use this in their EET and transition discussions with care leavers as appropriate.</p>	<p>Draft guidance due December 2009</p>	<p>DCSF and NCAS</p>
6. Local authorities to develop clear partnerships for managing young people's transition to Adult Services	<p>Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of Local Members and Directors of Children's Services requires them to be satisfied that effective arrangements are in place for transition to Adult Services for care leavers, including there being strong working links between Children's Services, Adult Services, housing agencies and the voluntary sectorⁱⁱ. The revised Leaving Care guidance will include direct reference to <i>Future Positive</i>ⁱⁱⁱ, which includes best practice examples for effective planned transition between Children's and Adult Services.</p>	<p>Draft guidance due December 2009</p>	<p>DCSF</p>

Recommendation	Agreed action	Timescale	Led by
7. Support local authorities to improve EET outcomes for care leavers	Government Offices, with support from NCAS through regional networks and <i>From Care2Work</i> implementation, to agree how best to work with approximately 30 local areas to help develop action plans to improve education, employment and training outcomes for care leavers. Action planning process to be led by regional Care Matters leads with assistance from NCAS.	January to May 2010	GO West Midlands
8. Dissemination of good and promising practice	As well as working directly with a number of local areas (as per recommendation 7), practice examples and learning from this report and other sources will be widely disseminated by the Social Exclusion Task Force via a range of means.	From November 2009	SETF
9. Establish a clear evaluation role for young people to monitor progress on EET provision	Existing NCAS regional care leaver participation forums will be engaged and supported to look at whether the recommendations and learning in this report are resulting in improved EET support and outcomes for care leavers. An annual forum discussion on this issue will be organised with input from government. Feedback from young people will be prepared in time for the annual ministerial stocktake ² .	Annually from November 2010	NCAS
10. Clarify the corporate parent role in providing EET support for care leavers so they are clear on what provision should be made available	The revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance will strengthen and clarify the Personal Adviser role in providing EET support for care leavers. Also, revised guidance aimed specifically at young people will be issued by DCSF. This will include information on what type of EET support is available to care leavers from Personal Advisers and other professionals, particularly at key stages of transition; and the key steps young people need to take to lead them from current to future EET activities.	Revised Leaving Care regulations and guidance published for consultation in December 2009 Guidance for young people due in 2010	DCSF

² The White Paper, *Care Matters*, proposed that Ministers annually lead a national stocktake of the outcomes for children in care.

ANNEX B: LOCAL PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Housing as a foundation for EET

- Local Practice 1: Supported Lodging Scheme to support EET outcomes, Cornwall
- Local Practice 2: Accommodation Pathways Service to provide housing and EET activities, Birmingham

Delivering quality EET opportunities

- Local Practice 3: Local partnership and joint targets to reduce care leavers who are NEET, Sheffield
- Local Practice 4: Close working relationships with further and higher education support services, Devon
- Local Practice 5: Provide a range of quality employment opportunities, Sheffield
- Local Practice 6: Improved access to flexible courses, Derby

Workforce matters: skills and support

- Local Practice 7: Create a dedicated specialist EET worker, Derby
- Local Practice 8: Independence training for foster carers, Warwickshire
- Local Practice 9: Extend remit of Virtual Head to cover up to age 21, Salford
- Local Practice 10: Reduced delay in receiving benefits, Government Office for West Midlands and Jobcentre Plus

Effective Pathway Planning

- Local Practice 11: Finance and independence training for young people, Tower Hamlets, London
- Local Practice 12: e-mentoring to improve self-confidence, Confident Futures, North Lincolnshire
- Local Practice 13: Positive Pathway Planning, Bristol

Joint working at transition to strengthen EET outcomes



- Local Practice 14: Virtual School Parent Teachers Association: Corporate Parenting, Warwickshire
- Local Practice 15: Joint needs planning, Salford
- Local Practice 16: Strategy for transition to Adult Services, Cornwall


Embedding local learning: not reinventing the wheel

- Local Practice 17: Data gathering and outcome monitoring to inform service commissioning and evaluation, Bristol


