

London Borough of Ealing

Placement Policy & Guidance

for

Looked After Children and Care Leavers

Updated August 2019

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Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to introduce this updated version of Ealing's placement policy and guidance which professionals should use when planning for Ealing's looked after children and care leavers. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff within Children's Services, as well as independent reviewing officers, have a clear and shared understanding of local policy. The application of this policy across all teams within Children's Services will ensure that all young people within Ealing receive a consistent service.

Here in Ealing we are committed to ensuring that children and young people only become looked after when there is no alternative and it is clearly in their best interests for this to happen. Our Brighter Futures programme has been transforming the way we work, and our focus is on enabling children and young people to live at home with their family wherever possible. We work intensively with children, young people and their families - where there is a risk of the child or young person being looked after – with the aim to keep children within their family network.

When it is not possible to keep children at home and they become looked after, we always aim to place them within a family setting. This could be with a member of the extended family or with a foster family. Ealing will only place children and young people within a registered residential children's home in exceptional circumstances.

The aim is always to place children in or near to Ealing, wherever that is possible. Occasionally it will be in a child's best interests to place them at a distance but that should only happen in exceptional circumstances.

In addition, we aim to work intensively with our most vulnerable and at risk looked after children and young people. Through intensive support and careful planning, we aim to ensure that children and young people do not experience multiple - or indeed any - placement breakdowns.

To summarise, the key aim of our local placement policy is to:

- Keep children with their families or in family settings
- Keep children in the local area
- Support stable placements and avoid placement breakdowns and moves.

Yours Sincerely,

Carolyn Fair
Director Children and Families

1. Becoming a looked after child and the first placement

1.1 Planned new LAC

Where there is a requirement for children or young people to become LAC on an ongoing basis they should follow one of the planned routes highlighted below prior to the child or young person becoming LAC.

- a) Children and young people age up to 15 years old should be presented to the Legal Planning Panel as per the process outlined here http://ealing.proceduresonline.com/p_legal_proc.html
- b) Young people aged 16 & 17 years old must be presented to the At Risk Of Homelessness (AROH) Panel. All referrals for slots at this panel should be emailed to artduty@ealing.gov.uk The exception may be where a manager deems the risk of harm to be significant and is seeking legal advice on care proceedings (Secure Order Application, Ward of Court Application, Court of Protection cases). Such cases should be referred to the Legal Planning Panel.

1.2 Unplanned new placements and short-term S20 placements

There are occasions where it is not possible to follow the above processes due to time constraints. There are also some occasions where they would not be appropriate. Some examples are listed below but please note this is not an exhaustive list.

- A placement is required in an emergency due to safeguarding concerns.
- A placement is required in an emergency due to non-safeguarding concerns such as homelessness.
- A child or young person has been placed under Police Protection
- A child or young person requires short term care due to family circumstances but is expected to return home within 20 days.
- A young person under 18 years of age has been remanded into custody*.

If you have a child or young person that requires a LAC placement but has not followed one of the planned LAC routes, then please refer to the process and flow chart below.

Please note these children and young people will need to follow the appropriate planned route immediately after they are accommodated and must be presented to the next panel after the date they become LAC.

The only exceptions to the above are children and young people who will be LAC for a period of less than twenty days.

Please remember that children and young people will not be considered LAC unless the placement episode has been completed and the allocated/duty Social Worker has confirmed the placement on MOSAIC.

*Young people under the age of 18, who have been remanded into custody, are considered LAC from the date of remand under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. If the young person is currently allocated to a statutory team (MAST, Connect, CWD or Housing Support) then that team will process the LAC episodes. If the young person is not currently allocated to a statutory team then ECIRS will send the notification to the Connect or Leaving Care Team to process the LAC episodes.

1.3 Changing Education provision due to moving placement

If a child or young person needs to change school due to becoming LAC, or moving placement whilst LAC, the allocated Social Worker **must** consult Ealing's Virtual School Head prior to the move. This discussion should focus on ensuring any disruption to the young person's education is kept to a minimum.

1.4 New LAC placements made via the Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

When a child or young person is accommodated by EDT the appropriate team will receive a notification from EDT the next working morning. The allocated/duty Social Worker will need to establish if they child or young person is still in placement and whether they need to remain LAC. If this is the case, you will need to follow the guidance below immediately that day to enable them to remain in placement.

1.5 Who to contact when a placement is required

If you have a child/young person you believe may require a placement you must discuss this with your manager/deputy manager. If they agree that a placement is required, they will seek agreement from the Head of Service who will then make a request to the Director Children and Families. Whilst awaiting agreement, you can call ART duty to discuss and seek advice.

