



Admissions to Aberdeen City Council's Residential Children's Homes

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| Location | Integrated Children and family Services | | |
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| Changes | 12 April 2019 | Review to take account of new guidance from Care Inspectorate " Matching Looked After Children and Young People: Admissions Guidance for Residential Services " (2018) | |
| | 28 March 2019 | Full review taking account of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) | |

Children's Homes Admission Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Aberdeen City Council's Residential Children's Home Service works with all current legislation and national guidance that pertain to this aspect of service. We have adopted a [Dyadic Developmental Practice ethos to care](#) which provides a framework for therapeutic intervention and parenting. This aims to support the development of a relational approach with young people supporting their recovery from earlier negative or traumatic experiences
- 1.2 Aberdeen City Council's Children's Home Resource Service complies with all current relevant legislation and national guidance. We accommodate young people from 12 to 16 years where existing care arrangements are not able to meet the needs of the young person. Where placements are sought for young people aged 16 years and over who are being supported in transition and returning to Aberdeen City please refer to [Throughcare resource guidance for placement access and gatekeeping arrangements](#).
- 1.3 In addition the [Children and Young People's \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) extended the duties and responsibilities of local authorities' corporate parenting role towards care experienced young people, particularly for young people who request to remain in care up to the age of 21. Locally, we are committed to supporting those young people who request to remain in care on a continuing care basis and for the experiences of these young people to be one which empowers them and enhances their development as young adults. As a residential Child Care Service we support and promote the principles which are reflected in "[Staying Put Scotland](#)"

2. Eligibility

- 2.1 There will be a range of adverse circumstances which combine to indicate that a young person is unable to be kept safe within existing care arrangements. For example, this may be a consequence of a carer's behaviour creating risk which cannot be effectively managed, a child's unmet needs that are not acknowledged by the carer, or where a young person acts out their distress in risk taking or risk seeking behaviours. When it is agreed that the threshold for placement has been reached, placement in a children's home may be one alternative to current care arrangements.

- 2.2 The National Care Standards provide the operational framework within which residential care is planned and delivered with and for young people, reflecting the core values of
- a. Dignity
 - b. Compassion
 - c. Inclusion
 - d. Wellbeing
 - e. Respect
 - f. Ambition
 - g. Equity
- 2.3 These values underpin and support our ethos of care which is both the reference point for practice and the underpinning approach to how we support young people in our care.
- 2.4 Many young people who are accommodated in our care present challenging and distressed behaviour due to attachment difficulties and/or trauma. Some of these young people feel so emotionally disorganised, empty and out of control that they spend their lives trying to feel safe by attempting to control everything around them.
- 2.5 Difficulties with communication can add to this and young people may show their feelings through behaviour rather than through words. As care providers we can easily but unhelpfully get into constant control/power battles which will only fuel the child's sense of rage and shame.
- 2.6 We need to remember that healing and recovery take time: for some young people a lifetime and that we are working with young people not doing to them or for them.
- 2.7 For placements to be successful we must consider the needs of the young person being placed. This must be done within the above context and take account of the needs and presentation of the young people we already have in our care. Making placement decisions without this being a paramount consideration creates distress for young people and considerable disruption and confusion if placements are then unsuccessful or overly disruptive and incompatible.
- To reduce the likelihood of placement breakdown a robust matching process will be followed in order that the most suitable placement to meet the young person's needs is identified. Consideration of the most suitable placement will consider the needs of the young people currently placed in the service and the current staffing situation. The matching considerations and decisions will be recorded on the [Residential Children's Homes Admission Matching Considerations form](#) (the form can also be found on careDocs) and this will be saved in the child's electronic case file under 'Request for Service'.

Children's Homes Admissions Procedure

3. Placement request considerations

3.1 When it is clear that a young person can no longer safely remain in their current arrangements and that the Service Manager for the Team/Unit has agreed that a residential placement should be sought, a residential placement request for a children's home service must be completed by the referring Social Worker/Consultant Social Worker (CSW)/Team Manager to the Service Manager with lead responsibility for Residential Care. The request must provide an up to date version of the Child's Plan including the chronology and any specialist assessments as well as the outcome of any multi-agency planning forums. A child's plan is required to address the following areas:

- a. A summary of the presenting concerns and the history of care approaches that have been implemented to support and safeguard the young person prior to the request;
- b. Details of the family history and genogram information;
- c. Details of the legal route being proposed for the placement of young person;
- d. Any risk assessment information concerning the young person's emotional and mental health needs, including any known use of alcohol or other substances.
- e. Details of any medical or disability support needs including any prescribed medications or treatment;
- f. Details of any of Kinship Care and Alternative Family placement considerations that have been explored;
- g. Previous or current history Child Sexual Exploitation including use of social media and access to devices like smart phones;
- h. Details of the young person's cultural identity or religious needs and the young person's chosen way of expressing these;
- i. *The views of the young person including their feelings about the placement. This is of particular importance in terms of the support they may need to settle them in the placement;
- j. The views of the young person's parents or carer including their feelings about the placement;
- k. Consent to the placement given by those holding parental rights and responsibilities;
- l. A summary of the presenting concerns and the history of care approaches that have been implemented to support and safeguard the young person prior to the request;
- m. Details of the family history and genogram information;
- n. Details of the legal route being proposed for the placement of young person;
- o. Any risk assessment information concerning the young person's emotional and mental health needs, including any known use of alcohol or other substances.
- p. Details of any medical or disability support needs including any prescribed medications or treatment;
- q. Details of any of Kinship Care and Alternative Family placement considerations that have been explored;