Aim: Use accommodation placements to support education, employment and training outcomes		→	Barriers: Insufficient flexibility in housing options; No specific housing options for care leavers; No 'second chance'; Lack of floating support.
Local Practice 1: Supported Lodging Scheme to support EET outcomes, Cornwall			
Objective To provide a range of supported lodging placements for 16 – 18 year olds based on a contract of structured activities between the host and young person.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Settled accommodation at age 19 increased from 56% in 2005 to 96% in 2009.– EET outcomes increased from 29% in 2005 to 93% in 2009.– Reduction in homelessness post age 18.– 97% of Pathway Plans completed within timescales.– There are 42 young people currently in the scheme.		↓
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Landlords provide housing related support and a stable base. Personal Advisers conduct Pathway Planning process, while Connexions advise on NEET issues and aim to participate in 100% of Pathway Plans. Other agencies participate as required, including youth offending services, targeted youth support, drug and alcohol services.– Landlord receives £180 per week, funded by Social Care.– Recognise that some young people will make mistakes and there may be a need to provide more than one landlord.– Funding has been secured through convergence to provide a care leavers mentoring service for those who are difficult to get into education, employment and training.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Sufficient recruitment of landlords and flexibility of provision;– Clear Council policies about standards and expectations of providers;– Contracts with young people about expectations;– Supply of move on accommodation for when young people leave lodging aged 18 or 19.	Evaluation Independent evaluation in 2007 gathered the views of landlords and young people involved in the scheme. Findings included high levels of satisfaction amongst young people; training needs identified for landlords and formal independent living skills training is needed for young people.	←	Recommendation: Commission supported lodging or residential housing which is explicitly linked to EET activities
	Contact David Roose droose@cornwall.gov.uk		




Aim: Use Supporting People funding to improve stability and positive activities		➔	Barriers: Silo working; Lack of multi-agency co-ordination; Lack of evidence of what works.
Local Practice 2: Accommodation Pathways Service to provide housing and EET activities, Birmingham			
Objective To increase supply of supporting housing options and floating support in order to stabilise placements as foundation for sustainable EET engagement.	Outcomes – Increased Supporting People budget for care leavers from £200k to £900k approx. – St. Basils project has reduced youth homelessness.		
Summary – St Basils, a third sector organisation, was commissioned by Birmingham local authority in 2007 to deliver an Accommodation Pathways Service (APS) for young people leaving care. The objective was to improve planning and reduce the use of B&Bs, hostels and prevent homelessness. The process supports young people in finding the various types of accommodation available to meet their needs. APS advisers consider all partner agencies who provide accommodation for young people. – St. Basils’ Learning, Skills and Work Service (LSW) contributes to a number of local young people’s strategies, consulting with young people on their educational and employment aspirations. Courses offered include ‘Move-on’ and Life skills courses. – St Basils works in partnership with HIAH, a drug and alcohol service for young people. This is critical in providing professional bespoke drugs treatment services to young people in direct access accommodation. – 90% St. Basils’ clients sustain their subsequent tenancies for more than 12 months.			
Critical success factors – Tie housing to EET outcomes; – St Basils adviser co-located with the Leaving Care Service, helping to engage young people; – Job club is held at different St Basils projects on a weekly basis; – Devised an LSW customer journey map to ensure effective service; – Use the Every Child Matters framework to ensure relevant outcomes; – Close partnership with the local authority both strategically and operationally.	Evaluation Self-evaluation available on efficiency savings. Contacts Chris Bush, Birmingham chris.p.bush@birmingham.gov.uk Jean Templeton, St.Basil’s jean.templeton@stbasils.org.uk		

Aim: Prioritise NEET reduction as a local priority Local Practice 3: Local partnership and joint targets to reduce care leavers who are NEET, Sheffield			Barriers: Multiple barriers to accessing learning; Low skills levels; Low aspirations; Chaotic lifestyles; Economic downturn impact on opportunities.
Objective To reduce the number of young people who are NEET with particular emphasis on the vulnerable groups who are over represented in those who are NEET.	Outcome – Incremental year on year decrease in the number of NEETs.		
Summary – Sheffield’s NEET Action Plan is firmly embedded within its 14 -19 strategy. – The Economic Inclusion Task Group, which reports directly to the 14 -19 Board, has a wide ranging membership from the private, public and voluntary sector. It is chaired by Lifelong Learning & Skills (LLL&S) who secured NEET responsive funds. The Task Group analyses Connexions’ NEETs data on a regular basis by geographical area, vulnerable group, skills level and area of interest. Engagement and employability projects are then commissioned accordingly. Targets are set not only for the NEET cohort on a monthly basis but also for the vulnerable groups therein. – LLL&S hosts a post dedicated to brokering employability opportunities for care leavers within the council and elsewhere and sources funding opportunities as they arise. – All activity is procured, commissioned, contract managed and quality assured through LLL&S.			
Critical success factors – Leadership through Sheffield County Council has helped to build robust partnership arrangements. – Detailed data analysis available from Connexions Service. – Shared ownership of targets and understanding of issues. – Strong links with targeted Youth Support Services. – Trust amongst partnerships to deploy resources to identified and agreed local needs. – Support packages need to be commissioned to wrap around learning & training opportunities.	Evaluation Much of the work targeting the NEET cohort is funded through fragile sources, which hinders long-term planning and capacity building. Contact Dee Desgranges dee.desgranges@sheffield.gov.uk		Recommendation: Create local partnership focus and joint target to reduce care leavers who are NEET


