

Guidance for providers: looked after and accommodated children who need ongoing support as young adults

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This is the first version of this document.

Guidance for providers of registered care services for looked after and accommodated children who need ongoing support as young adults

At the Care Inspectorate, we are committed to working with providers of care services to get the best possible outcomes for all children. We know that looked after and accommodated children are particularly vulnerable as they move from care into early adulthood. We are keen to be as flexible as possible with innovative care services that support the transition out of care.

Background

The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 sets out the different categories of services that must be registered with the Care Inspectorate. These include services for children and young people who are looked after and accommodated in the following service types.

- Care homes
- School care accommodation
- Secure accommodation
- Fostering
- Adoption

There are other service types that may also support young people over the age of 16 years, each of which must be registered.

- Housing support
- Support service
- Adult placement
- Offender accommodation

There are certain types of care service that cannot by law continue to care for young people when the young person reaches a specific age, or if the young person no longer meets the criteria for being accommodated in that service type. These include:

- secure accommodation, where no one can be accommodated on reaching their 18th birthday or if they no longer meet the criteria for secure care
- school care accommodation, where no one can be accommodated if they are no longer attending school
- foster care, where the young person ceases to be a “looked after child”.
- care homes, which may have a restriction placed on the age range of children and young people that can be looked after. Providers can apply for a variation to any conditions about age range.

Options to consider

We strongly suggest that providers ask us for advice at an early stage of developing their service. We are committed to supporting diversity and the development of

services that will provide good outcomes for children and young people. We must, however, do this within the parameters of relevant legislation.

There are examples of very good innovative and diverse service provision that have developed over many years to support young people in transition. These include:

- providers of school care accommodation also registering to provide other service types, such as care home and housing support services to provide transitional and through-care services
- care homes developing their service and separately registering an outreach service as housing support and/or a support service, depending on needs of young people
- care homes including in their registration a satellite flat to support young people in transition from the care home, or who need crisis support, to come back for a short time
- providers of secure accommodation developing care home and/or school care accommodation for young people who no longer need secure care but who do need ongoing, stable, support relationships and care planning
- Foster carers also registering as adult placement carers to support young people who are no longer looked after and accommodated (some of these may be under 18 years old).

Important points to consider

It is a legal requirement to register a service with the Care Inspectorate and this should be considered when trialling any new venture. It can take up to six months to register a new service, so contacting us early is crucial.

There is a registration fee and an annual fee to pay for each registration of a different service type, details of which are published online at www.careinspectorate.com. Services provided together, for example housing support and support services, can be assessed for a combined service discount.

Each registered care service will be inspected by us.

Young people over the age of 16 living in a foster placement will be subject to enhanced disclosure checks, as will any other adult living in the family home and birth children 16 years of age.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill proposes changes for 16-24 year olds. Providers should be cognisant of the Bill and we will update this guidance as necessary in light of new legislation.

For more information, please contact Lawrie Davidson, Head of Inspection (Criminal Justice and Young People's Services) on 0131 6534100 or at lawrie.davidson@careinspectorate.com