

Working together

Connexions and Social Services

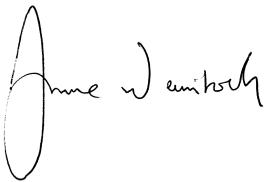
Foreword

Connexions will build a modern, multi-disciplinary service to help all young people reach their full potential and make a successful transition to adult life. We believe young people should get whatever help they need to do so, in the most straightforward, cohesive way possible. The vision is an ambitious one, but it is what young people have told us they want and need. There is recognition at the national level that the success of Connexions is vital to all Government Departments in their aims to help young people. This applies equally at local level, where we will only achieve our shared vision for young people by working closely together. This is why it is vital that everyone involved in delivering young people's services gets involved with their Connexions Partnership.

The Connexions Service National Unit and the Department of Health have worked with colleagues across Government, Connexions Partnerships and frontline agencies to produce this document. It is one of four sets of guidelines about joint working aimed at Connexions Partnerships and the range of agencies supporting young people. These publications focus on integrating support for some of the most vulnerable young people that Connexions will work with, homeless young people, teenage parents, young offenders and young people supported by Social Services to ensure that young people receive the support they need. To achieve their mutual aim of ensuring the young people they are in contact with receive the best support, it is essential that Connexions and Social Services work closely together, providing services through a single point of contact so a young person does not have to search around for help.

This is not a prescriptive blueprint for the delivery of Connexions. It is intended as a tool for agencies to use in planning together how the Connexions Service can be delivered most effectively in their region. The messages are based on what we have learnt from Connexions Pilots and the early work of the Connexions Partnerships that came into operation in April 2001. We have only just started and we are learning more all the time and will develop the guidance as the Service develops. To make it as helpful as possible, we need to hear back from you what you think, both about the usefulness of the guidance and your experience of the support Connexions provides.

Most importantly of all, we need you to get involved, and help Connexions become a service that ensures the best start in life for every young person.



Anne Weinstock
Chief Executive,
Connexions Service National Unit



Denise Platt
Chief Inspector,
Social Services Inspectorate Director for
Children, Older People & Social Care Services

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1. Aim of the Guidance

This publication outlines the remits of both the Connexions Service and Social Services and sets out the principles that should underpin joint working. Joint working is essential in developing and delivering an integrated support service for young people, and this guidance suggests models for how this might work in a range of circumstances. These are not prescriptive, but are intended as a tool to help Connexions Partnerships and Social Services consider how they might deliver the best service to young people in the light of local circumstances. Some of the early Connexions Pilots and Partnerships have been looking at these issues and their learning and experiences are reflected in the guidance. However, we will be revising this guidance as the Connexions Service develops.

2. What is the Connexions Service?

2.1 Introduction

The Connexions Service has been established in order to provide integrated information, advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for all 13 –19 year olds in England. It aims to help young people engage in learning, achieve their full potential and make a smooth transition to adult life. This will be achieved by bringing together a wide range of existing agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The support offered to young people will vary according to their needs, but will aim to respond to early signs of social exclusion and prevent escalation of adverse circumstances.

Connexions Partnerships share boundaries with the 47 local Learning and Skills Councils, and will be responsible for planning the new service while delivery will be organised by local management committees. Both the Connexions Partnerships and the local management committees are multi-agency bodies comprising a range of partners, such as LEAs, careers services, Yots, Social Services departments, health bodies and voluntary sector agencies. Together, these will develop a cross-cutting strategy to address the identified needs of 13 – 19 year olds. By developing the service across organisational boundaries, Connexions will help to develop consistency in the support young people receive, based on a shared understanding of their needs, and will help to strengthen the links between agencies.

2.2 The Connexions Key Principles

- **Raising aspirations** – setting high expectations of every individual
- **Meeting individual need** – and overcoming barriers to learning
- **Taking account of the views of young people** – individually and collectively
- **Inclusion** – keeping young people in mainstream education and training and preventing them moving to the margins of their community
- **Partnership** – agencies collaborating to achieve more for young people, parents and communities than agencies working in isolation
- **Community involvement and neighbourhood renewal** – through involvement of community mentors and through personal advisers brokering access to local welfare, health, arts, sport and guidance networks
- **Extending opportunity and equality of opportunity** – raising participation and achievement levels for all young people, influencing the availability, suitability and quality of provision and raising awareness of opportunities
- **Evidence based practice** – ensuring that new interventions are based on rigorous research and evaluation into what works

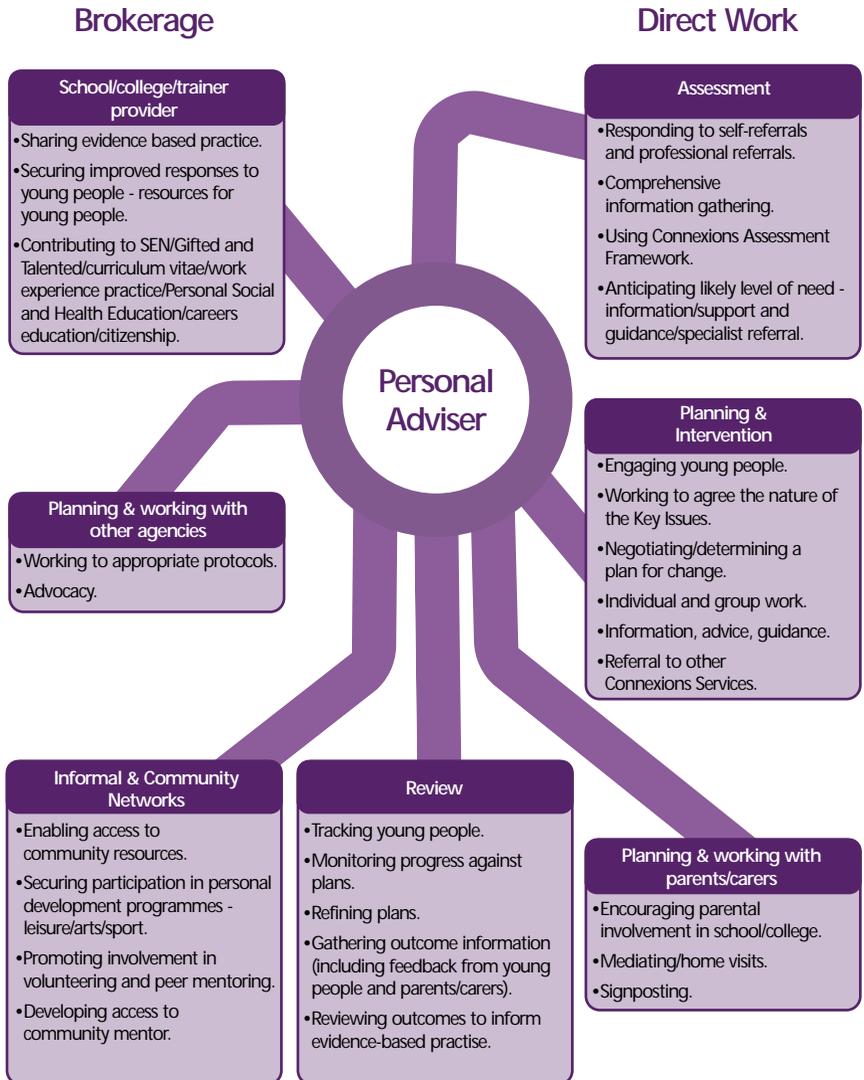
2.3 The role of the Connexions personal adviser

