

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

CONNEXIONS MANCHESTER
MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE
MAKING IT WORK

AGREEMENT FINALISED JUNE 2004

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN MANCHESTER CONNEXIONS SERVICE AND BARNARDOS MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE SERVICE/MAKING IT WORK PROJECT

1. INTRODUCTION THE THREE ORGANISATIONS

Connexions Manchester (CM) exists to provide information, advice, guidance and personal support to all young people aged 13 → 19 in the City of Manchester, to help those young people reach their maximum potential. In most cases this will be achieved by them entering or remaining in learning, or by finding appropriate employment. CM has its own network of trained Personal Advisors working for Connexions, but also enters into partnership with other Agencies to allow them to carry out part or all of this Personal Advisor role.

Barnardos Manchester Leaving Care Service (MLCS) is contracted by Manchester City Council to carry out Manchester Local Authority's legal duties under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. Dealing with all young people aged 16 → 21 (and occasionally beyond) who have been legally 'Looked After' by Manchester Local Authority beyond their 16th birthdays, this involves ensuring all such young people have an initial Needs Assessment, Pathway Plan (thereafter updated 6 monthly) and an allocated Personal Advisor throughout that 5 year period. That Personal Advisor's role – part 'doer' and part co-ordinator of other Services is then to ensure each young person is supported to make as smooth a transition towards independence as possible and that in so doing they maximise their potential to the fullest possible degree.

Barnardos Making It Work Project (MIW) is a 'sister' project to MLCS. It exists to provide more intensive learning and personal development support to young people leaving care, with a particular emphasis on helping certain young people into permanent employment through paid traineeships.

2. JOINT OBJECTIVES OF THE THREE ORGANISATIONS

- i) All young people leaving care will have 'holistic' personal support, varied according to their needs, as they make the transition towards independence.
- ii) All young people leaving care will have 'expert' careers guidance and encouragement, varied according to their needs, to help them realise their potential.
- iii) As many young people as need it will receive more intensive education/training/employment follow up support to help them reach the same aims as i) and ii) above.
- iv) That CM, MLCS and MIW try to avoid duplication of one another's services in achieving the above.
- v) That all 3 organisations will have a commitment to including the views of young people in the operation and development of their respective services.

That all 3 Organisations will work together to meet joint targets, namely

- ensuring as many post Year 11 16→19 years olds are in employment/training/education as possible.
- ensuring as many young people as possible aged 16→19 who become 'lost' to the Connexions Service are re-engaged with that Service.
- ensuring that on or about their 19th birthdays as many young people leaving care as possible are engaged in some form of education/training/employment.

3. **RESOURCES AVAILABLE**

- i) MLCS has 21 Personal Advisors Leaving Care (a mixture of Assessor/Planners and Leaving Care Workers) to work with young people on an individual, largely outreach basis.
- ii) MLCS has a Part Time Development Worker, Education/Training/Employment, part of whose role is a Careers Guidance and Assessment function to specific young people.
- iii) CM has x Connexions Personal Advisors, largely working from Connexions offices spread across the City of Manchester, but also available on an outreach basis (?), and x Employment Assistants who can help with Job Search.
- iv) MIW has one seconded Specialist Connexions Personal Advisor, Leaving Care and some Support Worker/Employment Assistant hours. The specialist P.A will be employed by Connexions, day to day line managed by MIW and work closely with MLCS.

4. **PROCESS OF JOINT WORKING**

- a) Information Sharing/Co-ordination
 - i) MLCS will send on a quarterly basis to CM a list of all 16 → 19 year olds known to MLCS, which will include name, address, date of birth, allocated MLCS personal advisor and current employment/training/education status of those young people.
 - ii) CM will consider the above list and return back to MLCS/MIW any updated such information they may have on those young people, including who the allocated Connexions Personal Adviser is.
 - iii) Such information will be shared by both parties in compliance with the Data Protection Act covering the purpose for which the information will be shared, the sources of information covered and the period it will be held by the recipient agency. Consent to share such basic information will be

obtained from young people at the outset of their involvement with both Services.

