

YOU MATTER TO US - CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Date: Thursday 16th April, 2026
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Mandela Room, Town Hall

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest.
3. Minutes - You Matter to Us - Corporate Parenting Board - 22 January 2026 3 - 6
4. Introductory Presentation Covering the Council's Responsibilities in relation to Housing, Supported Living, etc.

The Corporate Director of Children's Services will provide the Panel with a verbal update covering all of the Council's responsibilities in relation to housing, supported living, etc. including data.
5. Presentation by Rosecroft Children's Home 7 - 80
6. Homelessness Protocols for 16/17 year olds and Care Leavers 81 - 164
7. Any other urgent items which, in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Wednesday 8 April 2026

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors L Henman (Chair), Z Uddin (Vice-Chair), E Clynch, D Jackson, D McCabe, M Nugent and S Platt

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Tabitha Frankland, 01642 726241, tabitha_frankland@middlesbrough.gov.uk

YOU MATTER TO US - CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

A meeting of the You Matter to Us - Corporate Parenting Board was held on Thursday 22 January 2026.

PRESENT: Councillors L Henman (Chair), D Jackson, S Platt and Z Uddin (Vice-Chair)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: S Calvert (Volunteer Voice/Change Ambassador), A Robinson Coates (Volunteer Voice/Change Ambassador)

OFFICERS: T Dunn, G Nicholson, Peacock, C Cannon, T Frankland, T Jelfs and A Bates

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors D McCabe, P Storey, L Young

24/1 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and read out the Building Evacuation Procedure.

24/2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

24/3 **MINUTES - YOU MATTER TO US - CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD - 16 OCTOBER 2025**

The minutes of the You Matter to Us – Corporate Parenting Board meeting held on 16 October 2025 were submitted and approved as an accurate record.

24/4 **CARED FOR AND CARE EXPERIENCED ENGAGEMENT JULY - DECEMBER 2025**

Members were provided with a Cared For and Care Experience Engagement update and a report was presented to cover activity from July-December 2025. The Voice and Influence Manager highlighted during Care Experienced Month in November, the police had run a drop-in session at the Live Well Centre for our cared for and care experienced young people where they had the opportunity to ask the police questions and hear more about what they do. One of our Change Ambassadors had also delivered a talk to police trainee recruits, reflecting on his experiences with policing both positive and negative. This led to constructive discussion about the ways in which adverse life experiences and trauma can affect behaviour and lead to involvement with the criminal justice system.

A Member queried how the talk was received by the police.

It was confirmed that the feedback from the new recruits was very complimentary and they were keen to ask questions and learn from the Volunteer's experiences.

Following a discussion with one of our Change Ambassadors after the last Corporate Parenting Board meeting, Members also heard that Geoff Field (Corporate Director of Environment, Communities and Culture) had invited cared for and care experienced young people to hear about what his service was responsible for within Middlesbrough Council and career opportunities that were available. One young adult applied for one of the Refuge Collector posts and successfully got the job. A proposal on how to get more care experienced young people to work in Geoff's service area will be presented to DMT in 2026.

The Corporate Director of Children's Services added that this initiative would also be fed back to leadership across other areas of the Council and partners to maximise opportunities for our young people. It was also noted that support should be put in place for young people who were in a transitional stage and not yet ready for employment, to gain experience and become prepared to enter the workforce. This could be done through interview training, employability skills etc.

One of our Change Ambassadors continued the engagement update and advised Members

that Pathways had invited their young adults to enjoy free access to Scream Factory in October after a successful trip in 2024. 14 young adults were supported by four Pathways staff and it was enjoyed by all who attended.

It was also noted that Councillor Luke Henman had arranged for some of our care experienced young adults to meet the MP Andy McDonald. They were joined by Councillor Henman and the Mayor Chris Cooke on the day. Councillor Henman advised that it was a very useful session and our young people heard about how they had got into politics and the different roles and responsibilities within local and central government. Our young people also had opportunity to share their experiences and Councillor Henman highlighted that the MP was very motivated by the discussions and was going to discuss further with decision-makers.

