

JOINT WORKING PROTOCOL

**BARNARDOS MANCHESTER
LEAVING CARE SERVICE, MAKING IT
WORK, CAFRASS AND CONNEXIONS**

AND

**MANCHESTERS COLLEGES
DEALING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
WHO ARE IN AND LEAVING CARE**

FIRST AGREED: OCTOBER 2007

CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION
- DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES INVOLVED
- STATEMENT OF JOINT OBJECTIVES & COMMON OUTCOMES
- PROCESS OF WORKING TOGETHER
 - Data Sharing / Referral to one another
 - Joint working with Individual Young People at College
 - Joint working with Individual Young People not at College
- JOINT TRAINING
- STRATEGIC OVERVIEW
- APPENDICES – STAFFING CHARTS & CONTACT NUMBERS

1 INTRODUCTION

This Protocol aims to set down in writing how Manchester's four FE Colleges working with young people aged 16 → 21 in, and leaving, care, and in respect of whom Manchester is/was the Authority they are/were in 'care' of, will work together with Manchester Leaving Care Service (MLCS), Making It Work (MIW), Children and Families Refugee and Asylum Seeking Service (Cafrass) and Connexions to achieve the best possible educational/training/employment outcomes for this group of young people.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE AGENCIES INVOLVED

a) Barnardos Manchester Leaving Care Service (MLCS)

All young people who are legally 'looked after' ("in care") on their 16th birthdays of Manchester Local Authority, whether they are on Interim or Full Care Orders (S31) or Accommodated (S20), irrespective of where geographically or what 'placement type' they are living in, should all be referred on or about their 16th birthdays to MLCS.

MLCS, contracted by Manchester Local Authority's Childrens Services to work in partnership and on behalf of the said Children's Services, will then carry out in respect of all such young people the legal duties enshrined in the 2000 Children (Leaving Care) Act. In summary, for a minimum period of 5 years until the young person is aged 21 (and occasionally beyond this until 24 if the young person is in an agreed course of education or training) MLCS will allocate all such young people a Personal Advisor and ensure that an initial needs Assessment, Pathway Plan and regular 6 monthly Review of that Plan are all in place throughout the 5 year period in question. The Personal Advisor – part 'doer', part advocate and part co-ordinator of other services-- will further ensure each young person is supported to make as smooth a transition towards independence as possible and that in so doing they each maximise their potential to the fullest possible degree.

b) Barnardos Making It Work (MIW)

MLCS has a 'sister' Service called Making It Work. This Service exists to provide more intensive learning and personal development support to young people leaving care, with an emphasis on trying to get all such young people into appropriate education/training/employment options, and with a particular emphasis on trying to reach the most statistically disadvantaged groups of care leavers, such as lone parents, the black and ethnic minority communities and young people with 'health' difficulties.

c) Connexions

Connexions provides information, advice, guidance and support for all young people aged 13-19 in Manchester. For young people with learning difficulties or disabilities this

extends to 25. The Service aims to help young people make the right choices for a successful transition to adult life. It also aims to identify those young people who may need additional support and help to overcome personal difficulties and obstacles to learning and progression. All young people aged 13-19 will have a Connexions Personal Adviser and Colleges will already have established ways of working and liaising with such workers. Such arrangements will continue. As regards this particular Protocol however the role of the Connexions Service is to ensure that LAC/CL get extra support over and above the “norm” and thus in this instance their role is more of a strategic one in ensuring that Colleges and MLCS/MIW are facilitated to work together and provide this support.

d) **Children and Families Refugee and Asylum seeking Service(CAFRASS)**

Cafrass provides a service to unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people (UASC) who arrive in Manchester. All young people under the age of 18 become “looked after children” unless there is a specific reason not to accommodate them. CAFRASS provides a social work service to all UASC LAC up to the age of 18 and a leaving care service to young people aged 18-21, or 24 if in higher education. Many young people first present to the Local Authority after their 16th birthdays and hence their Pathway Plans are completed later than when they are aged 16 years and three months. At 18 each young person will have an allocated Leaving Care Worker who will undertake six monthly reviews of the Pathway Plan as well as providing support and guidance.

e) **MANCAT College**

Mancat is a large general FE College serving the City of Manchester. Its mission, supported by all staff and pervading everything it does, is “enhancing the knowledge and skills of the whole community”

The College has four main campuses at Openshaw, Moston, Ardwick and the City Centre. Additionally it has three specialist centres-two for construction and one for music, and four sixth form centres.

