



National IRO Managers Partnership

Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers

Introduction

The partnership seeks to improve outcomes for looked after children by providing up-to-date guidance to independent reviewing officers (IROs) about how they should discharge their distinct responsibilities to looked after children.

About this document

This document has been produced by the National IRO Managers branch of the Partnership and is provided as guidance to IRO Services.

The guidance follows the Department for Education (DfE) issuing its revised Children Act 1989 guidance for local authorities with respect to planning for care leavers. The guidance applies to all directors, managers, frontline staff and partner agencies.

The intention of the guidance and the checklist is to ensure insofar as is possible that care-leavers are given the same level of care, support, opportunities and chances as their peers to enable their successful transition into adulthood.

The checklist does NOT replace the statutory guidance. It should be read in conjunction with the statutory guidance. Relevant statutory guidance can be found online at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/397649/CA1989 Transitions guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/397649/CA1989_Transitions_guidance.pdf)

Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers - Independent Reviewing Officer Checklist

Practice Implications

IROs need to be aware of how the local authority they are engaged with is meeting its responsibilities including the effective implementation of the following provisions.

Pathway Plan

- a) Has it been negotiated and formulated with the young person, do they have a copy and are they in agreement. (if not what are the areas of disagreement)
- b) Is it presented in a format that maximises communication with the young person
- c) Was the plan prepared when the young person was 15 or 14 if they have a disability
- d) Is it based on updated and current assessment of needs that includes their ethnicity, diversity and religious needs
- e) Is the plan sufficiently aspirational and personalised, with support and services agreed being flexible, responsive and aimed at empowering the care leaver, including giving a number of chances and opportunities
- f) Does the plan extend and include review processes beyond 18
- g) Is there teaching and guidance for independence skills and is this tailored to the young persons needs and progress monitored
- h) Is the young person given appropriate responsibilities and are official documents stored safely
- i) Does the young person have an emergency/crisis number for when they need help and advice from someone trusted and known
- j) Does the young person have a bank account and access to their own money, are any significant funds/savings in known accounts and being managed appropriately
- k) Is there a clear plan for Adult services involvement if appropriate

Corporate Parenting

- a) Is there evidence of strong strategic partnerships
- b) Is the effectiveness of individual agencies being assessed
- c) Are opportunities promoted
- d) Is the authority responsive to the young person's wishes and needs
- e) Are achievements celebrated and recognised
- f) Is there evidence of commitment beyond the young person turning 18
- g) Is there sufficient accommodation available

- h) Is the advocacy service reviewed to ensure it is meeting young people's needs and informing practice

Education/Training

- a) Is the planning for key milestones regular and timely
- b) Is the pupil premium being used effectively
- c) Is the young person aware of their rights and entitlements, including the bursary
- d) Is their accommodation throughout planned and supported
- e) Do they have a driving licence, having lessons

IROs specific responsibilities

- a) Are agencies working together to maximise communication to reduce risks
- b) Is the support offered appropriate and sufficient to the young persons needs
- c) Is there a gap in services
- d) Are any issues of e-safety known, understood and addressed regularly

Advocacy

- a) Is the young person aware of their entitlements and do they have a leaflet from the LA regarding this, including their financial entitlements
- b) Is the young person aware of the role of the IRO and have their name and contact details
- c) Is the young person aware of relevant agencies that offer support and the CICC
- d) Is the young person aware of the advocacy service and the range of services they provide
- e) Is the young person aware of the complaints procedure and support to use this
- f) Is the young person aware of their rights to access to their records and do they understand why the reasons for decisions that were made for and about them

Family Relationships

- a) Is there an up to date risk assessment of the role the family can play in supporting the young person
- b) Is the young person able to return to the family's care and their support needs assessed
- c) Is lifestory work regularly reviewed and updated so that the young person is aware of what is happening in their family
- d) Is there a good understanding amongst professionals involved of those significant and important to the young person

Placement/Accommodation

- a) Are all options, including for them to remain with their carers, for the young person's accommodation considered at an early stage and reviewed according to their needs, abilities and wishes.
- b) Is the young person aware of their entitlements to setting up allowances

Health

- a) Is the young person confident about how and when to seek advice and medical help/intervention
- b) Is the young person aware of all the services available to them and do they understand what they can offer including privacy and confidentiality

See below from the APPG Inquiry

Five Entitlements for Care Leavers

1. You can ask your authority for £2,000 for the setting up home allowance. This was the amount that young people agreed, at the regional meetings for Chairs of Children in Care Councils, to ask their local authorities for.
2. Your local authority must provide you with help with costs of being in education or training up until you are 21 (or 25 if you're still in education).
3. Your local authority must provide you with help with the costs of getting and keeping a job (up until the age of 21 if you are in education, employment or training).
4. You must be given a copy, and full explanation, of your assessment and Pathway Plan
5. If you're in higher education, your local authority must provide you with vacation accommodation (or money towards it).

More information

More detailed information and relevant Department for Education (DfE) publications can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>