Lastly, the Voice and Influence Manager advised that a group of young people aged 18 – 25 had worked with Middlesbrough Council's Pathways team and herself to record their version of 'Dreams' by The Cranberries. The video was shown at a Full Council meeting and one of our Change Ambassadors also asked the Mayor a question.

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

24/5

DEVELOPING OUR FORWARD PLAN VIA A THEMATIC APPROACH

The Corporate Director of Children's Services delivered a presentation on developing a thematic approach for future meetings of the You Matter to Us – Corporate Parenting Board. She began by highlighting that all Councillors were corporate parents and the role of the Corporate Parenting Board was to consider how the Council was collectively fulfilling the role. The Director encouraged Members to consider what they would want for their own children and how well equipped they currently feel to fulfil the role of a corporate parent.

The Director continued that in previous meetings, there had been a significant amount of data presented covering many areas. Members were asked whether there were particular themes for which additional detailed data would be useful, allowing them to explore topics in greater depth. The importance of a joined-up approach was also highlighted, noting that disseminating information more broadly to our cared for and care experienced children, Councillors, staff and beyond was equally important as ensuring it was brought to the Board.

Members noted that it was important to hear the views of young people and what they require from their corporate parents. Training sessions for Councillors who do not understand their responsibilities as a corporate parent open to all Councillors would be useful and it was also suggested that data for future meetings was provided in a more concise and accessible format than previously, with Officers having the opportunity to highlight pertinent parts. It was also suggested that data could be circulated ahead of the meeting and important parts discussed in further detail at the meeting if necessary to optimise time available during the Board meetings.

One of our Change Ambassadors raised that Housing, Employment and Mental Health provision were very important topics for care experienced young people in Middlesbrough.

A Member queried the level of support provided to schools to ensure they are adequately equipped to prepare cared for and care experienced school leavers for the workforce.

It was confirmed that every school had a designated teacher who was accountable for children in care, usually a member of the Senior Management Team, and the Council offered training for this designated member of staff. The Council also worked in partnership with schools to provide opportunities for young people to visit universities and receive mentoring. The Virtual School worked closely with Middlesbrough College to ensure a smooth transition for school leavers and offer support to young people with their education, future pathways and work experience through online mentors.

The Change Ambassador added that college and home life often bled into one another for care experienced children as there was a shortage of 'third places'. It was important that cared for and care experienced children had a third space where they could feel safe and develop a sense of community and social support which could contribute to mental wellbeing.

It was also raised by the Change Ambassador that cared for and care experienced children

should not be forced into counselling and similar provision as this can backfire and cause individuals to withdraw, instead they should be given the option to engage when and if they are ready, although there should generally be more mental health and emotional wellbeing support available for care leavers. The barriers young people faced when making the transition to adulthood without a family support system were highlighted.

In response to this, Members heard that North East & Cumbria ICB were in the process of implementing the Pathway into 'Primary Care for Care Experienced People' which had successfully been in place in Northumberland since 2023. At the age of 17, each cared for child would have a final Review Health Assessment and they would also be given their health passport at this point. A summary of the young person's health history from birth to date, the Review Health Assessment and plan would be sent to their GP surgery. The Children in Care team would then task the GP surgery when the summary of care and Review Health Assessment was sent to raise awareness of the Child in Care who would become a Care Leaver the following year. This task would include a summary of their main health needs and anything outstanding. This system was aimed at empowering and enabling care experienced young people to access primary care and build relationships with more ease.

A suggestion was also made for increased involvement from local companies in supporting care-experienced children to develop work readiness, for example through work experience opportunities. This could be investigated in more detail at a future meeting focussed on employment and the importance of collective responsibility as a society was highlighted.