Aim: Provide further and higher education support services		→	Barrier:
Local Practice 4: Close working relationships with further and higher education support services, Devon			Lack of data on care leavers.
Objective To improve the number of young people, including care leavers, in EET at age 19.	Outcomes – Better performance in a key performance indicator. – More young people in further and higher education. – Increased skill levels for care leavers and increase in their ability to obtain employment. – Greater stability of education placements for young people.		
Summary – Quarterly meetings of Leaving Care managers, Connexions, Virtual Head teacher, officer responsible for curriculum development 14-19 and the Learning and Skills Council. Tracked care leavers aged 16-19 to ensure efforts were focused on getting them into EET. – Closer working relationships between Leaving Care Teams, Connexions and colleagues in further education colleges. Currently looking at how young people placed by other local authorities in Devon can be monitored. – The group aims to look more closely at how young people can be supported in further education. A protocol has been established with each of the further education colleges in Devon which sets out the type of information that should be shared between the local authority and the colleges. – A recent Ofsted inspection commented favourably on the good working relationships between the Leaving Care service, Connexions, and the colleges, as well as noting the significant improvement in the number of young people in higher education.			
Critical success factors – Accurate data on care leavers. – Front line managers who know the young people and strategic leads working together helps to address problems creatively.	Evaluation N/A	←	Recommendation: Establish regular meetings with appropriate management representatives of EET partners to track and monitor care leaver progress and outcomes
	Contact Ian Stewart-Watson ian.stewart-watson@devon.gov.uk		


Aim: Provide positive employment opportunities Local Practice 5: Provide a range of quality employment opportunities, Sheffield		→	Barriers: Young people lack basic qualifications; Low aspirations; High drop out rates; Exclusion in the workplace.
Objectives To provide employment opportunities across the Council and with private companies. Develop the Corporate Parenting Agenda within and across the Council.	Outcomes – Apprenticeship placement programme established within Council Directorates. – Pre-employability training programme established. – Workplace experiences for young people in a supported and safe environment. – Integrated approach – no gaps in service provision. – Long-term employment and training opportunities.		
Summary – The Council has secured the offer of 40 apprenticeships across the Council as well as securing further pledges of practical support, help-lines and mentoring and befriending. – Created the post of an Economic Inclusion Officer and established a Leaving Care Team, which are responsible for brokering pre-employability training courses for care leavers. Care leavers are supported to access apprenticeships and work placements, and receive support whilst they are at work or are in training. – Children and Young People’s Directorate provide support (financial and emotional), care and supervision. Sheffield Homes Ltd provide safe and affordable accommodation and Kier Sheffield provide secure employment and training opportunities. – Monthly meetings attended by all agencies, employers and workers involved to review each young person. Resources provided to support extra disadvantage (e.g. Dyslexia) and mentoring training provided for employers and staff.			
Critical success factors – A flexible and shared vision for the project. – Sustained employment for successful trainees and flexible employer approach to employment and training. Placements underpinned with NVQ training. – Creation of a care leavers employment team with Connexions and across Directorates. – Worksite mentoring provided. Training for mentors and career development opportunities created for mentors. – Responding swiftly to unplanned crises as they arise to support the young person to maintain their accommodation and work placement. – Minimum salary levels above benefit rates agreed to ensure that young people were not penalised financially in taking part.	Evaluation N/A Contact Mark Barratt Mark.Barratt@sheffield.gov.uk		


Aim: Provide flexible education and training provision Local Practice 6: Improved access to flexible courses, Derby		➔	Barriers: Small cohort; Lack of flexible, specialist provision post-18.
Objective To provide access to more flexible further and higher education courses, with the appropriate levels of entry and support available.	Outcomes – High take up of Alexis access course by care leavers; – Teachers/tutors more aware of care leavers’ needs.		
Summary – Derby’s <i>Aspire</i> aftercare team have always found it difficult to place certain groups of care leavers because of behavioural issues, learning disabilities, lack of formal qualifications or because they missed the September start date. – Derby University’s Alexis access course provides full time study including basic skills that can be used as a springboard to higher qualifications. – The team are now working to improve access to apprenticeships in the Council and with local employers. – Have successfully placed young people in various specialist courses: Prince’s Trust, YMCA independence training, E2E, voluntary work to build confidence and give them something to do until full-time opportunities are secured.			
Critical success factors – Specialist EET worker to broker relationships. – Named single point of contact in further and higher education who has a working knowledge of care leavers issues. – Ensuring financial package in place to make up for benefits.	Evaluation N/A	➔	Recommendation: Work with further and higher education institutes to make courses more flexible and available after age 18
	Contact Beverly Fearn Beverley.fearn@derby.gov.uk		