The Connexions personal adviser will be central to the Connexions Service. All young people will have access to a personal adviser whose aim will be to ensure that the needs of individual young people are met so that they are able and motivated to engage in education, training and work opportunities to achieve their full potential. The exact role the personal adviser fulfils for each young person will depend on the support that the young person requires. However, the personal adviser's role may include any or all of the following elements (also see the diagram overleaf):

- Engaging with young people to identify and address their needs, offering information, advice and guidance on learning and career options and personal development opportunities, with a view to raising the aspirations of each young person
- Utilising and supporting education and training institutions and employees in meeting the needs of young people.
- Working with a network of voluntary, statutory and community agencies, and commercial bodies to ensure a coherent approach to support for the young person
- Working with parents, carers and families to support young people
- Managing information effectively to facilitate the process of meeting the needs of young people
- Reviewing and reflecting upon their own professional practice to achieve continuous improvement

The work of the Connexions personal adviser can be split into direct work with young people and brokerage of services. The balance between direct work and brokerage will depend on both the skills and knowledge of the personal adviser and the needs of the particular young person.

The role and functions of the personal adviser



2.4 What Connexions will offer young people

Every young person aged 13 – 19 can expect help from the service with the aim of ensuring a smooth transition to adulthood to help them reach their full potential, delivered primarily through a personal adviser. The service will be fully inclusive but differentiated according to the varying needs of young people, and will take account of how these needs may change over time.

There will be three broad levels of service according to young people's need:

**INTENSIVE SUSTAINED SUPPORT
FOR THOSE WITH MULTIPLE PROBLEMS**

**IN-DEPTH GUIDANCE AND HELP
FOR THOSE AT RISK OF DISENGAGING**

**INFORMATION, ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND REVIEW OF
CAREER/LEARNING/EMPLOYMENT/PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT CHOICES**

Broad levels of personal adviser intervention

1. All young people will receive information, advice and guidance on careers, learning, personal development and other issues and opportunities.
2. Young people at risk of disengaging from learning will receive more in-depth one-to-one support based on a full assessment of their needs. The personal adviser will develop an action plan with the young person to address the underlying factors, such as problems at home and school, and ensure their continued engagement in learning.
3. For those facing multiple problems, for example, drug, mental health or housing problems, the role of the personal adviser will be to broker access to specialist support as necessary and ensure a co-ordinated approach to supporting the young person across agencies so that the young person receives the more intensive support they need.

Personal advisers may be directly employed by the Connexions Service, seconded to the service, or remain within their existing professional context, working under a Partnership Agreement with the Connexions Service. A Connexions personal adviser will be identified for each young person taking into account the views of the young person and the skills and background the Adviser will require to best address the young person's needs and circumstances.

Connexions Partnerships have particular responsibilities in the area of assessment and planning for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which includes special education needs (SEN). These responsibilities will be discharged through the personal adviser. For young people with statements of special educational needs, the Connexions personal adviser will have an important role in the development and implementation of Transition Plans governed by the SEN Code of Practice. The Connexions Service will also be required to arrange assessment for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the last year of compulsory schooling who intend to continue learning. To build on this, the Connexions Service will, in partnership with local agencies, continue to support this group of young people up to their 25th birthday if they are not ready to access the adult services provided locally. Full guidance on Connexions and young people with learning disabilities can be found on the Connexions website at www.connexions.gov.uk

2.5 Access to the Connexions Service

The Connexions Service will have a strong base in schools and further education colleges. However, the Connexions Service must be available to every young person, including those who are not in education, employment or training. To address this, the Connexions Service will have outreach and drop-in centres, and work closely with other agencies, including Social Services, the Benefits Agency, Employment Service and Housing Office and youth and voluntary groups, both to deliver the Connexions Service and to promote its benefits to this group of young people.

Access to the service will be by a variety of routes:

- Self-referral – for example in school or college, at or Connexions centres, via training providers, through the Youth Service and other informal settings, over the phone or in time over the web.
- Parental or carer referral – parents or carers may well make the initial contact with Connexions, having been informed about the service by the school or college or by publicity.
- Professional referral – either, referral where a young person is in formal or informal learning, and where the school / college / training provider / youth worker will have to make a judgement about who is referred to Connexions;
or
referral where a young person is not in learning. Such a young person should always be considered a priority client and may be referred by any agency which is in contact with the young person (including health services, Yots etc).

3. Social Services

3.1 An overview

Social Services provide a range of care and support for adults, children and families, including: older people; people with physical or learning disabilities; people with sensory impairments; people with mental health or substance misuse problems; families where children are assessed as being in need, including disabled children; children who may be suffering 'significant harm'; children who require looking after by the local authority; through fostering or residential care; and children who are placed for adoption. Because of their powers, duties and responsibilities in relation to children, Social Services departments act as the principal point of contact for children in need who require the provision of services. Government guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (see Annex 2 for how to obtain copies of this and other useful publications). This guidance should be followed for all children about whom there are child welfare concerns. *The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* should be followed for all assessment of children in need, including those requiring protection (see Annex 2 for further details).

3.2 Statutory responsibilities

Social Services' responsibilities towards children should be seen in the context of the broad range of social care and support available, so that children and families can be helped and supported in an integrated way which recognises the range and diversity of their needs and strengths.

a) **Children Act 1989**

Local authority social service departments have specific legal duties in respect of children under the Children Act 1989;

- to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need;
- and – provided that this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare – to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing services appropriate to the child's needs;
- to make enquiries if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child in their area is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

b) **Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000**

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 places new responsibilities on local authorities with Social Services responsibilities, to provide greater support to young people living in and leaving care, including:

- A duty to assess and meet the needs of young people aged 16 and 17 who qualify for the new arrangements.
- The provision of a personal adviser and pathway plan for all young people aged 16 – 21, or beyond for those who qualify for the new arrangements.
- A duty to assist those leaving care, including with employment, education and training. The duty to assist with education and training and to provide a personal adviser and pathway plan continues for as long as a young person remains in an agreed programme, even beyond the age of 21.

The Act will be implemented from October 2001. Quality Protects funding was made available to local authorities for preparation from April 2001. Young people leaving care have specific needs, and therefore require particular support.