- iv) A quarterly 'strategy' meeting will take place between relevant Managers of CM, MLCS and MIW to consider issues of joint working, target achievements and the work of the specialist Connexions Personal Advisor (see below).
- v) MLCS's Manager will attend the Manchester Connexions Management Committee and the Operations Manager Connexions will attend the MIW Steering Group.
- b) Day to Day Joint Working
 - i) Most young people leaving care who attend school will already have a Connexions Personal Advisor involved with them, alongside a Local Authority Social Worker.
 - ii) Manchester Social Services will routinely refer all young people legally 'Looked After' by Manchester Local Authority to MLCS on or around each young person's 16th birthday.
 - iii) MLCS will then allocate each young person a Personal Advisor, Leaving Care, who in the majority of instances will be an Assessor/Planner. That Worker's main initial role will be to conduct the Needs Assessment and write the Initial Pathway Plan as required by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.
 - iv) In formulating such an Assessment and Plan, the MLCS Assessor/Planner will always consult the young persons Connexions Personal Advisor for their views as to that young person's education/training/employment needs, and ensure that the name and contact address/telephone number of that Worker is recorded on MLCS's computer system.
 - v) Thereafter, either via the Assessor/Planner or a later allocated Leaving Care Worker, MLCS will take the lead role in providing the 'holistic' personal advisor support to the young person as again required by the 2000 Children (Leaving Care) Act. However in so doing the allocated MLCS Worker will routinely use the careers guidance expertise of the Connexions Personal Advisor to help progress this aspect of the young person's life and the 2 Workers will in this regard jointly negotiate who is going to do which tasks with the young person to help this happen. The Section on Education/Training/Employment in the Young Person's initial and updated Pathway Plan should reflect this division of tasks.
 - vi) Some young people, either at the point of initial referral to MLCS, or later in their 'leaving care' years, will not be involved for whatever reason with the Connexions Service and will need either at least an initial assessment, or reassessment, of their career situation and potential. In such instances which ever MLCS Worker is involved with the young person will try to re-engage

the young person with a Connexions Personal Advisor, via an office or outreach appointment in whatever area the young person is currently living in.

- vii) Sometimes however it will not be possible to immediately get the young Person re-involved with Connexions. In these circumstances the MLCS Worker will enlist the on-site expertise of MLCS's Development Worker, Education / Training / Employment, who will see the young person themselves. Wherever possible, this Worker will then try to reengage the young person with the Connexions Service 'proper'.
- viii) CM are organised in such a way (see Appendix) whereby a mixture of Guidance Workers, Outreach Workers and Employment Assistants operate out of each Connexions office. The aim will be to ensure that all care leavers at least benefit from the specialist guidance element, as required, of CM but that outreach and employment assistant (for job search) resources are also utilised as appropriate.
- ix) It is further accepted that some young people will need a lot more intensive Involvement and follow up work than the 'normal' work of MLCS/CM can provide if they are to be successfully engaged in some form of education/training/employment. Though resources are currently quite limited, MIW will attempt to provide this more intensive involvement, partly through its seconded specialist Connexions Leaving Care Personal Advisor and partly through developing various traineeship opportunities for young people which MIW will support. In this way referrals to the intensive input that MIW will provide will not be 'open' to all, but will be on a targeted basis discussed quarterly at the 3 organisations quarterly strategy meetings.

c) Joint Training

All 3 Organisations will make a commitment to joint training, or sharing opportunities wherever possible. In particular

- MLCS/MIW will offer training on care leaver issues to Connexions Staff via its Development Worker, Education/Training/Employment.
- Connexions will make available training opportunities to MLCS/MIW staff, including 'Introduction to Connexions' and 'Understanding Connexions' courses.
- An annual 'partnership' day will be held between the 3 organisations to share practice and promote joint working.

5. REVIEW

This protocol will be annually reviewed and amended as necessary by all 3 Organisations, via one of the tri-agency strategy meetings.

APPENDIX A

LOCATION OF CONNEXIONS MANCHESTER STAFF

Personal Advisers are based in Connexions Centres across the city (see below). In some cases staff from related agencies will also work in Connexions Centres. In addition to meeting Personal Advisers at Connexions Centres, young people can access the service through:

- Detached and outreach workers
- Education projects, for example those linked to Manchester Youth College
- Training providers
- The website (connexions-manchester.com)
- Schools
- FE and Sixth Form colleges

HARPURHEY	Connexions Manchester Harpurhey District Centre Manchester M9 5PR	205 1644	205 6002	Manchester North
LONGSIGHT	Connexions Manchester 551& 553 Longsight Shopping Centre Stockport Road Longsight Manchester M12 4JH	248 7684	225 8863	Manchester East
OPENSHAW	Connexions Manchester Room OT014 IT Tower MANCAT Ashton Old Road Openshaw Manchester M11 2WH	231 9660	231 9666	Manchester East (Part time: Mon-Thu 1-4)
MOSS SIDE	Connexions Manchester The Powerhouse Raby Street Moss Side Manchester M14 4SQ	226 8609	226 4969	Manchester Central
WEST DIDSBURY	Connexions Manchester 141 Barlow Moor Road West Didsbury Manchester M20 2PQ	434 6582	448 2673	Manchester South (Part time: Mon-Thu 1 - 4)
WYTHENSHAW	Connexions Manchester Ground Floor Alpha House Rowlandsway Wythenshawe Civic centre Manchester M22 5RG	437 4288	436 6897	Manchester South

APPENDIX B

LOCATION OF MLCS / MIW STAFF

1. BARNARDOS MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE SERVICE
36 MONTON STREET,
MOSS SIDE
MANCHESTER M14 4LT
0161 226 6722

2. BARNARDOS MAKING IT WORK PROJECT
ZION CENTRE
339 STRETFORD ROAD
MANCHESTER M15 4ZW
0161 342 0812/0813