Aim: Provide quality education, employment and training (EET) information, advice and guidance			Barriers:
Local Practice 7: Create a dedicated specialist EET worker, Derby			Complexity of local EET provision; Complexity of benefit system.
Objective To give care leavers the best quality of advice and guidance about their career and existing EET opportunities.	Outcomes – Helped increase EET outcomes at age 19 from 71% to 96% in five years. – Improved range of options for those most at risk of NEET. – Named contact at University.		
Summary – Derby's <i>Aspire</i> aftercare team nominated an experienced Personal Adviser in 2001 to deal with all EET requests from young people. – Individual relationships were developed with schools, colleges and in particular Derby University where there is now a named contact; student support is available at all the further education campuses. – Work begins with each person around age 17, before they transfer to <i>Aspire</i> at age 18, feeding into the Pathway Plan reviews. The Personal Adviser often attends Jobcentre Plus and EET interviews. – Full costs are paid for by Connexions who receive monthly reports on progress for all care leavers. – <i>Aspire</i> runs a homework club in their open plan office where young people can drop in without an appointment to use computers, read job-ads and discuss their options with Personal Advisers.			
Critical success factors – Personal Adviser developed specialist benefits knowledge. – Personalised approach to motivate young people. – Continuity of service due to EET specialist. – Financial support package available for further and higher education. – Training resulting in a qualification e.g. NVQ3 Health and Social Care.	Evaluation Dedicated EET worker for care leavers improves EET outcomes. Care leavers benefit from the continuity and personalised support offered. Contact Beverley Fearn Beverley.fearn@derby.gov.uk		


Aim: Improve skills of foster carers Local Practice 8: Independence training for foster carers, Warwickshire		→	Barriers: Carers lack of aspiration for young people; Carers not responsible for Pathway Planning; Carers have limited knowledge of EET options; Carers have weak links to Leaving Care services.
Objective To devise and implement a new training course specifically for foster carers of 13-15 year olds to provide the skills to support transition from care.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Carers understand key issues around successfully fostering young people at age 18 and beyond.– Carers understand how to prepare young people for supported independence.– Carers understand latest research findings on improving the outcomes for young people.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The course explores factors that help and hinder transitions to independent living, including looking at ways of working, using training experience and exercises with young people.– The course also helps foster carers to understand Pathway Planning and how to improve engagement with young people.– Costs approximately £1,000 for this two day course. Additional costs will be around £500 for revisions to course material, which includes information on the Staying Put and Right 2be Cared4 pilots as Warwickshire are piloting these schemes.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– As with all foster carer training, it is vital that relevant carers are prioritised and given the support to attend.– All training courses have at least two spaces for social work staff to attend. It is crucial for staff to take up these places to ensure they have a good working knowledge of training offered to carers. This helps them signpost relevant training to carers. It is vital that they are supported by their managers to attend.– Adequate budgets need to be in place to support carers to attend this course.	Evaluation <p>After each course trainers get copies of all evaluations completed by attendees and agree any changes with Warwickshire County Council prior to the next course.</p> <p>The following play an active role in the success of this training event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Foster carers– Fostering social workers– Leaving Care Teams– Staying Put workers– Young people Contact <p>Brenda Vincent brendavincent@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>	←	Recommendation: Provide specific training for foster carers to improve quality of transition for care leavers




Aim: Extend remit of Virtual Head Local Practice 9: Extend remit of Virtual Head to cover up to age 21, Salford		→	Barriers: Large number of schools and colleges to co-ordinate; Out of authority placements.
Objective Salford extended the Virtual Head's remit to include young people up to age 21 to cover those who had left care and were in college or university.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Single point of contact.– Improved educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.– Developed relationships with further and higher education providers.– Promoted and supported the additional needs of looked after children (LAC) and care leavers.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– As part of the national pilot programme of Virtual Heads responsible for education outcomes for all looked after children, Salford employed a Virtual Head. Permanent funding for the post has now been agreed.– During the pilot, it became clear that the role should be extended past school leaving age to include further and higher education. The Virtual Head now covers all care leavers up to age 21 as it was recognised that young people needed ongoing support, particularly utilising college mentors and support staff, as well as moving on from education into employment.– The pilot also highlighted the huge number of different schools attended by looked after children, both across the city and outside, particularly for out of authority placements. It underlined the role of the designated teacher for LAC and the need for meaningful and personal education plans.– The Virtual Head also pursued a corporate employability scheme proposal for LAC and care leavers.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Drew on expertise from <i>Aim Higher</i>.– The Virtual Head was able to call upon other council officers and colleagues in education and the Primary Care Trust and accommodation providers, to grasp the concept of 'corporate parenting'. These partners offered support in critical areas to ensure that the young person's chances of success in education and employment were maximised.– The Virtual Head worked alongside further education colleges to identify alternative curriculum delivery for those in year 11 in real danger of permanent exclusion.	Evaluation <p>The pilot demonstrated the need for creative and innovative practice in maintaining some LAC and young people in mainstream school, particularly when their attendance, behaviour or additional needs challenged the school environment.</p> Contact <p>Michael Kelly michael.kelly@salford.gov.uk</p>		