Guidance on the Children Leaving Care Act is available on the Department of Health web site at:

http://www.doh.gov.uk/qualityprotects/work_pro/project_5.htm

It sets out in detail the role of the Young Person's Adviser and the new legislative framework.

3.3 Roles and responsibilities:

a) Young Person's Adviser

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 requires the responsible authority to arrange for each "eligible", and "relevant", child to have a personal adviser and to continue the appointment for "former relevant" children (see Annex 2 for definitions of these terms). The appointment of a personal adviser to these young people is therefore a statutory requirement. This emphasises the importance of the role and reflects the belief that young people living in and leaving care should be able to identify someone as committed to their well being and development on a long term basis. The local authority can either provide these services themselves or subcontract them, for example, to a voluntary organisation or to Connexions. The functions of a Young Person's Adviser are:

- To provide advice (including practical advice) and support.
- To participate in the assessment and preparation of the pathway plan (this does not apply to former relevant children).
- To participate in reviews of the pathway plan.
- To liaise with the responsible authority in the implementation of the pathway plan.
- To co-ordinate the provision of services and to take reasonable steps to ensure that the young person makes use of such services.
- To keep informed about the child's progress and wellbeing.
- To keep written records of contact with the child.

As the role of the Young Person's Adviser appointed by the local authority for the purposes of the Children (Leaving Care) Act will be very similar to that of the Connexions personal adviser, it is expected that the Young Person's Adviser will normally also act as the young person's Connexions personal adviser. Further details on this are provided later in the guidance in section 6.3.

b) Social worker with Children and Families

The local authority, through its staff, has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area.

Role in safeguarding children:

The social worker has lead responsibility, on behalf of Social Services, for undertaking an assessment of the child's needs and the parents' capacity to respond appropriately to the child's identified needs within their wider family and environment. The assessment will address the following questions:

- What are the needs of the child?
- Are the parents able to respond appropriately to the child's needs?
- Is the child being adequately safeguarded from significant harm, and are the parents able to promote the child's health and development?
- What action is required to safeguard and promote the child's welfare?

In the great majority of cases, children are safeguarded while remaining at home by Social Services working with their parents, family members and other significant adults in the child's life to make the child safe, and to promote his or her development within the family setting.

Where it is agreed at a child protection conference that a child is at continuing risk of significant harm, the child's name will be placed on a child protection register. Social Services are then responsible for co-ordinating an inter-agency plan to safeguard the child, which sets out and draws upon the contribution of family members, professionals and other agencies. In a few cases, the Social Services department, in consultation with other agencies and professionals, may judge that a child's welfare cannot be adequately safeguarded if he or she remains at home. In these circumstances, the Social Services department may apply to the courts for a Care Order, which commits the child to the care of the local authority. Where the child is thought to be in immediate danger the Social Services may apply to the courts for an Emergency Protection Order, which enables the child to be placed under the protection of the local authority for a maximum of eight days.

Role for disabled children:

As part of its wider role to promote the welfare of children in need, Social Services Departments (SSDs) have specific duties in respect of disabled children and their families. SSDs have to provide a range of services to families with disabled children to minimise the impact of any disabilities and enable them to live as normal a life as possible. Typically departments will provide short term breaks in foster families or residential units, support services in the home and, increasingly, assistance for disabled children to participate in out of school and leisure activities in the community alongside their non-disabled peers.

Role for looked after children:

Where the local authority looks after a child following the imposition of a Care Order, or accommodates a child with the agreement of their parents, it is the role of the social worker to ensure that adequate arrangements are made for the child's care and that a plan is made, **in partnership with the child, their parents and other agencies**, so that the child's future is secure. Children may be looked after in a number of settings, e.g. children's homes, foster care or with prospective adoptive parents. Irrespective of the setting in which children are accommodated, all looked after children will have a social worker and may have carers such as residential social workers or other care staff, foster carers, prospective adoptive parents etc., who should be involved in making plans or decisions about the young person.

4. Funding and Resources

4.1 Connexions Service

The Connexions Service is funded from 3 sources:

- National grant from the Connexions Service National Unit. This includes the current Careers Service and New Start budgets, and the additional funding which has been made available in the Spending Review 2000. This amounts to £320m in 2001-02 and £420m in 02-03.
- Existing resources that are devoted to youth support and guidance activities at local level. For example, we expect Connexions Partnerships to bring together relevant aspects of the work of Local Authority Youth Services, Education Welfare Services, Youth Offending Teams and Quality Protects (particularly services to care leavers). We expect their business plans to set out the contribution that each can make to delivery. Funding for these services will therefore form part of the overall resources that are available at a local level. Partners are not necessarily expected to transfer staff or money to the Connexions Partnership, unless they agree that it would be helpful to do so. Rather, they are asked to identify the work that they do that will also help to deliver the goals of the Connexions Service, and to make sure that this is co-ordinated effectively to ensure that young people receive a seamless service; and
- Regional European Social Fund money.

4.2 Social Services Funding

Local government will spend about £13bn (gross) this year (2001/02) on Social Services. Of this, the Government has made available some £8bn in revenue support grant, targeted grants and business rates and the balance is raised by local government through council tax and charges. However all of the funding available, except the targeted grants of £900m, may be spent by local government on any of its services, e.g. education, environmental services and social care, according to the priorities of individual authorities. The main grants targeted on social care services are the promoting independence grant, children's services grant and the mental health services grant.

4.3 Leaving Care Grant

For the introductory years (i.e. up to March 2004) of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, Local Authorities will receive a specific grant ring-fenced for implementation of the Act, including provision of Young Person's Advisers. Authorities can add to their ring-fenced grant from other resources available to them. As the role of the Young Person's Adviser will be very similar to that of the Connexions personal adviser, it is anticipated that these roles will normally be delivered by the same person. In all cases, the Local Authority will be able to make decisions locally on how best to use its leaving care grant to provide the Young Person's Adviser service in the light of local circumstances, the composition of the local Connexions partnership, and the needs of the individual young people. Models available might include:

- Directly employ Young Person's Advisers who also act as the Connexions personal advisers for the young people with whom they are working. This will in effect be a contribution in kind to the Connexions Partnership. Staff would be employed by the Local Authority but would need to be linked into and operate as part of the local Connexions Service.
- Sub-contract the provision of Young Person's Advisers to another organisation with appropriately skilled staff, e.g. a voluntary organisation. Depending upon the skills base of the local Connexions Partnership, an individual Local Authority might decide to subcontract the provision of Young Person's Advisers to the Connexions Partnership.