Mancat’s key goals of widening participation and improving achievement are attained through a high quality curriculum which is flexible and learner centred, and is also responsive to employer needs and skills sector demands. The College was inspected by OFSTED in 2007 and was graded “outstanding” with the commitment to educational and social inclusion especially highlighted in the report.

Mancat is committed to enhancing student experience for ALL students and recognises the complex and disparate needs of individual and particular groups of students. To this end Mancat has a dedicated team of youth workers within the Youth Support Department within the College, described as “highly skilled” within the Ofsted report, who work with young people to help them overcome barriers to accessing, and

remaining in, further education. This Youth Support Department will work with Connexions and Barnardos MLCS/MIW and CAFRASS to identify the support needs of individual and groups of LAC students. Each LAC student, where appropriate, will be allocated a named youth worker who will be responsible for offering ongoing support, tracking student progress and communicating with Personal advisors from Barnardos and Connexions.

Mancat will also try to do what it can for those LAC not in College but who might benefit by being so, by being prepared to discuss an individual LACs needs and fit them in to a particular course if possible, or by being flexible about entry dates to college and in so doing trying to create specific entry/taster type courses at different non standard admission times in the calendar year, with a view to such young people joining a longer term standard course at College when they are able.

f) **City College**

City College Manchester's mission is to "widen participation in high quality education and training provision that will help drive social, economic, and cultural development". Being a large FE Institution, covering a wide geographical area, including Manchester city centre, the College has a diverse population and an extensive range of activities. The college is active in a significant number of areas of high deprivation. Manchester has a history of educational underachievement and is ethnically diverse City. This is reflected in City College's varied population and strong widening participation mission

There are five campuses across the City, three in the south, one in the north and one in the city centre. The College also operates in a number of other community venues. Additionally, there is a centre for international students located in the city centre. All the various sites have different curriculum flavours and atmospheres.

The College positions itself to respond to government initiatives and utilises local knowledge and strategies to establish provision. To address the below average educational and employment indicators, the social, cultural and ethnic diversity of the students and the challenging targets set at national, regional and local level, the College has developed a wide and varied curriculum. City College thus provides courses through from basic skills to degrees, giving students the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills required for employment or further study. The College is also a major provider of English for speakers of another language.

Support for students is wide and varied and is offered to students according to their individual needs. College support staff are qualified in differing aspects of specialism eg deaf; blind/partially sighted; learning difficulties; dyslexia; counselling and youth work.

City College is committed to working with young people and to support individuals in achieving their full potential. The student support service will allocate named staff for each LAC as appropriate. These staff will liaise closely with the Personal Advisors from connexions and Barnardos and will engage each learner to ensure ongoing support and guidance is provided.

g) Loreto College

Loreto College is situated on one single site in Hulme. The College has a very strong support structure for all students to enable them to achieve their learning goals. All students have a personal tutor with whom they meet daily for a fifteen minute period and for longer one hour session once a week. The personal tutor is responsible for the day to day welfare of the student and will build up a strong supportive relationship with each student. Subject teachers inform the personal tutor of any concerns about the student's progress or behaviour and these are then discussed with the student. All students are also allocated a senior tutor who has overall responsibility for the student's progress and welfare. The senior tutor will liaise with parents and outside agencies and will work with students who are at risk within the College. Students are very positively encouraged to contact their senior tutor and to discuss any worries or personal concerns they have which can then be dealt with or referred on to appropriate specialist agencies. Within the tutorial system assemblies for each senior tutor group are held weekly to reinforce the spirituality of the College and the community to which the student belongs.

There is a College Counsellor to whom students can be referred or to whom students can refer themselves. The College Chaplain also has an extensive support role working with students from all faiths to offer guidance and support, particularly to help students settle into college. The College also has a Social Inclusion Officer who works with groups of students with social needs and with individual students to motivate them and help them reach their potential. Student's attendance is followed up by a Retention and Attendance Officer who builds up relationships with students to encourage them to attend college regularly.

There are also many other sources of support within the College for all students. Students with special physical or medical needs are cared for by a team of Support Workers led by the College Disability Officer with a dedicated room and facilities.

High achieving students are identified by their GCSE achievements and by teacher assessments, and are encouraged and supported to have high aspirations. A member of staff has specific responsibility as an Oxbridge Coordinator to ensure that students who wish to apply for particularly competitive Universities or courses have individual and highly specific advice to do so based on current university requirements.

There is extensive study support for students with specific learning needs and learning difficulties. This is based in the college's study centre and students are given one to one support as part of their weekly timetable. This service is available to all college students whatever their level of achievement.