You may also need to discuss the case with Ealing's Legal Department, but before doing so please ensure you have agreement to do so from a manager/deputy manager.

1.6 Children Looked After under S20 Ceasing LAC

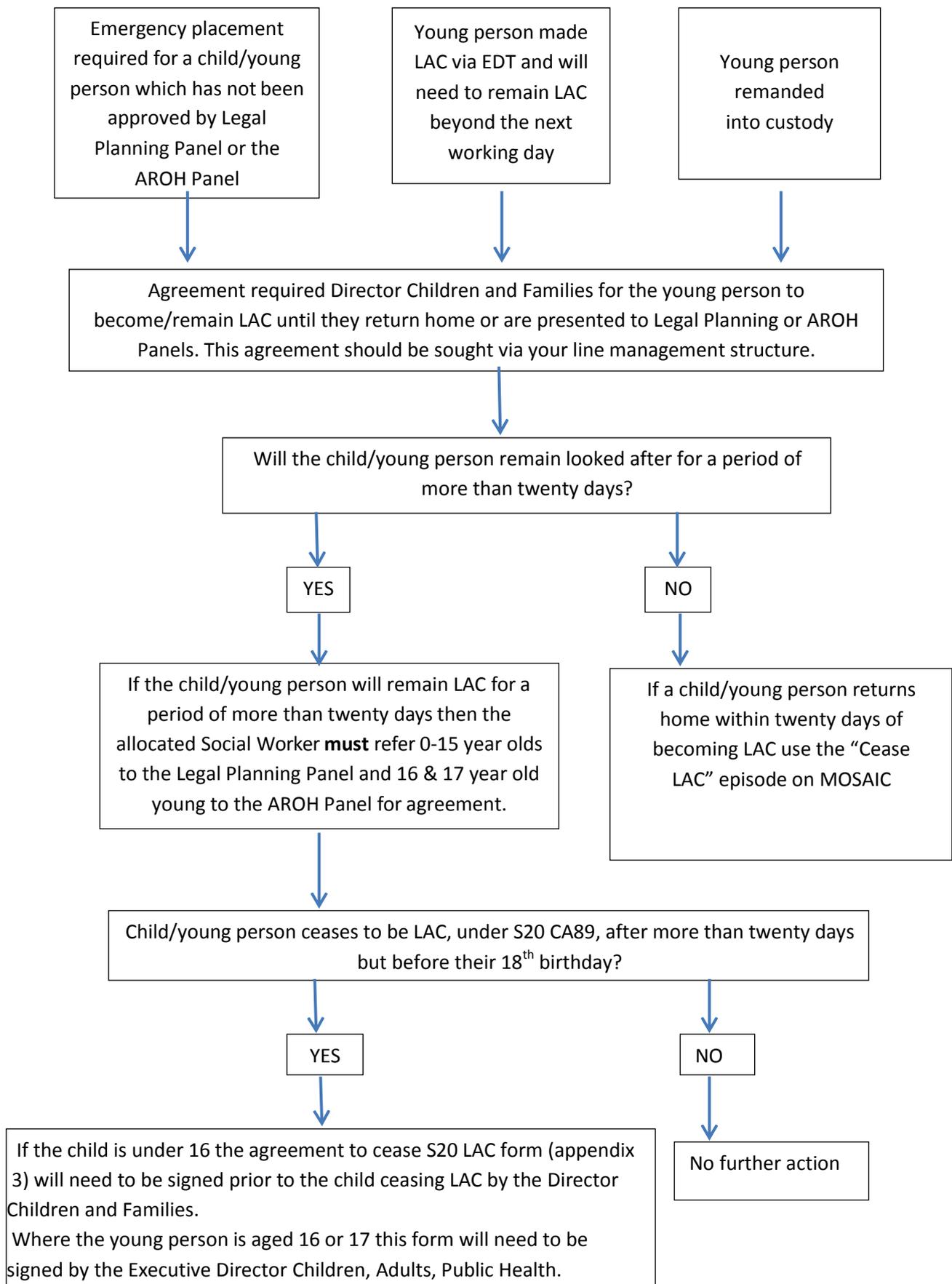
Where a child under 16 years of age has been accommodated for at least 20 working days under section 20 of the 1989 Act the decision to cease to look after her/him must not be put into effect until it has been approved by the Director Children and Families.

Where the local authority is considering ceasing to look after a child aged 16 or 17 years, who has been accommodated under section 20 of the 1989 Act, this decision

must not be put into effect until it has been approved by the Executive Director Children's, Adults and Public Health (see flow chart below).