5. Key Principles of joint working between Connexions and Social Services

Connexions Partnerships will need to work closely with existing services to ensure that the young person receives a coherent service. The way to do this will differ according to the young person's views, local circumstances and provision, but there are some principles which underpin successful, joined-up working:

- **The Connexions Service should not duplicate or replace the work of existing agencies**, but should build on and work closely with existing services to ensure that resources are used to best effect and there is more cohesive service planning and delivery for 13 – 19 year olds, both as a group and for individuals.
- **The most appropriate worker should be identified to lead the young person's case management** and ensure that the roles of different agencies are clearly agreed and followed (thus in effect acting as the young person's Connexions personal adviser), drawing on all the resources available through different routes. Where a child's name has been placed on the child protection register or the child is looked after, the Social Services department will have lead responsibility for implementing and reviewing the child's plan.
- **The number of other professionals working directly with the young person should be rationalised** to avoid confusion or duplication from the young person's point of view and to stop them being passed between agencies unnecessarily. For example, by a personal adviser may get advice from a specialist colleague where appropriate, rather than automatically making a referral. Where specialist intervention is required, the personal adviser will need to ensure clearly differentiated roles are agreed between workers. Awareness and understanding of one another's roles should be developed between support workers, for example, through joint training, meetings, secondments, exchanges or using shared / adjoining premises.
- **Young people receive continuity and consistency of support** and professional boundaries do not impair the support the young person receives. Referrals to specialist advice and key transitions should be managed in as supportive a way as possible.
- **Information about young people needs to be managed and shared** (with the young person's consent) and a dialogue maintained, to ensure that repeat assessment of the young person is avoided and an overview of their needs is maintained over time and across agencies, ensuring that the young person does not fall through gaps.
- **There should be co-ordinated, complementary accountability and quality assurance arrangements** so that each young person can be sure they will receive all of the support they need.

6. Ways in which Connexions and Social Services can work together

For young people with significant needs who are already involved with statutory agencies, the personal adviser has an important role to play in ensuring that they receive the coherent support that is necessary to participate and progress successfully in learning. When the Social Service departments are in contact with a child in need who reaches 13, or start to have contact with a child aged 13 – 19, they should discuss with the Connexions Service and the young person how Connexions will fit in with the work the Social Service department is already doing, or the services they are providing, and agree how this will work taking into account the 2nd principle in section 5. Similarly, when a young person is not already in contact with Social Services and the personal adviser's assessment indicates that the young person may be a child in need, it may be appropriate to refer the young person to Social Services for further assessment. They should ensure that they decide with the social worker and young person how they will work with the Social Services department which has lead responsibility for undertaking the assessment.

Following a 'child in need' assessment, it should be decided which agency will be the most appropriate one to take lead responsibility for implementing the resulting plan. Where a child's name has been placed on the child protection register or the child is looked after by a local authority the Social Services department will have lead responsibility for implementing and reviewing the child's plan. For children outside these categories, Social Services may have lead responsibility, or it may be more appropriate for other agencies to lead, depending on the nature of the child's needs and services being provided. These agencies could be, for example, education, health or the Connexions Service.

Because Connexions will be working with young people up to the age of 19, or up to 25 for certain disabled people, it will also be important for Connexions Partnerships to make links with adult Social Services teams. In particular, Connexions workers should be familiar with how to work with the Social Services teams that work with people with disabilities and mental health problems, including awareness of:

- The circumstances in which a person is likely to receive services from adult teams
- The type and level of services available locally
- Local policy and practice guidelines

6.1 Strategic Links & information sharing

To ensure the young person receives the best support, it is important that strategic links are developed locally between Connexions and Social Services, through, for example, protocol agreements and representation on the Connexions Local Management Committee. When planning services, Connexions and other agencies, including Social Services, will need to consider the following:

- Which agencies are already delivering personal adviser roles and how can this work be best linked into the Connexions Service?
- Where do gaps in provision for personal adviser support for young people exist? How can these gaps be best filled in a way that provides the right expertise in the most appropriate location?
- How can links between different organisations be made to ensure that personal advisers from whatever background and in whatever context can provide the consistent and comprehensive support the young person needs?

Information Sharing

Connexions Partnerships and Social Services departments will need to consider drawing up an information sharing agreement. This agreement would normally include what information is to be shared, the purpose for which it is used, the source of the information, and the period that the information will be retained by the recipient agency. It is essential to seek the young person's consent to share information, except where sharing information may place the young person at an increased risk of significant harm, in which case information may be shared without the young person's consent. Therefore the agreement should set out the procedures for informing the young person of his/her rights and for obtaining consent. In addition to seeking consent from young people it may also sometimes be necessary to seek the consent of parents or others, for example:

- If a young person is not able to give informed consent.
- If the information to be shared is personal information about others, e.g. parents or siblings.

Only information which is necessary for the planning and carrying out of effective services for the young person should be shared. Given that Social Services departments may have been involved with some young people over a period of many years, discretion will be needed in determining what information needs to be shared with Connexions.

Further guidance on information sharing will be issued shortly by the Connexions Service National Unit and will be available from the Connexions website.

6.2 Day-to-day links

Some suggested ways in which individual social workers and Connexions personal advisers can work together in the best interests of the young person are set out below, along with a range of issues which should be considered. These suggestions are not prescriptive but are intended as a tool to help both Connexions Partnerships and Social Services departments to consider how their respective roles relate to one another. The case scenarios provided in section 7 show how these ways of working might operate in practice and in particular look at the difficult transition points in the life of a young person.

In some cases it may be appropriate for the social worker to act as the Connexions personal adviser if they are already undertaking much of the necessary work. This includes: one-to-one support work, engaging with young people to address their needs, offering advice and guidance with a view to raising the aspirations of each young person, case management, brokering access to other services, co-ordinating support. Support could be drawn in from the wider Connexions Service, if needed.

However, even if a young person already has a social worker, the young person may wish someone else to act as their Connexions personal adviser, perhaps to provide better access to personal development opportunities, or specialist careers advice.

There are a number of issues which should be considered when deciding on the respective roles:

- The views and wishes of the young person.
- Any transition points in the young person's life, for example, from Child to Adult Social Services; moving into the remit of the Leaving Care Team and eligibility for a Young Person's Adviser – so that the worker assigned to the young person will be able to provide consistency during these transitions.
- Clear identification by all workers of the relevant statutory responsibilities and who is fulfilling which roles, including the case management and referrals to other agencies, to ensure this work is not duplicated from the point of view of the young person. To make sure that Connexions is aware of when to refer people to Social Services, Social Services departments should share with Connexions Partnerships information about the services it provides, including details of initiatives provided by the Local Authority under its Quality Protects Management Action Plan (see Annex 2, Section A 4 for further information on the Quality Protects Programme).
- The relative skills and experience of the individual staff members, in particular their level of training in Connexions (see Annex 1, Section 2 for details of appropriate training).

6.3 Young Person's Adviser and Connexions

The roles of a Young Person's Adviser and a Connexions personal adviser are broadly similar, which is why the Young Person's Adviser under the Children (Leaving Care) Act will also normally act as the Connexions personal adviser for these young people. Whoever takes on the role of the Young Person's Adviser will need a thorough understanding of the new legislation and the powers and duties of local authorities to young people under these circumstances, as well as being familiar with the Connexions Service. A case scenario for a Young Person's Adviser becoming the Connexions personal adviser is set out in section 7.