Aim: Improve access to benefits Local Practice 10: Reduced delay in receiving benefits, Government Office for West Midlands and Jobcentre Plus		→	Barriers: Different geographical boundaries for local delivery agencies; Difficult to get all Jobcentre Plus offices to sign up; Personal Advisers not happy checking official forms.
Objective Improve process for care leavers to apply for benefits prior to their 18th birthday and establish a named contact in Jobcentre Plus.	Outcomes – 95% of benefit claims now processed by 18th birthday. – Engagement by young people in other services offered by Jobcentre Plus. – Closer partnership between Leaving Care Team and Jobcentre Plus.		
Summary – Government Office for West Midlands and the Jobcentre Plus district for the Black Country (through the Benefit Delivery Centre) agreed a protocol that would enable care leavers who were likely to claim benefits to do paper based claims two weeks prior to their 18th birthday. – The Personal Adviser rings the named contact at the appropriate office for the appropriate benefit to arrange for a claim form to be issued. – Due to the small numbers, Jobcentre Plus report that this has added almost no additional burden on their advisors responsible for 16/17 year olds. – Has led to a considerable decrease in the time Personal Advisers spend helping young people to reapply for benefits and subsistence costs paid for by the local authority.			
Critical success factors – Training for Personal Advisers – ensuring greater awareness of benefit process. – Protocol agreed and clear roles and tasks allocated to partners. – Building relationship with Jobcentre Plus advisors responsible for 16/17 year olds as single point of contact. – Paper based benefits applications made the norm.	Evaluation Evaluation due in 2010 by Government Office for West Midlands Contacts Mandy Smith, GOWM Mandy.smith@gowm.gsi.gov.uk Gerry Murphy, DWP: gerard.murphy@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk		


Aim: Provide financial and other independence skills support Local Practice 11: Finance and independence training for young people, Tower Hamlets, London		→	Barriers: Schools do not provide independence training; Lack of soft skills and financial knowledge.
Objective To provide a guide to the range of financial support available to care leavers, including incentives and grants, to ensure young people are ready to take on the responsibility of a permanent tenancy.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Improved educational outcomes.– Reduction of numbers not in education, employment or training (NEET).– Improved tenancy maintenance.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Care leavers are a priority target group for the positive action for young people borough wide agenda, which is monitored through the Integrated Youth Support Partnership Board.– Partnership working with Connexions, aiding young people to increase their learning potential by improving key skills such as confidence and motivation.– Leaving Care service provide reward grants for young people who have passed exams, completed courses and training, and for those who have not reached any formal attainment, recognising and celebrating young people’s ability to adapt and change.– Ensuring that young people have developed and have had their independent living skills assessed rigorously before they have had the ability to access permanent accommodation.– Partnership with Supporting People team who have provided dedicated bedspaces for young people.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fully utilised bedspace provision.– Very good levels of tenancy sustainment.– 43 dedicated Leaving Care Supporting People funded bedspaces.– NEET reduction worker.– Dedicated educational resource.	Evaluation Success is measured by feedback through service user consultation and young person representation on Leaving Care Steering Group.	←	Recommendation: Set out clear advice on financial support available and provide specialist independence training for care leavers
	Contacts Kevin McAndrew Kevin.Mcandrew@towerhamlets.gov.uk Jo Bird jo.bird@towerhamlets.gov.uk		


Aim: Improve care leavers' self-confidence and self-esteem		➔	Barriers:
Local Practice 12: E-mentoring to improve self-confidence, Confident Futures, North Lincolnshire			Lack of continuity in the lives of care leavers.
Objective	Outcomes		
To provide sustained, personal and focused support via an online mentor.	Anecdotal evidence of positive impact on users: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Project used as an outlet for young people's concerns and issues.– Can increase communication between users and Children's Services.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– North Lincolnshire recruited young people in care and care leavers and matched them with an e-mentor in partnership with The Brightside Trust.– Both mentors and mentees are trained on how to use the site and on the boundaries of the mentoring relationship. The website includes online secure conversations, a comprehensive resource library and mentee coaching activities.– Mentors support young people in care and care leavers through a variety of situations such as applying for jobs, starting out on their own (independent living), and participating in further education courses. A small number of care leavers are also being supported through higher education courses.– Mentors act as a consistent support for beneficiaries. Mentees tend to use the service sporadically at times of particular need, they often distance themselves and then return when they have an issue to address.– Other local authorities involved in the pilot include Norfolk and Hillingdon.			
Critical success factors	Evaluation	➔	Recommendation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– A designated member of staff must be available to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit young people;• Train users with support from Brightside;• Oversee correspondence.– Consistent support from mentors is invaluable, even when mentees use their e-mentor in an on-off way.	External evaluation in January 2010.		
	Contact Suzanne Maskrey suzanne.maskrey@thebrightsidetrust.org www.confidentfutures.org		Set up e-mentoring support for care leavers