Prior to any child ceasing LAC prior to their 18th birthday a Child and Family Assessment (CFA) must be completed and should include an assessment of parental capacity and what has changed to now make it safe for a return home. It should also include a clear plan of support that will be provided. If a young person returns home unauthorised the CFA should be completed with two weeks of the child absconding from placement.

2. Agreement for a Child/Young Person to Become/Cease LAC Flowchart



3. Matching and Approval of Placement

The matching process should consider the child's needs especially regarding the following key areas:

- The child's education;
- The expectations around contact with relatives and friends;
- The child's identity/race/culture;
- The child's history;
- The child's behaviour;
- The child's health;
- The focus of the placement.

The matching process should also consider the carer's availability and:

- Their experience;
- Their strengths;
- The family composition;
- The distance from the foster home to the child's school;
- Other children in the placement;
- The foster carer's children.

Once a potential placement has been identified, an offer will be made by ART.

The child's social worker will liaise with the foster carer's supervising social worker (who may be from an independent fostering agency) to agree arrangements for the placement. At this stage, the social worker will also discuss the child with the prospective foster carer and share/clarify any risks associated with the placement with the foster carers and the supervising social worker. Wherever possible, the child's social worker should visit potential carers and as required consult with other professionals, prior to a decision about the appropriateness of a placement being made.

In relation to the sharing of bedrooms, each child over 3 should have their own bedroom, or where this is not possible, the placing authority must agree to the sharing of the bedroom and this must therefore be addressed during the matching process.

Where the proposed placement is an in-house placement, it will then be presented to the social worker's manager for approval. If the placement is outside the foster carer's terms of approval or an exemption is required, see Exemptions and Extensions/Variations to Foster Carer Approval Procedure.

The social worker may then arrange an introductory visit to the proposed placement, with the child (if old enough) and parents (if appropriate).

4. Placement Planning

Before the child is placed, the child's social worker will arrange a Placement Planning Meeting after liaising with the foster carer and the foster carer's supervising social worker (who may be from an independent fostering agency). The meeting will usually be held in the new placement. See also **Placement Planning and Disruption Meetings Procedure**.

Participants will include:

- The parent;
- The child (if appropriate);
- The foster carer;
- The supervising social worker;
- Any other relevant professionals, e.g. a representative from the child's school;
- Anyone else considered appropriate or who will have a role in the placement.

The purpose of the first Placement Planning Meeting is to finalise the Placement Plan (which will be recorded on the Placement Information Record). This will involve a discussion of the child's needs to ensure careful matching, including the child's personal history, religious persuasion, cultural and linguistic background and racial origin, as well as the child's health and education needs and how these are to be met. It will also include the arrangements for registering the child with local health professionals (GP, dentist and optician).

In addition, the Placement Planning Meeting will consider the type of introduction process required, for example whether arrangements should be made for the child, parents and the social worker to visit the foster home and/or whether it may be appropriate to have an introductory overnight stay. Children should be able to visit the foster home and talk in private with the carer. If this is not possible, arrangements may be made for the carers to visit the child and parents; or for information about the foster carers to be sent to the child and/or the parents, for example about routines in the foster home, bedtimes, meals, visitors, pocket money, school, privacy and the overall expectations in relation to the child's behaviour within the home.

For children placed in foster care, the Placement Plan should cover the following issues in addition to those for all placements set out in the **Decision to Look After and Care Planning Procedure**:

1. The type of accommodation to be provided and the address;
2. Where the authority has, or is notified of, Child Protection concerns relating to the child, or the child has gone missing from the placement or from any previous placement, the day to day arrangements put in place by the appropriate person (placement provider) to keep the child safe;
3. The child's personal history, religious persuasion, cultural and linguistic background and racial origin;

4. Where the child is Accommodated:

- The respective responsibilities of the Local Authority and parents/anyone with Parental Responsibility;
- Any delegation of responsibility by parents/anyone with Parental Responsibility to the Local Authority and /or the foster carer(s) in relation to the following matters (and identifying any of these matters on which the local authority/parents/persons with Parental Responsibility consider that the child may make a decision):
 - Medical and dental treatment;
 - Education;
 - Leisure and home life;
 - Faith and religious observance;
 - Use of social media;
 - Any other matters upon which the local authority/parents/others with parental responsibility consider appropriate.
- The expected duration of the arrangements and the steps to bring the arrangements to an end, including arrangements for the child to return to live with parents/anyone with Parental Responsibility;
- Where the child is aged 16 or over and agrees to being provided with accommodation under Section 20 Children Act 1989, that fact.