The Study Skills Department arranges assessment by external agencies such as educational psychologists in order to identify specific student needs and offer appropriate support. There are also extensive careers materials within the study centre and advice available for students on higher education and employment. Connexions staff also visit the College weekly and students can make appointments to see them within the college for careers or personal advice.

h) **Xaverian College**

Xaverian College is located on one site in Victoria Park. It is committed to the overall development, both personal and academic, of each individual student and hence will provide a range of pastoral and academic support service tailored to the needs of each individual. These services will include access to learning mentors, personalised career support and the college counsellor, amongst many other services.

3. STATEMENT OF JOINT OBJECTIVES AND COMMON OUTCOMES

Whilst all LAC /Care Leavers (LAC/CL) are each individuals in their own right, and need to be treated as such in respect of their particular circumstances and potential, nevertheless it will be recognised from the outset that LAC/CL 'statistically' are a highly disadvantaged group who thus figure disproportionately in 'negative' indicators such as more likely to be 'NEET', more likely to not have achieved formal qualifications at school, more vulnerable to homelessness, becoming young parents, mental health issues etc etc. As such the primary objective of all parties to this agreement, cognisant of these statistics, will be to work together to provide wherever necessary something "extra" to this group of young people which thus tries to compensate for the additional disadvantages they may face. In this regard common objectives will further be

- to make 'College' as flexible and attractive option as possible to those not currently at College, but who may well be interested in, or capable of so being.
- to give the maximum level of support possible to those 'in' College, both to ensure they last the course and succeed, or that indeed they are on the 'right' course for them in the first place.
- to give the same mixture of both pastoral and academic support to ensure such young people 'progress' to their full potential whilst in College
- to ensure that all steps are taken to feed young people into appropriate employment /further education etc when the time comes for them to leave college.

As such the joint outcomes being worked towards will be

- that as many LAC/CL as possible go to college, if this is the best option for them
- that LAC/CL 'progress' within College to the same level as any other young people
- that LAC/CL enjoy being at college and gain socially from the experience
- that LAC/CL demonstrate good destinations in employment/further and higher education when they leave College.

4. **PROCESS OF WORKING TOGETHER**

a) **Data exchange/information sharing**

At the outset of its dealings with all young people referred to its Service, MLCS invites young people to understand, and 'sign up' to, the basis on which MLCS will or will not share information about the young person with other Agencies. Essentially this process differentiates between 'basic information' like name, date of birth, address etc (and in this instance the fact that they are a care leaver known to MLCS) - which we say we will routinely share if we feel such a Service can then benefit that young person, and 'personal information', such as family/care history, offending history, etc which we undertake not to share without the express involvement and consent of the young person. Exceptions to this are obviously around child protection and serious harm to self or others. Young people sign a consent form to say they understand and consent to

this process, and such a record of consent is also held on computer. CAFRASS is to work towards a similar “consent to sharing information” process.

Give this situation MLCS/CAFRASS will share on a 6 monthly basis with a “named person” working within “student support” with all Colleges named in this Protocol details of who are known to be care leavers (thus revealing their basic information), which in the first instance could then be used in the following 3 circumstances

- for that College itself to know who it is working with who are Manchester Care Leavers, and for that College to be able to use that information anonymously for statistical purposes
- for that College to be able to target “its” care leavers with specific information if it so wishes setting out what support that young person can expect during their time at College
- for a named person in that College (which will be someone from ‘student support’) to make contact with the MLCS Worker, and where appropriate Connexions Personal Adviser, involved with that young person to explore whether, and how, a more ‘personal’ service to that young person might be offered. It could be that as a result of this initial conversation no ‘follow up action’ whatsoever will be taken; on the other hand arrangements may be made for the MLCS/CAFRASS Worker to discuss with the young person the benefits of greater involvement with pastoral or academic staff within the college in which case a joint approach may be made to the young person etc etc. In this way the sensitivity of the young person as a care leaver and their right to preserve certain personal information about themselves and their situation will be respected but the benefits of potential information sharing will be properly explored.

It should be emphasised that the agreement to share information is ONLY between MLCS/MIW/CAFRASS/Connexions and “Student Support”. However difficult, information that the young person is a care leaver, or more personal information arising out of any contacts that may take place in the paragraphs above, will only further be shared with other staff in the College with the express knowledge and agreement of the young person concerned

b) Joint working with individual young people already in College

Once MLCS, CAFRASS, Connexions and ‘student support’ within the College, in conjunction with the young person, agree to work ‘fully’ together, the minimum that will occur will be regular telephone updates as to the young person’s progress, and ideally periodic three way face to face meetings including the young person. Both MLCS, CAFRAS, Connexions and College representatives should also feel obliged to keep one another informed of any major developments in the young person’s life, and to

try together to find solutions to such issues that if at all possible retain the young person in College.