Aim: Positive Pathway Planning Local Practice 13: Positive Pathway Planning, Bristol		→	Barriers: Some young people do not engage with Pathway Planning; Plans are not sufficiently long-term; High caseloads reduce time spent on Pathway Planning.
Objective For Personal Advisers to develop positive relations with care leavers and get them actively involved in Pathway Planning.	Outcomes – Engagement with key worker where previously difficult. – Young person has plan for now and future. – Young person knows own strengths and areas for development. – Reduced crime.		
Summary – Personal Adviser supports young person through transition into adulthood and builds relationship with young person so they will engage with Pathway Planning process, encourages them to own Pathway Plan and take responsibility, and sets realistic goals with small measurable steps with young person. – The Personal Adviser explores a variety of options with young person and introduces them to new experiences to raise aspirations. They ensure that the young person does not give up if something is not working, are creative and provide more than one chance. – The Personal Adviser introduces the young person to community resources to enable them to access these in future and increases their self-esteem and confidence.			
Critical success factors – Good open and honest working relationship between young person and Personal Adviser. – Regular reviews to maintain focus and recognise achievements. – Strong links with voluntary and community resources. – Young people need to have ownership in order to engage with services.	Evaluation N/A Contact Joan Icton joan.iceton@bristol.gov.uk		

Aim: Increase local authority ownership of corporate parenting role			Barriers: Multiple agencies and boards with overlapping mandates; Care leavers are a fluctuating priority with senior officers and members.
Local Practice 14: Virtual School Parent Teachers Association: Corporate Parenting, Warwickshire			
Objectives To build ownership amongst all local authority staff and elected members so they recognise their role as corporate parents. Create opportunities for those leaving care to be part of the 'family firm' through apprenticeships and other work experience opportunities generated by the local authority.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Improved education achievement and positive destinations at year 11.– Increased numbers of young people leaving care pursuing careers in the public sector.– Every Looked After Child from year 6 is offered a mentor to support them through their educational career.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The Tiffin Club members include: Children Services, Learning and Skills Council, Connexions, Human Resources, Environment & Economy, Virtual School, Leaving Care Forum and Children in Care Council. They meet to discuss how, as a corporate parent, they can enhance the chances of looked after children and add value to what is already happening.– The Tiffin Club has now emerged into the more formal Virtual School Parent Teachers Association. There is a commitment from the Strategic Directors Leadership Team of the local authority for staff to be members of the PTA.– The cost of the project so far has been 'in kind' voluntary hours from staff. Having recruited the first set of mentors and developed the work experience and apprenticeships, Warwickshire are about to employ a part-time post that will cost about £20,000 a year. This post will exist under the Virtual Head who has been appointed on a permanent basis following the successful pilot.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Early support through mentoring; priority given to work experience; and eventual goal of an apprenticeship.– Corporate parenting as a long-term objective means staff and elected members in the local authority must know their children. The Virtual School PTA offers that opportunity to build relationships through the mentoring, work experience and apprenticeships.– Involving young people at every stage is critical – they are the ones living the experience and know what they need as well as what they may want.– The link to the Virtual School is vital if you have one.	Evaluation N/A Contact Hugh Disley hughdisley@warwickshire.gov.uk		

Aim: Increase joint needs planning Local Practice 15: Joint needs planning, Salford		→	Barriers: Complex needs means potentially high cost; High threshold for Adult Services; Multiple agencies and professionals involved.
Objective To undertake a joint needs assessment for those about to leave care with particularly high support needs.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Young person living in an out of authority placement given better planned EET outcome and move-on accommodation and a return to accommodation within their home local authority.– Reduction in placement costs.– Better able to meet young person's overall needs, working alongside Adult Services, Primary Care Trust (PCT) and EET providers in home local authority.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– A young person with particularly high needs was placed in an outer borough. A referral was made to Adult Services when the individual reached age 16 to request a joint needs assessment from the Adult Learning Disability services and Mental Health services to plan his exit to suitable housing.– The young person clearly stated that he wanted to remain in the outer borough area as he was familiar with routines, college etc. The Leaving Care service explored all options in his area of choice and he visited several projects but found none suitable.– The Leaving Care worker assessed that the most appropriate supported accommodation available was actually in Salford but the young person was still anxious about a return to his home city.– A joint needs assessment took place one month before his 18th birthday and concluded that the young person's housing and support needs could not be met in the authority in which he was placed, due to his particular needs. It concluded that the young person's housing and support needs could be met within Salford, in specific Supporting People funded provision, and that their future educational needs could also be met in a local college in Salford. Adult Services agreed to work alongside the Leaving Care Team in a consultancy role to ensure a successful return to Salford. The young person is now back in Salford and learning to cope with a greater degree of independence.– Outside placement cost £5,000 per week. New placement costs were met in full by Supporting People funding as the young person had turned 18; total weekly cost was £650.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Establishing trust between partners.– Clear assessment of need, with agreed roles and responsibilities of all agencies during and after assessment.– Creation of 'virtual team' of mental health and learning disability workers.	Evaluation N/A Contact Michael Kelly michael.kelly@salford.gov.uk		