Alternatively, if the Connexions personal adviser understands the requirements and workings of the care system and the Children Act they would be well placed to continue to advise the young person. They could therefore fulfil the role of the Young Person's Adviser as well as Connexions personal adviser, with the work of the Young Person's Adviser being subcontracted to Connexions. In this situation the Connexions personal adviser will need to be in close contact with the Leaving Care team to receive support and supervision over the preparation and implementation of the Pathway Plan. In addition, arrangements will need to be put in place for a possible transition at age 19, as the young person moves out of the Connexions Service remit, but will still be entitled to support under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, unless the work is subcontracted to the Connexions Service. In this case the Connexions personal adviser could continue to act as the Young Person's Adviser until the young person reaches the age of 21, or for longer (up to the age of 25) if they remain in an agreed programme of education past this age.

7. Case scenarios

ALI

Background

Ali is 13 years old, the eldest of three siblings, and lives at home with his disabled mother. Ali has been in regular contact with Social Services who have been working to support his family.

Current situation

The Connexions worker at Ali's school is setting up appointments with all the pupils in Year 9 to inform them about the service and to make an informal assessment of their needs. Ali asks his social worker for advice about Connexions, as his focus is on providing support to his mother and he doesn't consider he has time for more school activities.

Issues

- Ali has a good relationship with his Social worker and trusts him because he has been able to help Ali's mum to access support and services.
- Ali is anxious about Connexions as he has had difficult relationships with school staff in the past due to the level of unauthorised absences arising from his caring responsibilities.
- Ali is feeling moody and anxious and is unwilling to engage with a further worker.

Process followed

Ali's social worker feels that the best course of action is to organise a review of Ali's needs in order to ensure that his educational, vocational and personal development needs are addressed. The social worker asks Ali if he is happy for the school Connexions worker to attend the review but Ali refuses. The review takes place with Ali, his mother and his form tutor and it is clear that Ali needs emotional and practical support if he is going to be able to access careers advice and make the best of his educational opportunities.

Outcomes of review meeting

It is agreed that Ali's social worker will take on the role of Connexions personal adviser, brokering access to additional services and support, particularly careers advice. As a result:

- A plan is drawn up to address Ali's educational needs.
- The social worker contacts the Connexions Service in Ali's school to tell them about the outcome of the review meeting.
- Ali is supported by his social worker to access careers advice through the Connexions Service in his school.

MARY

Background

Mary is a 15 year-old child who is looked after by the Local Authority. She is academically able with ambitions to be an engineer and is 6 months into her Year 10 studies. She can sometimes be challenging to work with as she questions and can argue with decisions made about her care.

Current situation

Mary has been fostered since the age of 12 and is in her 3rd placement in the last four years which has led to changing schools and disruption to her education. Her current placement has now broken down due to a change in the personal circumstances of her foster carers and as she moves into a neighbouring local authority, will need to move school again.

Issues

- Mary has had some contact with the Connexions Service at her old school.
- Mary's new school does not offer Design & Technology (one of Mary's GCSE options) and is doing different exam boards for a number of other subjects.
- Mary has a good relationship with her social worker and has drawn up a Personal Education Plan (see Annex 2 for definition) with her and her previous school.

Process followed

The Connexions worker in Mary's old school contacts the adviser in her new school to hand over. The Connexions worker in Mary's new school contacts Mary and talks to her social worker and foster carers. The Connexions worker becomes aware that Mary's social worker is arranging a review of her care plan to ensure that any needs arising from Mary's move are addressed. The Connexions worker asks to attend the review meeting. Mary's social worker discusses this with her. Mary wants the Connexions workers from both her old and new school to attend to discuss her educational needs, but does not want them present when the meeting is discussing family issues. At the meeting Mary makes clear that education is her priority and she wants support on this aspect of her life to be separate from her home life.

Outcomes of the Care Plan review:

- Mary's school Connexions worker is identified as her Connexions personal adviser to:
- ensure that Mary gets support in transferring syllabuses through discussions with the School Headteacher and the exam board about accrediting existing course work.
- ensure that Mary gets additional support from classroom teachers in the subjects where she is taking new syllabuses.
- research Design and Technology courses at other nearby schools and colleges.
- explore possible work experience placements for Mary.
- ensure Mary settles in her new school by exploring with Mary her interaction with her peers in school, and her relationship with teachers and other school staff.
- build on Mary's personal educational plan to reflect the specific wider goals that she will be working towards.
- Mary's social worker will continue to be responsible for the implementation of Mary's care plan.

PAUL

Background

Paul is a 20 year old young man with learning disabilities. He lives at home with his parents, but is keen to increase his level of independence. Paul's parents are anxious to ensure that he is not exposed to any risks or possible harm and would like him to continue to live at home.

Current situation

Paul is studying at the local FE College and has made some progress on social skills, numeracy and literacy. However he is approaching the upper age range for his course and the Connexions worker at the FE College is working with Paul as his personal adviser to identify options for when his course finishes. The personal adviser has identified another course which he feels will help Paul but it is at another FE College and Paul would need support to travel there every day.

Issues

- Paul does not want to join a new course - he sees study as something for younger people.
- Paul likes the personal adviser at the FE College as he perceives the worker to be more independent from his family than his social worker.
- Paul's parents are concerned that the Connexions personal adviser does not know Paul's history and may recommend something that he is not ready for. They would prefer that Paul left college and spent more time at home where he could help to look after his elderly father.
- Paul has not reacted well to change in the past – when he began his current course at the FE College he became very anxious and was quite challenging at home. His parents received support from a social worker who specialises in supporting young people through transitions and would prefer to work with Social Services on options for Paul's future.

Process followed

The Connexions personal adviser meets with Paul for 2 or 3 sessions to make him aware of his options. It is clear that Paul's preference is still to leave college and ideally he would like to find employment. The social worker contacts Paul's Connexions personal adviser at the request of his parents. The Connexions personal adviser convenes a meeting - Paul agrees to have both his social worker and parents present.

Outcomes of review meeting

The Connexions personal adviser and the social worker identify a new scheme that is starting up locally providing work-based training at a farm. This would not require Paul to be residential although there is potential for him to do so and his parents agree to consider this once he settles and appropriate funding streams have been identified. The Connexions personal adviser supports Paul during his transition into employment. The Connexions personal adviser also works with Paul to explore personal development opportunities both within the college and in the local community, keeping the social worker informed of progress.

NATALIE

Background

Natalie has been in care since she was a small child, she is completely estranged from her family and subject to a care order. She is approaching her 16th birthday and has been living in a local authority children's home for a year since her last foster placement broke down. Natalie was excluded from school at around the time that her foster placement broke down.