From time to time additional input of an individual or group nature may be considered to advance that young person's confidence and well being, educational attainment and achievement. Besides individual advice and support, this may include targeted group work with certain care leavers or targeted 'destination' work to try to ensure such young people are evenly represented in progression to employment or higher education once their College course ends.

c) **Joint Working with individual young people not currently at College**

Not only will Manchester's Colleges give possible additional support to the City's Care Leavers who are in College, but they will also give ongoing consideration as to how to get such young people not currently in College into College in the first place if that would be appropriate for them. In this regard Colleges will be open to individual discussions about, and directly with, young people throughout the year and where possible and practicable may arrange for such young people either to join courses 'late' or to attend College on some sort of pre-entry programme (s) prior to these beginning a course proper, which of course usually commence in the Autumn of each year.

5. Joint Training

Understanding the particular issues facing young people in, and leaving, care and the legal and practical workings of this Protocol, is a topic College staff will need to be aware of. Accordingly MLCS/CAFRASS staff, with the help of staff from Manchester's Childrens Services, will commit to assisting College staff with this issue and make themselves available for briefing/training sessions as appropriate.

6. Monitoring & Review

Staff from MLCS, MIW, CAFRASS and Connexions meet regularly on a quarterly basis to consider and co-ordinate education/training/employment issues for LAC/CL across the board from school to higher education and all destinations in between. College staff may be invited to such meetings on an 'as and when' basis if specific issues need to be considered.

However, once every 6 months MLCS, MIW, CAFRASS, Connexions and College staff will meet formally together to look at the workings of this Protocol, ensure data exchange and joint working issues are progressing smoothly, and to consider any wider strategic initiatives that may be appropriate.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF CONTACT NAMES & ADDRESSES

1. **MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE SERVICE (MLCS)**

Childrens Services Manager – John Strongman
Team Manager - Jeanette Smith
Team Manager - Yasmin Tryon
Team Manager - Kim Harwood

Tel No - 0161 226 6722
Fax No - 0161 226 5112

E Mail – forename.surname @ barnardos.org.uk
Address – Barnardos Manchester Leaving Care Service, 36 Monton Street,
Moss Side, Manchester, M14 4LT

2. **MAKING IT WORK(MIW)**

Childrens Services Manager: Ruth Welford Hunte
Tel No - 0161 342 0812
Fax No - 0161 342 0812
E Mail – forename.surname @ barnardos.org.uk
Address – Making It Work, Zion Centre, 339 Stretford Road,
Hulme, Manchester, M15 4ZY

3. **CONNEXIONS**

Operations Manager: Jane Dewar
Tel No 0161 226 8609
Fax No
E Mail – jane.dewar@betterchoices.co.uk
Address – c/o the Powerhouse, Raby Street, Moss Side, Manchester M14 4SL

4. **CAFRASS**

Service Manager; Joanna Waterhouse
Tel No 0161 226 8131
Fax No
E Mail joanna.waterhouse@manchester.gov.uk
Address – Moss Side Social Services Office, 27 Bold Street, Alexandra Park Estate,
Manchester M16 7AD

5. **MANCAT COLLEGE**

Head of Youth Support Team: Rosie Croarkin

Tel no 0161 953 5995

E Mail rosie.croarkin@mancat.ac.uk

Address – Mancat College, Openshaw Site, Ashton Old Road, Manchester M11 2WH

6. **CITY COLLEGE**

Student Support Manager; Sheila Farrell

Tel No 0161 614 8000

E Mail sfarrell@ccm.ac.uk

Address -- City College Manchester, Northenden Campus, Sale Road, Northenden, Manchester M23 ODD

7. **XAVERIAN COLLEGE**

Assistant Principal Pastoral Care: Mr VJ Morrison

Tel No 0161 224 1781

E Mail v.morrison@xaverian.ac.uk

Address Xaverian College, Lower Park Road. Manchester M14 5RB

8. **LORETO COLLEGE**

Principal; Ann Clynch

Tel No 0161 226 5156

Fax No 0161 227 9174

E Mail rzerafa@loreto.ac.uk

Address Loreto Sixth Form College, Chichester Road, Manchester M15 5PB