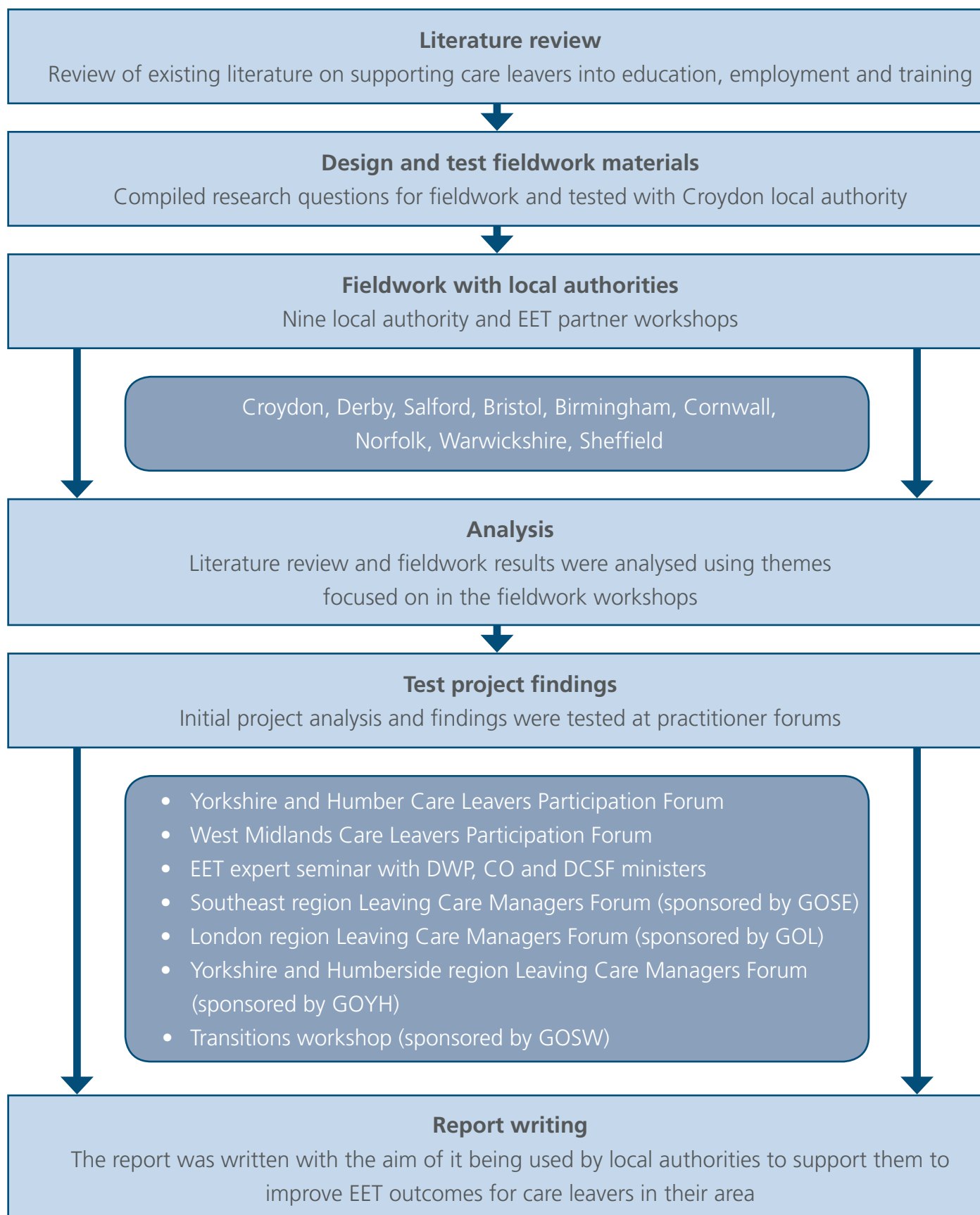
Aim: Improve transition to Adult Services Local Practice 16: Strategy for transition to Adult Services, Cornwall		→	Barriers: Services not joining up for care leavers with multiple needs; High threshold for accessing services; Out of authority placements; Lack of floating support.
Objective To improve the quality of transition between Children’s and Adult Services, helping to sustaining education, employment and training activities.	Outcomes – Better EET and health outcomes for young people with learning disabilities or difficulties and other vulnerabilities. – Structured planning from age 16 with regard to transition to Adult Services.		
Summary – Adult and Children’s Social Care appointed transitions workers to help the process. Transitions workers bring together Adult Social Care, Leaving Care workers and Children’s social workers to ensure smooth planning into adulthood. – Pathway Planning process has clarity due to transitions protocol. Transitions operational group and management group to ensure protocol is enforced. – Connexions have a critical role in ensuring education, employment and training provision. – Transitions workers are jointly funded by Adult and Children’s Services.			
Critical success factors – Multi-agency process includes: PCT, Children’s and Adult Services. – Pooled or shared budget. – Specialist training for Personal Advisers. – Close tracking of cases from age 14 through to 24. – Ensure different service plans focus on the same outcomes. – Connexions are essential partners.	Evaluation – Clear Pathway Planning ensures good quality service planning. Contact David Roose droose@cornwall.gov.uk		