Current situation

Natalie was reintroduced into school in a new secondary school about 6 months ago at the end of the last the academic year and has settled well. She is in Year 10 due to the amount of school time she has missed. Natalie has been in contact with her Connexions personal adviser at school and has begun to trust him.

Issues

- Natalie feels she is ready to live alone, but residential staff are concerned about her ability to cope in independent living at such a young age.
- When she reaches 16 Natalie will be an eligible child under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and local authority which has been looking after her will have a duty to provide her with a young person's adviser and a pathway plan.
- There are concerns about Natalie's health needs - she has recently started going out with an older boy and may be sexually active.
- Natalie could leave school at the end of the academic year, but staff at the children's home are keen that she completes year 11.

Process followed

Natalie's social worker convenes a review of her care plan as Natalie is approaching 16 and her responsible authority has a specialist Leaving Care Team which deals with all cases of young people aged 16 and over. This review begins the process of the statutory needs assessment which will form the basis of her Pathway Plan from her 16th birthday. The review will deal with the question of who is to be Natalie's Young Person's Adviser under the Children (Leaving Care) Act. The review is attended by Natalie's Connexions personal adviser, a social worker from the Leaving Care Team, and staff from the children's home.

Outcomes of the review meeting

The school Connexions personal adviser does not have the understanding of the requirements of the Children Act and the local procedures for planning for young people who are looked after and is therefore not able to take on the role of the Natalie's Young Person's Adviser. Therefore at the meeting it is agreed with Natalie that her responsible local authority will appoint a Young Person's Adviser. The Young Person's Adviser will work with her to draw up her Pathway Plan (drawing on her existing Care Plan and incorporating her Personal Education Plan) and on independent living skills drawing on the Connexions Service at school to help address her education and training needs. Natalie's Young Person's Adviser will also be able to broker access for her other services, particularly health services.

Annex 1 – Additional Information on Connexions

1. Structure of Connexions

The Connexions Service has been piloted in different forms around the country. Twelve Phase 1 areas (listed below) began delivering the service in April 2001.

Phase 1 areas

- The Black Country
- Cheshire and Warrington
- Coventry and Warwickshire
- Devon & Cornwall
- Lincolnshire & Rutland
- London North
- London South
- Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
- Cumbria
- South Yorkshire
- West of England
- Shropshire, Telford and the Wrekin

In addition, three further Phase 1 areas are working towards beginning to deliver the service from September 2001:

- Suffolk
- Greater Merseyside
- Humber

The remaining 32 Partnerships will begin a phase 2 areas in 2002/3.

The following structures have been established to deliver the new service:

The Connexions Service National Unit

The Connexions Service National Unit is part of DfES, and has responsibility for:

- Connexions Service policy
- establishing a Grant Agreement with Connexions Partnerships for development and delivery of the service
- monitoring performance; and
- quality improvement

Connexions Service Partnerships

Connexions Service Partnerships are the strategic bodies responsible for:

- the development and delivery of the Connexions Service within their partnership area (Connexions Service partnership areas have the same boundaries as the Learning and Skills Councils)
- deciding how local management committees will operate
- ensuring that the service is delivered at a local level
- contracting for local provision and specialist services

Local Management Committees

Local Management Committees should be chaired by local authority Chief Executives (or other local figures of similar status) and are responsible for:

- the day-to-day operational management of the Connexions Service at the local level (based on local authority boundaries or groupings of local authority areas)
- ensuring that a universal Connexions Service is available via a network of personal advisers
- ensuring personal advisers work to uniform standards

2. Connexions Training

The two main national training programmes for personal advisers are:

- the **Diploma for Connexions personal advisers**;
- the **Understanding Connexions training programme**.

Diploma for Connexions personal advisers

The Diploma for Connexions personal advisers is primarily for practitioners who will be working with young people needing in depth support and who face significant barriers to learning. All personal advisers working with these young people should attend this training. It comprises pre-course reading and five core modules, each of the first four consists of:

- 25 hours distance learning
- 12 hours live training
- 3 hours work with smaller groups in an action learning set

The last module, on reflective practice, is longer, with around 40 hours of distance and reflective learning, 18 hours of live training and 3 hours in an action learning set.

Understanding Connexions Training Programme

The Understanding Connexions training programme will reflect the universal nature of the Connexions Service and will allow progression to the Diploma. It will primarily be for Connexions personal advisers who will be working within their practitioner base with young people needing less intensive support, but will also provide a way into personal adviser training for others with fewer relevant qualifications.

It is currently being designed and will comprise:

- a front end introduction (2-3 days) training offering a basic information on the Connexions Service which will be for anyone who needs to know about the Connexions Service. This may be delivered by approved training providers or possibly by Partnerships;
- further training for up to 10 days for people working as personal advisers;
- 5 days supervisory training for team leaders who will be supervising groups of personal advisers.

The 10 day training programme for personal advisers training will cover key areas such as:

- Contributing to the Connexions Service;
- Working effectively as part of a multidisciplinary team within the Connexions Service;
- Developing Connexions at the local level.

The programme will be available as a pilot for 5 partnership areas from September 2001 and nationally from October/November. For further details on the training, including how to get onto a course, please contact your local partnership via the Government Office contacts listed in the table in paragraph 7.

3. Connexions Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review

The Connexions Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review has been developed to support personal advisers in helping young people make a smooth and successful transition to adult and working life. It outlines a process for identifying needs, planning effectively and taking action to address and review those needs. In particular it is intended to help personal advisers co-ordinate more coherent service delivery to those young people facing significant or multiple barriers to learning some of whom may be currently be involved with a range of different agencies. It has been designed to support the Connexions quality standards and once trained in its use it will be good practice for personal advisers to follow the process outlined. The Connexions Framework was issued to all Partnerships in June 2001. An evaluation, as part of a larger piece of research looking at personal adviser practice and training, is planned for the autumn. The findings along with feedback from a range of sources will inform revisions to the guidance due to be re-issued in April 2002. A copy of the Connexions Framework is available on the Connexions web site.

4. Connexions Direct

In addition to the traditional methods of delivery for the service, the potential for using new technology is being explored through Connexions Direct. It will use telephone and internet technology to help Connexions reach out effectively to all young people. The service will be piloted in the North East of England from September 2001.

Connexions Direct will be an integral part of local Connexions provision, offering a complementary tier of service delivery. It will offer information and advice through qualified practitioners who, where necessary, will also facilitate referrals to personal advisers and specialist support services on the ground.