- r. Previous or current history Child Sexual Exploitation including use of social media and access to devices like smart phones;
- s. Details of the young person's cultural identity or religious needs and the young person's chosen way of expressing these;
- t. The views of the young person including their feelings about the placement. This is of particular importance in terms of the support they may need to settle them in the placement;
- u. The views of the young person's parents or carer including their feelings about the placement;
- v. Consent to the placement given by those holding parental rights and responsibilities;
- w. Details of any arrangements for contact, including provisional arrangements for contact, with whom, purpose, risks, contingencies. This should also include consideration of the views of the young person, the parent/carer, possible impact on the young person, the family and wider relationships;
- x. Contact details of carers and those with whom the young person has significant relationships

4. ***Recording the views of children, and young people that are submitted from Mind of My Own**

- 4.1 The [Mind of My Own App](#) is a digital participation tool that can help children and young people have their voices heard and to participate in decisions about their lives. It provides two co-produced apps for children and young people who use health, care and education services.

Staff should be using these routinely as part of their support to children and young people to help them contribute in a full and meaningful way with decisions that are being made about their care.

We are raising awareness across our partner agency, but currently only workers who are within the Integrated Children and Family Service have accounts and using it with the children and young people they support.

As an Aberdeen City Council Integrated Children and Family Service employee you will have a workers account for the Mind of My Own App. It is your responsibility to champion this and raise awareness with partner agencies to ensure children and young people's participation as a priority

All children being supported by Aberdeen City Council's Children's Social Work will have access to the Mind of My Own App regardless of the type of placement they have.

Workers can use their Aberdeen City Council Devices with the child or young person to use the App.

To ensure secure access that does not allow access to Aberdeen City Council internal sites workers will ensure:

- They use a Wi-Fi connection only;

- All other Apps and email are closed;

The child or young person is supervised at all times while they use a worker's device.

When children and young people provide their views in writing through the Mind of My Own App we will explain to them that this is saved as part of their care record. This means that it will be retained for the same period of time and shared with the same people who we might share their record with.

The submitted document will be recorded on careFirst as a 'classification - MOMO Submission'. The actual PDF will then be saved in the child/young person's electronic case file in '01Personal'.

5. **Agreed placement with the Service Manager for Children's Homes**

5.1 The need for a residential placement may be considered following a crisis breakdown in current care arrangements and also through a number of fora:

- a. The Looked After Children (LAC) Review
- b. Child Protection Case Conference (CPCC)
- c. Screening Resource Group (SRG)
- d. Children's Specialist Service Forum (CSSF)

5.2 Once a placement has been agreed with the Service Manager for residential children's homes, that Service Manager will identify the children's home most suited to the presenting needs of the young person; following which they will:

- a. Provide the contact details for the home and its Manager, an initial briefing regarding the placement expectations and objectives to the child's Social Worker; CSW/Team Manager. Agreement will be made about the initial admission plan and timeframe for the young person to be received into placement;
- b. The Manager for children's home will email the brochure for their home to the referring Social Worker so that it can be shared with young person and their parent or carer;
- c. The Manager of the home will share the most recent Care Inspectorate report with the referring Social Worker.

6. **How we will provide care**

6.1 There are some core functions which will be carried out in the delivery of the care we provide to young people. These will include:

- a. Listening to young people;
- b. Support and attendance at Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews and other core group for a, including accompanying children and young people to these meetings;
- c. The allocation of key worker roles to provide consistent continuity of support to the young person;

- d. Support for clear, regular communication with the young person's allocated Social Worker and CSW. This will include helping to establish the most supportive, appropriate ways to communicate with a young person;
- e. The provision of an initial assessment of the young person and a perspective on placement suitability. This will include an outline of this for the 72 Hour LAC Review and with further detail for the 6 week LAC Review.
- f. Working in partnership with the young person, carers and the other professionals and networks supporting the young person;
- g. Collaboration with Education Services and advocate for consistent support and provision that meet the best need of the young person;
- h. Supporting a young person to address any health needs, including physical, emotional, mental and support for any prescribed medication;
- i. The provision of an environment which is physically safe and free from harms and is emotionally supportive and encouraging of routines and boundaries, for example at meal and bedtimes;
- j. Support and encouragement for a young person to meet with the Children's Rights Officer
- k. The promotion of anti-discriminatory practice and the promotion of equity and equality of opportunity which might include support with subject and career choices taking account of the child or young person's early experiences
- l. Making young people aware of their choices for 'staying put' and for continuing care and Throughcare and Aftercare;
- m. A commitment to support our staff teams to better understand the range of long terms adversities young people continue to face and how they can help young people to overcome these.

7. Useful Links

- 7.1
 - [Matching Looked After Children and Young People: Admissions Guidance for Residential Services](#)
 - [Children's Scotland Act 1995](#)
 - [National Care Standards for care homes for children and young people](#)
 - [Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)
 - [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014](#)
 - [Getting It Right For Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
 - [Dyadic Developmental Practice \(DDP\)](#)