Aim: Improve data gathering Local Practice 17: Data gathering and outcome monitoring to inform service commissioning and evaluation, Bristol		→	Barriers: National indicator is a narrow measure; Databases are not compatible.
Objective To use careful monitoring of outcomes at age 19 but also at age 16 to anticipate and jointly plan for demand for specialist services.	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Tracking of distance travelled.– Specialist EET and housing placements commissioned.– Those at risk of NEET at age 13-15 identified.– Information shared and gathered by partners in same database.		
Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Connexions Personal Adviser is attached to the Care and After Team, to share information, identify and track young people at risk of NEET and to support, encourage and maintain young people’s aspirations.– Joint work with ECLAS (Education Children Looked After Service), Connexions Personal Adviser and Care and After Team as young person makes transition from school to college. Referral to engagement worker for young people at risk of withdrawing.– Teacher employed in Care and After Team provides individual tuition and support for young people who have missed education; support with college and university applications; and links with local colleges and universities.– Designated tutor for care leavers at City of Bristol College. Use of <i>Positive Activities for Young People</i> funding to broaden young person’s aspirations, e.g. trips to Tate Gallery, theatres.– National Benchmarking Forum is gathering inter-year data and EET figures at age 20 and 21 to provide more complete picture.			
Critical success factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Reduce the number of databases tracking young people and ensure they can exchange information.– Commit to sharing agreed, defined data with partners regularly.– Partnership working is vital to ensure that all young people are included.	Evaluation N/A Contact Joan Iceton joan.iceton@bristol.gov.uk	←	Recommendations: Gather quarterly and other data to monitor progress and use to commission services Develop information sharing protocol with other services

ANNEX C: USEFUL RESOURCES FOR SUPPORTING CARE LEAVERS INTO EET

- Cabinet Office, Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and National Care Advisory Service (NCAS), 2009, From Care2Work: creating opportunities and raising aspirations:
<http://www.leavingcare.org/professionals/whoarewe/projects/fromcare2work>
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), 2009, Quality Matters in Children's Services: Messages from Research
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/research/keyresearch/qualitymattersincls/qualitymatters/>
- Ofsted, 2009, Support for Care Leavers:
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Support-for-care-leavers>
- National Care Advisory Service (NCAS), 2005 – 2007, What Makes The Difference theme information:
http://www.leavingcare.org/professionals/products/theme_evaluations
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Educational Achievement of Looked After Children:
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/childrenincare/educationalachievement/educationalachievement/>
- Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2006, Future Positive: A resource guide for people working with disabled care leavers:
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/download/?id=289>
- National Care Advisory Service (NCAS), National Standards in Leaving Care:
http://www.leavingcare.org/professionals/national_standards_in_leaving_care/
- Department of Health, 2007, Who Pays? Establishing the responsible commissioner:
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_078466
- Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2004, Who does what: How social workers and carers can support the education of children in care:
<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/LACWDW.pdf.pdf>
- Department of Health, 2009, Consultation on ordinary residence guidance, directions and cross-border arrangements:
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_098421

ANNEX D: PROJECT METHODOLOGY



ANNEX E: REFERENCES

- i Social Exclusion Task Force, 2007, Socially Excluded Adults Public Service Agreement (PSA 16):
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/psa.aspx
- ii Cabinet Office, Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and National Care Advisory Service (NCAS), 2009, From Care2Work: creating opportunities and raising aspirations:
<http://www.leavingcare.org/professionals/whoarewe/projects/fromcare2work>
- iii Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
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