5. Connexions Card

The Connexions Service aims to raise the aspiration of and motivate young people. Supporting this will be the new Connexions Card. The Connexions Card is an exciting and innovative cross-departmental project. Young people will be rewarded for their engagement in learning – all forms of learning, both formal and informal. The Card will reward 16 – 19 year olds for their participation in learning and for meeting agreed targets. You can find more information about the card at <http://www.connexionscard.gov.uk>

6. Further information

Further details about Connexions, including relevant publications, can be found at the web site on www.connexions.gov.uk

7. Contact Details for Connexions Partnerships

To obtain contact details for your local Partnership please contact your Government Office:

GO	CONTACT	ADDRESS	TELNO	FAX NO	E:MAIL ADDRESS
GONE	ERIC BANNISTER	GO-NE Wellbar House Gallowgate NEWCASTLE NE1 4TD	0191 201 3300 GTN 5227 3559	0191 201 3510 GTN 5227 3510	ebannister.gone @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOEM	PETER WARD	GO-EM Belgrave Centre Talbot Street NOTTINGHAM NG1 5GG	0115 971 2729 GTN 6205 2729	0115 971 2747 GTN 6205 2747	pward.goem @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOWM	BOB SMITH	GO-WM FL3, Chamberlain House Queensway BIRMINGHAM B1 2DT	0121 212 5000 GTN 6177 5441	0121 212 5454 GTN 6177 5454	bsmith.gowm @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOSW	PETER CLOKE	GO-SW Mast House, 24 Sutton Road PLYMOUTH PL4 0HJ	01752 635000 GTN 1390 5035	GTN 1390 5095	pcloke.gosw @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOSW	JONATHON ROGERS	GO-SW The Pithay BRISTOL BS1 2PB	0117 900 1811	0117 900 1914	jrogers.gosw @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOYH	DEREK IRELAND	GO-YH 516, City House New Station Street LEEDS LS1 4JD	0113 280 0600 GTN 5173 5259	GTN 5173 5404	direland.goyh @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOL	BRENDA PEARSON	GO-L FL4, Riverwalk House 157-161 Millbank LONDON SW1P 4RR	0207 217 3260 GTN 217 3259	020 7217 3485 GTN 217 3485	bpearson.gol @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOSE	HILARY OMISSI	GO-SE L4,Bridge House 1 Walnut Tree Close GUILDFORD GU1 4GA	01483 882255 GTN 3011 2520	01483 882259	homissi.gose @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GOE	ROGER ALLEN (Phase 1)	GO-E Victory House Vision Park, Histon CAMBRIDGE CB4 9ZR	01223 202057 GTN 3052 2001	01223 202020	rallen.go-east @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk
GONW	TONY McGEE	GO-NW Cunard Building Water Street Pier Head LIVERPOOL L3 1QB	0151 224 6300 GTN 4127 2912	0151 224 2929	tmcgee.gonw @go-regions.gsi.gov.uk

Annex 2 – Additional Information on Social Services

A. Definitions

1. Children in Need

Young people may be identified as 'children in need' under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 following an assessment undertaken by Social Services. A child is regarded as being in need if:

- he is unlikely to achieve or maintain or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority
- his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services or
- he is disabled.

1.1 Plans for Children in Need

Children who have been identified as being Children in Need will receive an assessment in accordance with the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families. This assessment will identify the young person's development needs, the capacity of those parenting the child to respond to those needs and the wider family and environmental context. Following the assessment, a plan will be drawn up to be based on the young person's identified needs, which records the objectives and actions which are to be achieved to ensure that all the identified needs are responded to appropriately. For children who are not on the child protection register or looked after, it is recommended that the plan is reviewed at intervals of a maximum of 6 months, or earlier if the child's circumstances change.

Core Assessment

A core assessment is an in-depth assessment which addresses the central or most important aspects of the needs of a child and the capacity of his or her parents or caregivers to respond appropriately to these needs within the wider family and community context. While this assessment is led by Social Services, it will invariably involve other agencies or independent professionals, who will either provide information they hold about the child or parents, contribute specialist knowledge or advice to Social Services or undertake specialist assessments. The timescale for completion of the core assessment is a maximum of 35 working days.

2. Looked after children

“Looked after” is a term used in the Children Act 1989 to describe all children who are the subject of a care order, or who are provided with accommodation on a voluntary basis for more than 24 hours. Section 22 of the Children Act provides the basis for the ‘corporate parent’ role of local authorities who look after or accommodate a child by requiring them to:

- safeguard and promote his or her welfare
- make use of other services which are available to children living with their parents which he or she needs

Looked after children can be placed in children’s homes, foster homes or at home with their parents or other relatives.

2.1 Care Plan

The Care plan records what the overall plan for the child is, e.g. return home, long term foster care, and actions which are to be taken by the child and family members, Social Services and all other relevant agencies to ensure that all the child’s identified needs are responded to and the Care Plan is fulfilled. The Care Plan must be reviewed within four weeks of the date upon which the child begins to be looked after or provided with accommodation by a responsible authority. The second review must be carried out not more than three months after the first and subsequent reviews must be carried out at least every six months. It is within this broader context that the young person’s educational needs will be identified and met (see Personal Education Plans in 2.2 below).

A Care Plan must be prepared within 2 weeks of a young person starting to be looked after. As the majority of looked after children will previously have been Children in Need, the Care Plan will usually build on any previous initial or core assessment that may have been undertaken before a young person starts to be looked after. However, in some circumstances (e.g. if a young person becomes looked after without having been previously known to Social Services or before an initial or core assessment has been completed), a Care Plan will need to drawn up before a core assessment has been completed. This may then need to be amended at the first review meeting in the light of any additional findings any core assessment.

The Children Act 1989 provides the overarching framework for assessment, planning, intervention and review of all looked after children and young people. The requirements for a care plan are laid out in detail in Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations (paragraphs 2.59 to 2.62), and a format for the plan is an integral part of the Department of Health’s Looking After Children materials (Department of Health, 1995).

In addition, Local Authority Circular LAC(99)29 sets out further guidance on Care Plans, particularly in relation to Care Proceedings under the Children Act 1989. However, it should be noted that the Looking After Children materials will be reviewed in 2001/02 in a way which will align them more closely with the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, to produce an integrated model for assessing and providing services to all children in need, whether they are looked after or not.

2.2 Personal Education Plan

Because of the importance of improving educational attainment for looked after children, in May 2000, the Department for Education and Employment and the Department of Health issued joint guidance on the Education of Young People in Care (Local Authority Circular (2000)13). One of the key areas of the guidance was the requirement that all looked after children should be provided with a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school. The PEP should set out the child's achievements, their needs and aspirations and ensure access to services and support. The PEP will also contribute to stability; minimise disrupted and broken schooling; signal particular and special needs; establish clear goals and act as a record of progress. The PEP should be sensitive to the diverse needs of children and young people and focus on the action required to enable them to fulfil their potential.

The PEP is designed to encourage dialogue between social workers, carers and schools and underline the importance attached to the young person's education. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP, which should be drawn up in partnership with the child/young person, designated teacher, parent and/or family member, carer and any other relevant person (e.g. educational psychologist). The PEP will be an integral part of the young person's Care Plan.