5. The circumstances in which it is necessary to obtain in advance the Local Authority's approval for the child to take part in school trips or overnight stays;

6. The Local Authority's arrangements for the financial support of the child during the placement;

7. The obligation on the carers to comply with the terms of the foster care agreement.

The meeting also provides an opportunity to ensure that the foster carers have a copy of any relevant court order and that full information is shared with them about the child's needs and any behaviour management issues.

Except in emergency placements, the Placement Planning Meeting should be held before the placement. Where this is not possible, it should be held in order that the Placement Plan is prepared within 5 working days of the start of the placement.

The child's social worker will complete and arrange for the circulation of the Care Plan and Placement Plan to the child, parents and foster carers before or at the latest, within 5 working days of the placement.

At the time of the placement, the foster carers should also be given any additional information about details of the child's day to day needs which are not covered by the Placement Plan/Placement Information Record but are important to ensure that the carers are in the best possible position to help the child settle in the new placement, for example any particular fears at night-time or the child's favourite toys.

The child's social worker must provide the child and the parent with written information about coming into care, including information on using the Complaints Procedure.

In addition, as indicated above, the social worker should ensure that any other information about the placement that is available for the child is obtained and given to him/her. Children must understand house expectations before the placement is made.

In all cases, the child should be accompanied to the placement by the social worker and helped to settle in. Suitable luggage should be used, and a child's belongings should never be transported in bin-bags or other inappropriate containers.

5. Notification of Placement

The child's social worker will update the child's electronic records with the details of the placement in order to trigger payments to the placement.

The notifications should be before the start of the placement, wherever possible, or within 24 hours.

Notification of the placement will also be sent by the child's social worker/practice support officer to the *Designated Nurse for LAC*, the education service, the relevant local Children's Services (if the placement is in the area of a different local authority) and the child's GP.

The child's social worker will notify all family members consulted and involved in the decision-making process of the placement.

The child's social worker must also notify the allocated Independent Reviewing Officer or, if it is the first placement, the Planning and Review Officer, of the placement. This notification will trigger the appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer if it is the first placement, and the setting up of arrangements for a Looked After Review.

These notifications must be made in writing, advising of the placement decision and the name and address of the person with whom the child is to be placed.

The child's social worker should also notify - preferably in writing but it may be verbally - all those involved in the day to day arrangements for the child, including nursery/school and any health professional or YOT worker actively involved with the child.

It will be necessary for the foster carer or the child's social worker to ensure the child is registered with a GP, Dentist and Optician, either retaining practices known to him or her (which is preferable) or in the area where they are placed.

In relation to a first Looked After placement it will also be necessary for the social worker to liaise with the LAC Health Administrator to arrange a Health Care Assessment - see [Health Care Assessments and Plans Procedure](#) for further details. The social worker must also contact the relevant school or, where the child does not have a school place, the relevant education officer with a view to the completion of a Personal Education Plan - see [Education of Looked After Children Procedure](#).

For any new placement, every effort should be made to enable the child to remain at the same school unless there are reasons which would be detrimental to his or her well being

6. Support and Monitoring of Placements

The child's social worker must visit the child in the placement within one week of the placement and then, at a minimum, every six weeks during the first year, thereafter every six weeks (three months if the placement is intended to last until the child is 18). For children in long-term foster placements visits after the first year should not be less frequent than six monthly - see **Social Worker Visits to Looked After Children Procedure**.

The foster carer will also receive support and supervision from their supervising social worker (for in-house placements) - see **Supervision and Support of Foster Carers Procedure** - and from the independent fostering agency (for external placements).

Where there are concerns in relation to the progress of the placement, consideration should be given to seeking additional resources to assist the carers.

Where there are any changes to the type of placement or to the child's legal status during the placement, the child's social worker must update the child's electronic records.

The records should be monitored for quality, adequacy and retention.

A Looked After Review should be convened where:

- The child is, or has been, persistently absent from the placement;
- The placement provider, parents or area authority are concerned that the child is at risk of harm; or
- The child so requests, unless the Independent Reviewing Officer considers that the review is not justified.

See also **Looked After Reviews Procedure**.

