

Information for Corporate Parenting Board 1.10.12

Moving to Adulthood Looked After Children Action Plan Update

- 1. Creating more supported accommodation options, including some which can take young people with complex needs, including in emergencies.**

Have a very successful arrangement with Skipbridge Farm (supported accommodation in converted cottages, with foster carers 'on site').

Monitoring number of very chaotic or very vulnerable Care Leavers, for whom Howe Hill for Young People (HH4YP) is not suited. Early stages of discussions with Supporting People, Youth Offending Team and Foundation about possible re-provision of 5 bed unit for chaotic/Youth Offending Team young people with history of assaults, prison release etc. Also looking at options for small provision for vulnerable young people who would not manage in a 20-bed unit such as Howe Hill. With only one Tier 1 provision for all young people with a housing need, there are limited options and some young people cannot be placed with other young people due to their shared histories.

- 2. Ensure the sustainability of the Staying Put scheme by recruiting enough foster carers to replace those whose young people stay put.**

19 young people Stayed Put in 2011-12, only 4 of those were in a bed that would have been used for a Looked After Child. Recruitment of foster carers continues, but numbers of Looked After Children continue to increase. Better and more sustained outcomes for those young people who Stay Put.

Outcomes for those who Stayed Put in 2011-12 were as follows:-

At age 19 84% engaged in Education, Training or Employment (ETE): 16% not in paid work, but are full-time Mums.

At age 20 100% engaged in Education, Training or Employment.

3. Develop a more consistent approach to preparing young people for independent living by creating a programme that builds up their skills and can be used in a variety of settings.

Consultations underway with foster carers, residential workers, young people, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and Pathway Workers to pull together a “minimum knowledge/skills” that every young person leaving care will be able to achieve, having had support from foster cares, residential workers, Social Workers.

4. Adopt a more structured approach to the identification of young people’s skills and learning needs when they are moving to independent living, and include this in the planning process.

Skills and learning needs are identified in the Pathway Needs Assessment and Pathway Care Plan. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) will monitor the progress and support received, through Child Care Review system.

5. Use the new provision at Howe Hill to build on and develop existing links with colleagues in housing, education and the voluntary sector, to increase the Education, Training and Employment options available to care leavers.

‘Start Smart’ sessions to run in October half-term with 16 year olds, around appropriate self-presentation in a variety of settings e.g. college, workplace etc . Working with York Cares to set up employers coming to run work readiness sessions for Care Leavers at Howe Hill. Springboard Project now up and running – activities to engage the ‘hardest to reach’ young people and build confidence to get them into Education, Training or Employment. Creative use of resources to develop packages of support that the young people are really excited by.

6. Further develop the opportunities for care leavers to access training and employment within the council, e.g. “employment with training” and ensure that Human Resources processes are supporting the access of care leavers to jobs and apprenticeships.

Meeting with Tracey Walters, Eoin Rush to look at possibility of revising City of York Council job applications with priority for York Care Leavers. Looking at legality around guaranteed interview if Care Leavers meet essential criteria.

Apprenticeships within City of York Council – Care Leavers have advance interview if meet essential criteria. Apprenticeship Group remit widened to include pre-apprenticeships and Foundation Learning opportunities across City of York Council. Work just starting to set these up in similar way to apprenticeships, but in more practical/vocational areas of work.

7. Clarify the process by which over 21s can access Pathway support when eligible.

3 requests for support, so far. New policy in place, young people being told at their exit interviews about this right to request support post 21. Leaflets recently received from National Care Advisory Service, to publicise it further to foster carers and other agencies who may come into contact to with 21 – 24 year old York Care Leavers.

8. Ensure there is easy access to mental health and counselling services for care leavers and young adults up to the age of 25.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service – Looked After Children Team continue to provide a Care Leaver drop-in once a month at Howe Hill, which is well-supported. Young people also access the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service counselling that is available from Kate Gibbon at Castlegate. We are just starting some discussion with Relate about a pilot young people’s project they are about to start with Care Leavers, both 1:1, group and relationship counselling.

Development of an effective emotional and mental health support to Care Leavers aged 18 and above is not within the auspices of the Pathway Team but is included in the Emotional Well-Being Section of the Looked After Children Action Plan. The Pathway Team would welcome this piece of work and will offer whatever support and advice we can to enable such a service to be commissioned.

9. The pathway team will put in place a system of exit interviews for care leavers approaching 21 years, and use this information to improve the service.

5 completed so far this year. Exit interviews offered in person or by email, by the Pathway Young People’s Participation apprentice. Not all young people take up this offer, but some useful learning coming through. Responses will be collated and used to inform future planning.

10. Jointly, with other agencies, create more accessible social, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities for care leavers, to equip them to enjoy living independently.

Pathway Social Group resumed, been out for meals, bowling, cinema, theatre and ongoing consultation about future activities. Discussing plans for some activities/events in National Care Leavers Week (October half-term). Good links with Energise to provide free membership – good take-up of gym and swimming by Care Leavers.

Springboard Project have taken 3 York young people to Carlton Lodge (North Yorks) for activity day and are planning an overnight trip in 2013. North Yorkshire Rural Arts and Springboard are offering creative arts experiences and so far young people have been involved in designing a plaque, t-shirt design and printing, waste metal sculptures.

11. Improve the process of carrying out Pathway Assessments, planning and reviews so that young people understand, are involved in and value these activities.

Pathway Needs Assessment now developed (in conjunction with young people), Pathway Care Plan in use – more appropriate to older teenagers and links in with Pathway Planning. Increased rate of plans being completed and reviewed on time and quality assurance measures improving the quality of the actual plans. Young People are actively involved in the whole process, but are still somewhat ambivalent about Pathway Planning in general and do not see the Pathway Plan as a dynamic tool.

12. Develop the work which has started with the group of foster carers who look after teenagers, so that they become our partners in monitoring, developing and reviewing the service.

Have met with Chair of York Area Foster Care Association (YAFCA) on several occasions and as a result of a number of questions that carers had about how York College works with carers, Pathway organised and facilitated a half-day information session at York College for foster carers, Family Placement and Pathway Workers. We welcome being invited to the Teenage Foster Care Group whenever they wish to discuss any topics with us.

13. Put in place better arrangements for the provision of health care to young people and care leavers who are no longer at school, and offer them choices in how they access health care and information.

Initial Health Assessments for up to 16 year olds have been commissioned and the specification for the Review Health assessments for the same age group is being drawn up and will be commissioned. However, there remain gaps in the provision of health assessments for 16-18 year olds who are no longer in school.

It is not within the Pathway Team remit to put in place any health arrangements, but we would welcome working alongside Health colleagues to develop appropriate provision that meets the health needs of our older Looked After Children and Care Leavers, in a way that encourages and commends them taking increasing responsibility for their own health needs.

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