2.3 Designated Teachers

The joint guidance on the Education of Young People in Public Care also sets out the critical importance of schools appointing Designated Teachers to act as a resource and advocate for looked after children and young people. The Designated Teacher will understand the particular needs of looked after children and ensure that they receive the practical help, support and advice that they need. The Designated Teacher should also ensure that relevant education information is shared between the various agencies and individuals involved with the child's care.

3. Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

3.1 Eligible Children

Children aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who are still looked after. These children will receive the service of a personal adviser, including a needs assessment and a pathway plan in addition to the provisions of the looked-after system.

3.2 Relevant Children

Children aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and have been looked after at some time while 16 or 17, and who have left care. These children will receive the service of a personal adviser, including a needs assessment and a pathway plan as well as accommodation and maintenance, and assistance to achieve the goals agreed and set out in the Pathway plan. The responsible local authority also has a duty to take reasonable steps to keep in touch with the child.

3.3 Former Relevant Children

Young people aged 18-21 who have been either eligible or relevant children, or both. If at the age of 21 the young person is still being helped by the responsible authority with education or training, he or she remains a former relevant child to the end of the agreed programme of education even if that takes him or her past the age of 21. These young people will receive the service of a personal adviser and a pathway plan. In addition they will receive assistance with employment, education and training and vacation accommodation for higher education or residential further education if needed. The responsible local authority also has a duty to take reasonable steps to keep in touch with the child.

3.4 Qualifying Children

Any young person aged under 21 (under 24 if in education or training) who ceases to be looked after or accommodated in a variety of other settings, or privately fostered, after the age of 16. This includes young people who leave care after October 2001, at or after the age of 16, but do not qualify as eligible children; young people who left care before October 2001. The responsible authority must keep in touch with local authority care leavers as they think appropriate and these children are entitled to assistance with education and training up to the age of 24 and vacation accommodation for Higher Education or residential Further Education courses if necessary.

3.5 Pathway Plan

The Pathway Plan should be pivotal to the process whereby young people map out their future, articulating their aspirations and identifying interim goals along the way to realising their ambitions. Each young person will be central to drawing up their own plan, setting out their own goals and identifying with their personal adviser how the local authority will help them. The authority should work to ensure that the Plan is owned by the young person and is able to respond to their changing needs and ambitions. It should look ahead at least as far as the young person's 21st birthday and will be in place beyond that where the young person is in a programme of education or training which takes them past that age.

Schedule 1 of the Act sets out the detail of what each Pathway Plan must cover:

- The nature and level of personal support to be provided to the young person.
- Details of the accommodation the child or young person is to occupy.
- A detailed plan for his education or training.
- Where relevant, how the responsible authority will assist the child or young person in employment or seeking employment, or alternatives to employment.
- The support to be provided to enable the child or young person to develop and sustain appropriate family and social relationships.
- A programme to develop the practical and other skills necessary for him to live independently.
- The financial support to be provided to the child or young person, in particular where it is to be provided to meet his accommodation and maintenance needs.
- The health needs, including any mental health needs, of the child or young person, and how they are to be met.
- Contingency plans for action to be taken by the responsible authority should the pathway plan for any reason cease to be effective.

For each of the areas above, the plan must set out how the responsible local authority plans to meet the needs identified through the assessment, and the timetable for the actions required to do so. The plan must be recorded in writing and a copy provided to the young person. Local authorities have a duty to arrange a review of the pathway plan at least every six months, or sooner at the request of the young person, or if the authority or the personal adviser considers a review necessary.

4. Quality Protects

Quality Protects was launched in September 1998. It is the main vehicle for delivering the aims in the White Paper, Modernising Social Services, of effective protection, better quality care and improved life chances for children. The Quality Protects programme is a key part of the Government's wider strategy for tackling social exclusion. It focuses on working with some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children in our society. Those children looked after by councils; in the child protection system; and other children in need.

Children's Social Services work with some of the most disadvantaged families and some of the most vulnerable children and young people in our society. Children's Social Services need to provide the right targeted help to ensure that disadvantaged children and young people are able to take maximum advantage of universal services - in particular education and health.

The key elements of the Quality Protects Programme are:

- new national Government objectives for children's services which for the first time set out clear outcomes for children, and in some instances gave precise targets to be achieved;
- an important role for local councillors in delivering the programme and ensuring as the corporate parents of children looked after that they receive services of the highest quality;
- an annual evaluation of councils Quality Protects Management Action Plans which set out how they intend to improve their services.
- partnership between and within central and local government and with the health service and the voluntary sector;
- a new children's service grant of £885m payable over five years.

B Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their families:

The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (outlined in the figure overleaf) provides a systematic basis for collecting and analysing information to support professional judgements about how to help children and families in the best interests of the child. Practitioners use the framework to gain an understanding of a child's developmental needs; the capacity of parents or caregivers to respond appropriately to those needs, including their capacity to keep the child safe from harm; and the impact of wider family and environmental factors on the parents and child.

The framework is designed for use within Social Services departments for the assessment of all children in need, including those where there are concerns that a child may be suffering significant harm. Use of the framework provides evidence to help, guide and inform judgements about children's welfare and safety, from the first point of contact with Social Services through the processes of initial and more detailed core assessments.

Evidence about children's developmental progress – and their parents' capacity to respond appropriately to the child's needs within the wider family and environmental context – should underpin judgements about:

- the child's welfare and safety
- whether, and if so how, to provide help to children and family members; and
- what form of intervention will bring about the best possible outcomes for the child, and what the intended outcomes of intervention are.

Assessment Framework



C Details of relevant publications and web sites:

Publications:

1. Working together to Safeguard Children, Department of Health *et al.*, 2000.
2. Framework for the assessment of Children in Need and their families, Department of Health *et al.*, 2000.
3. Valuing People: A new strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century, Department of Health, 2001.
4. Looking After Children: Trial Pack of Planning and Review Forms and Assessment and Action Records (Revised), Department of Health, 1995.

The above publications can be purchased from:

The Stationery Office,
PO Box 29,
Norwich, NR3 1GN
Tel: 0870 600 5533
Website: www.clickTSO.com

5. Education of Young People in Public Care – DfEE and DH joint publication.
6. List of Area Child Protection Committee Chairpersons in England and Wales – www.doh.gov.uk/qualityprotects/info/publications/blue.doc
7. List of Child Protection Co-ordinators in England and Wales June 2001 – www.doh.gov.uk/qualityprotects/info/publications/cord.doc
8. List of Custodians of Child Protection Registers in England and Wales - www.doh.gov.uk/qualityprotects/info/publications/custod.doc

Websites:

Department of Health:	www.doh.gov.uk
Quality protects:	www.doh.gov.uk/qualityprotects



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DfES Publications PO Box 5050 Sherwood Park
Annesley Nottingham NG15 0DJ

Tel: 0845 60 222 60 Fax: 0845 60 333 60
Text Phone: 0845 60 555 60 E.mail: dfes@prolog.uk.com

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