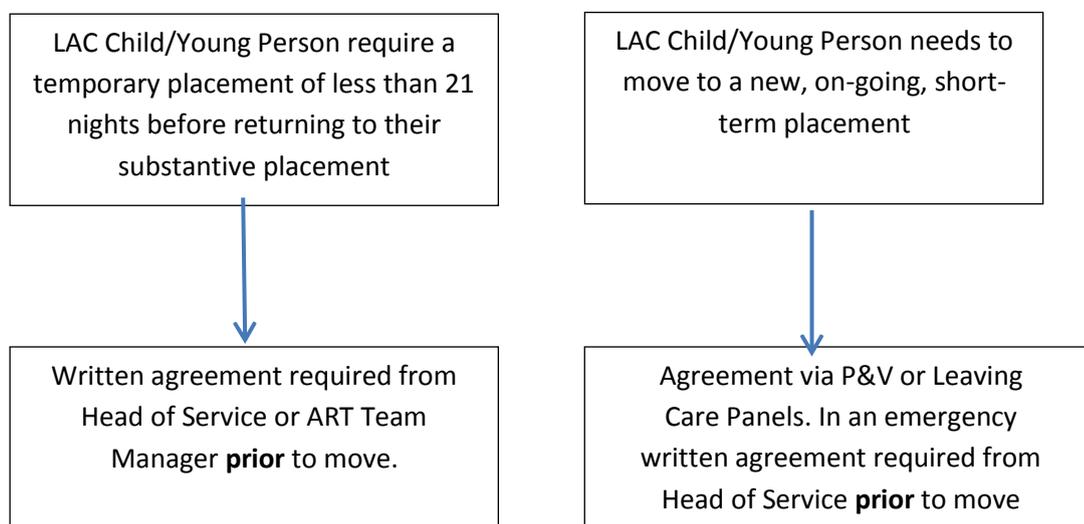
7. Moving Placement

a. Respite

Children and young people who are in a LAC placement may require an alternative placement either for a short period of time before returning to their substantive placement, often referred to as respite, or moving permanently.

Where a child or young person require a temporary/respice placement but will be returning to their substantive placement you will need to have agreement as outlined below prior to the move.

- For a period less than 21 one nights - agreement from either a Head of Service or from the Manager of the Access to Resources Team (ART)
- For a period in excess of 21 - agreement from a Head of Service.



b. Moving placements via permanency planning

Identification of an alternative placement needs to be undertaken within the permanence planning process http://ealing.proceduresonline.com/g_perm_plan.html. The suitability of any placement needs to be considered within the child's normal care planning and review process. If a move is not part of the child's care plan agreed at a LAC Review, there is a need to inform the IRO and have a LAC review to approve the change in placement. All placement moves will need to be initiated on MOSAIC via the ART episode. This needs to happen within one week of the placement being identified

c. Moving placements outside permanency planning

There may be occasions when a child or young person needs to change placement due to unforeseen circumstances. Examples of this include safeguarding concerns regarding their current placement, placement breakdown, illness or resignation of the

carer. ART will accept referrals only where written agreement has been given by a Head of Service or an ART Manager/Senior has agreed to accept it whilst awaiting written agreement.

d. Moving from residential

All young people placed in a registered residential children's home will move to other suitable accommodation at the end of Key Stage 4 to progress the young person's journey to adulthood.

8. Placement options for looked after children and care leavers

Placement options for children aged 0-15

It is Ealing's Children's Services policy that children & young people aged 0-15 years who are LAC should be placed within a family setting. This could be with kinship carers or with approved foster carers. Some children/young people may, at times, require additional support within a foster placement. If it is identified that this is the case, please contact ART immediately. Early intervention is essential to avoid placement breakdown.

A small proportion of LAC may require a foster placement with ongoing additional therapeutic input for the carers and young people. Such placements are sometimes referred to as specialist fostering. ART will only accept referrals for specialist fostering when agreement to this type of placement has been given in writing by the Head of Service for Children in Care and Care Leavers and or Children's Placements.

In exceptional circumstances children & young people may require another placement setting such as a registered residential children's home. Such placements will need to be authorised by the Director Children and Families before ART will accept a referral. Authority should be sought using Ealing's line management structure.

Where a child or young person has been placed within a residential setting the placement planning meeting and subsequent LAC reviews must include a clear plan. This plan will include clear indication of the type of placement the child young person will move to next, as well as a timescale including month and year for the child/young person to move on.

If you need advice pre/post placement regarding this, please contact an ART Manager/Senior. ART will also monitor specialist fostering and residential placements.

See also section below about the use of residential placements.

Placement options for LAC aged 16-17 (Including Staying Put)

Some young people aged 16+ will still have their needs best met within a fostering placement. For other young people aged 16 or 17 years old supported lodging or semi-independent accommodation will be offered for new placements.

Most of the semi-independent accommodation that Ealing uses are located in Ealing or neighbouring boroughs. Placements can be identified in other locations but will need Head of Service approval

Placements in registered residential children's homes will not normally be considered suitable for this group (see 3.4). The majority of young people aged 16+ are capable and will often want a less restrictive placement setting to enable the development of their independent living skills.

To ensure the young person is aware of potential types of placement they will be given information by their allocated worker at the point they transfer to the Leaving Care Service/at the LAC review after their 15th birthday. This will highlight the options of supported lodgings, semi-independent & Staying Put.

Young people need to be reminded, via their allocated Social Worker and the independent reviewing officer, of the type of accommodation they will be offered as they move towards independence. It must be emphasised that they will probably need to share facilities whatever type of placement they move to.

See also section below about the use of residential placements.

Placement options for young adults aged 18-21 (up to 25 if in education)

➤ Staying Put (up to 21)

When a young person has been placed within a fostering household prior to their 18th birthday there will be a potential option of staying with their foster carers under a staying put arrangement. This is explained in Ealing's Staying Put Policy (see link in Appendix 4).

➤ Shared housing, semi-independent, supported lodgings

Care leavers aged over 18 who still need ongoing support within the placement will be offered placements within shared housing, semi –independent accommodation or supported lodgings. These types of placement are not permanent, so the young person will need to move on from this type of accommodation after a period of time.

Due to the limited availability of such placements young people will be required to accept the placement offered unless there are very strong reasons not to do so. If the allocated worker has evidence that the accommodation on offer is unsuitable, then the case will need to be presented to the Care Leavers Funding Panel for agreement to seek alternative accommodation.

If a young person aged over 18 year of age does not use the accommodation provided appropriately, i.e. they have more than seven days absence in a calendar month, they refuse to claim benefits where appropriate or do not utilise key work sessions, then the placement will be ended. Any exceptions to this will need to be agreed by the Head of Service, Children In Care.

Where the placement has an initial support package of support hours over and above the standard package of care offered by the provider these will reduce within a 6-week period to the placements standard support hours unless explicit agreement has been given by the Care Leavers Funding Panel.

➤ Permanent accommodation without ongoing support

Once young people have reached the stage where they no longer require additional support in their placement they will move to independence. Ealing can provide a range of options. The options that may be available include: Rented accommodation within the private sector, housing association and limited council housing.

Residential placements (0 to 18 year olds)

In the majority of cases the use of a residential placement will be as a time limited intervention to help meet needs which cannot be met outside of a residential provision or where there is no other option. The use of residential placements will be time limited, with a coherent plan of intervention, a planned end date and regular monitoring.

In the first instance if a child or young person cannot be placed within their family, the type of placement sought would be a foster placement.

There will be some instances where the level of need requires a residential placement e.g. a specialist residential unit for children with a profound disability.

It is imperative that education is not disrupted at key stages in a child's education pathway. Therefore, consideration must be given to key transition points e.g. if a young person cannot remain at the same school due to moving from residential to foster care and they are midway through their GCSE years the planning for their move must be viewed sensitively to their education.

The general principle is that young people should be provided with the opportunity to prepare for independence and for that reason, residential placements should not normally continue beyond the time when the young person reaches the end of school Year 11.

Exceptions to any of the above will require the agreement of the Head of Service and the Director Children and Families.

Protocol for requesting a residential placement:

No residential placement will be considered without the agreement of the Director Children and Families. This agreement must be sought by the relevant Head of Service.

If approved a clear referral to ART including the identified needs and a time scaled plan of desired outcomes, including a plan to move on to foster placement should be submitted.

Monitoring outcomes and progress

- IRO: the IRO must be consulted about any proposal to move a child to residential care. This consultation needs to take place prior to any placement move. If this move is not part of a child's existing care plan it will require an early LAC Review, to which the SW must present a transition plan detailing alternative placement options for the child, including (as appropriate) transition to home or family placement, transition to a foster placement or to semi-independent accommodation.
- Update Reports: The Social worker must receive regular reports on the intervention and the progress of the intervention from the residential unit.
- Supervision: The plans for children in residential will be reviewed in supervision and any concerns in relation to lack of progress should be raised with the Head of Service immediately.
- P&V Panel/ Care Leavers Funding Panel: All residential placements will be reviewed at the P&V panel for under 16's and Care Leavers Funding Panel from 16 plus.
- Managers and allocated social workers will be accountable for the planning and effective outcomes on these cases.
- Other local monitoring mechanisms will also review plans and progress, e.g. LAC and Leaving Care Management Meetings.

9. LAC Children/Young People Placed at a Distance.

When a LAC child/young person is placed outside of Ealing or neighbouring boroughs (Brent, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow) the placement has to be authorised by the Executive Director, Children, Adults, Public Health. This will be organised by ART, you will receive an email with a Word attachment giving the authorisation. This will need to be uploaded onto the client record on MOSAIC.

10. Ending of Placements

When the placement ends, the child's social worker must update the child's electronic records and notify the finance section so that payments to the carer/provider will cease. The social worker will also send copies to those notified when the placement was made.

All written information on the child, which the foster carer holds, should be transferred to the supervising social worker for transfer to the child's social worker.

In appropriate cases, the foster carer should be asked to complete an end of placement report.

Children must, when they leave the home, be helped to understand the reasons and be supported with the transition - including return home and independence.

Foster carers must be supported to maintain links with children who leave their care, where appropriate.

Where the placement ends in an unplanned way, consideration should be given to holding a Disruption Meeting - see **Placement Planning and Disruption Meetings Procedure**.

Where a former carer's records are requested by a new agency, these must be made available within one month of the request.

11. Temporary Approval as Foster Carers of Approved Prospective Adopters

A person who is approved as a prospective adopter may be given temporary approval as a local authority foster carer for a named Looked After child, where the local authority consider that this is in the child's best interests.

Before giving such approval, the responsible authority must:

- Assess the suitability of that person to care for the child as a foster care; and
- Consider whether, in all the circumstances and taking into account the services to be provided by the responsible authority, the proposed arrangements will safeguard and promote the child's welfare and meet the child's needs as set out in the Care Plan.

The temporary approval period expires when:

- The placement is terminated by the local authority;
- The approval as a prospective adopter is terminated;
- The prospective adopter is approved as a foster carer;
- The prospective adopter gives 28 days' written notice that they no longer wish to be temporarily approved as a foster parent in relation to the child; or
- The child is placed for adoption with the prospective adopter.

12. Long Term Foster Placement

Where it is the case that the most appropriate route to permanence is long-term foster care, the regulations set out the arrangements for making such a placement, including:

- That foster care is the plan for permanence and is recorded in the child's care plan, (Reg 5(a));
- That the foster carer has agreed to act as the child's foster carer until the child ceases to be looked after;
- That the responsible authority has confirmed the nature of the arrangement with the foster carer(s), the birth parent and the child; and
- The child and foster carer have a clear understanding of the support services they will receive to promote the placement.

The assessment and planning process for long-term foster care should address the child's current needs and likely future needs, and the capacity of the foster carer to meet these needs now and in the future. The length of placement will vary according to the child's age and the long-term plan for the child, including the transition to adulthood. These factors must all be taken into account in planning for support and services where long - term foster care has been identified as the plan for permanence for a child.

Before deciding to place a child in a long-term foster placement, (whether or not this means moving to a new carer) the ability of the identified long-term foster carer to care for the child both now and in the future should be assessed. The support and services which will be needed to ensure that the placement is stable, secure and meets the child's needs should be identified taking into account the carer's previous fostering or other childcare experience, family configuration (including placement of other children under fostering arrangements), existing relationship (if any) with the child, knowledge and skills and capacity to care for the child long term under a fostering arrangement.

It is imperative that the foster carer fully understands and explicitly agrees to the long term commitment they are making to the child [regulation 22B (2)(f)]. A record of the discussion of these matters including the outcome should be made as part of the assessment process.

The decision to place a child in a long-term foster placement with a particular foster carer should be discussed and recorded as part of the review process. This decision should then be recorded in the placement plan and agreed and signed by the foster carer [regulation 9(3)].

Where it is agreed that the child will be placed in a long-term foster placement, this should be communicated clearly to the foster carer, the child's parents or any other person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility and the child. (Reg 2(1)).

Where the decision has been taken that the plan for permanence is long-term foster care and the child is in an existing foster care placement, it may be that the carer and (where appropriate) the child want the existing foster placement to be the long-term foster placement. Such a proposal should be considered in a reasonable timescale taking into account the existing relationship between the child and the foster carer, the length of time in placement, the child's relationships with the foster carer's wider family and community.

Consideration should also be given to the progress the child has made in the placement, recorded through the case review process.

There may be circumstances where it is not considered appropriate to assess the ability of the current foster carer as the long-term carer for the child. In these instances, the reasons for this decision should be clearly set out in writing to the foster carer. This decision should also be communicated to the child where it is appropriate to their age and understanding.

Appendix 1 - Types of placement

Placement Type	Information
Kinship or Family & Friends Care	<p>When a child/young person cannot remain with the person with parental responsibility the first option that should be explored is a placement with someone known to them.</p> <p>Please note that if such a placement is not arranged via Children's Services it would normally be considered to come under Private Fostering regulations. If you are unsure, please consult your manager.</p>
Standard Foster Care	<p>Most children/young people who are LAC will be placed within a family setting. If no suitable placement within their network is available ART will identify a foster placement with either Ealing's own fostering service or with an external fostering agency.</p> <p>ART will identify possible carers, if these are via an external agency the allocated/duty Social Worker will need to read that carers Form F to ensure it is a suitable placement. ART will ensure the agency is approved and will also verify the carers statutory checks are current and complete.</p>
Enhanced (Specialist) Foster Care	<p>Some children/young people will require a foster placement with additional inputs. These will need to be identified by the Social Worker on the placement request to ART.</p> <p>Please note, agreement for such placements will need to be given by a Head of Service.</p>
Residential Care (Registered Children's Home)	<p>A small number of children/young people will require a placement in a non-family setting. Such placement can only be agreed by the Director Children and Families. If you would like advice on this type of placement option, please contact an ART Manager/Senior to discuss.</p>
Parental Residential Assessment Centre	<p>A placement that will assess a parent's ability to care for their child. These are time limited placements, either 4, 6 or 12 weeks. Such placements will normally only be commissioned as part of Care Proceedings and where this type of placement has been agreed by the Legal Planning Panel.</p>
Community parental assessment with accommodation.	<p>ART can jointly commission accommodation, usually with Greenford YMCA, alongside a parenting assessment from a third party.</p>
Secure Children's Home (welfare)	<p>In exceptional circumstances a placement within a secure environment may be considered. Such placements require written agreement from a Director Children and Families</p>

	followed by agreement from court within 72 hours. Please consult with your line manager regarding such placements.
Respite Care whilst LAC	Temporary periods of care away from the child/young person's normal LAC placement.
Special Residential School	Special residential schools would need agreement from Joint Funding Panel. Please contact Ealing's SEN service if you need further advice.
Semi-independent foyer accommodation	Supported housing within a project designated for specific group. Examples include YMCA and Centrepoint.
Supported Lodgings/ YMCA/ Host Family	Accommodation within a household with own bedroom and shared facilities. The person providing the accommodation will have been assessed and will offer support there will also be key work support external to the placement.
Semi-independent Accommodation with support (staffed 24 hours) –	Shared housing with staff on site at all times, additional key work support dependent on need.
Semi-independent Accommodation with support (not staffed 24 hours) –	Shared housing without staff on site at all times, additional key work support dependent on need.
Housing options	Private rented, limited Housing Association, limited Council Housing
Placed with Parents (PWP)	Children/young people subject to a Care Order may, with a director's written approval, be placed with persons with parental responsibility. Please note that LAC under S20 CA89 cannot be classified as placed with parents.

Appendix 2 - Reporting issues/concerns regarding a LAC/Care Leaver Placement

Reporting concerns/issues regarding placements

Any safeguarding concern must be raised with your line manager as soon as it comes to your notice. All other concerns should be reported as set out below.

The ART team source placements from a variety of providers and will be involved with a placement until the young person is placed. Once the child/young person is placed it is vital that any issues/concerns are feedback to ART to enable ongoing quality assurance of providers.

If you have an issue concern regarding a placement you must report it to the Access to Resources Team. Please email details of the issue/concern to artduty@ealing.gov.uk this will then be dealt with by the Commissioning Officer responsible for that particular placement type.

You will receive confirmation of receipt of your issue/concern within 2 working days, ART will explore the issue/concern with the placement provider. Once this has been investigated you will receive an update from ART.

If the issue/concern continues or you are unhappy with the response from ART please email the senior integrated commissioning manager who will respond to you directly.

Appendix 3: Ceasing LAC Form

Agreement form for any child returning home after being LAC for 20 days or more

1. Name of Young Person:
2. DOB:
3. Name of SW:
4. Team:
5. Reason for being looked after and reason for return home:
6. Date of LAC period:
7. View of young person:
8. CFA completed:
9. View of IRO:
10. Ongoing plan of support:
11. Agreement to de-accommodate.

For clients aged 16 or 17 when ceasing LAC

----- (Signature and date)

Judith Finlay

Executive Director

For clients aged under 16 when ceasing LAC

----- (Signature and date)

Carolyn Fair

Director Children and Families

Appendix 4 - Staying Put Policy

Please see [Ealing Childrens Social Care Services Procedures Manual, Staying Put Procedure](#).