Concerns were raised that care leavers were disproportionately at risk of engaging in minor offending, underscoring the importance of early intervention and support to encourage positive choices during the early years of adulthood. The concerns raised prompted agreement that youth services should be considered as a future agenda item. Board Members also noted the opportunity to proactively liaise and feedback information from the Board meetings with anchor institutions on behalf of cared for and care experienced children. The need to support younger cared-for children in having their views represented was also raised, as they do not have the same opportunities as some older children to feed back their experiences due to their age.

A Member added that Language & Terminology could be a future meeting theme as a shift was taking place from the use of formal and impersonal terminology to a more human-centred approach.

AGREED as follows:

1. That the information provided was received and noted.
2. That all topics suggested during this meeting were considered as themes for future meetings and the next meeting be focussed on Housing.
3. That the Corporate Director of Children's Services and Chair arrange a meeting with our Volunteer Voices/Change Ambassadors ahead of the next Board meeting to collaboratively create the agenda.

24/6

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED

None.

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Welcome to Rosecroft

A Guide for Children and Young Adults

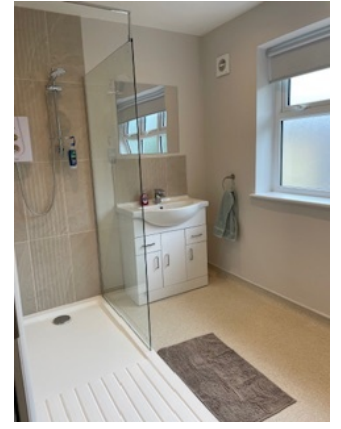
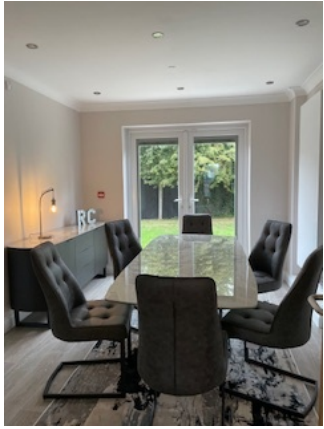
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MY NAME IS:

58 Croft Avenue
Acklam
Middlesbrough
TS5 8AX

Office number: 01642 728821

Welcome to Rosecroft



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Here at Rosecroft we understand how difficult it can be to move to a strange place where you do not know anyone. We are going to try really hard to make that as easy as possible.

We are here to listen to you and to provide a safe environment for you to live in.

This booklet will explain about living at Rosecroft. It cannot tell you everything, so ask if you need to know something. We will always try to help.



What's important to us

We will approach you in a friendly manner. *We will listen more.* **WE WILL ASK YOU MORE OPEN QUESTIONS. WE WON'T ACCEPT YOUR FIRST ANSWER.** We want you to tell us what happened. We will be more open about the impact of your behaviors. We will work 'with' you. **OPEN AND HONEST WITH EACH OTHER.** *Checking in with each other.* WE'LL ASK ABOUT EDUCATION. **POSITIVE COMMUNICATION.** *Discuss issues openly without issues.* **Ask 'how was your day?' Say hello, goodbye, good morning, good night'.** **ASK MORE ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS.** *Ask you to be involved in de-briefs.* **WE WILL INCLUDED YOU MORE.** *You will be involved in decisions.* **Clearer end point.** WE WILL TREAT YOU AS INDIVIDUALS. **GIVE YOU YOUR OWN SPACE.** **Spending more time in the home together. Group activities.**

ROSECROFT

WELCOMING. Family Environment. Strong relationships. Routine. **Settled.** Encouraging. **CARING. POSITIVE.** Relaxed. **SAFE.** **HAPPY. Clean. Supportive.** Experienced. **SECURE. Homely.** Approachable. **FUN. Entertaining. Exciting.** Organised. **CHARITABLE.** Share emotions. **SHARE INTERESTS. Laughter. Friendly. Memories. BE YOUR TRUE SELF. Be human.** Days out.

The people who live at Rosecroft

Rosecroft is a home for children and young people, usually between the ages of 11 and 17. Both boys and girls can live here.

Up to five young people can live at Rosecroft at the same time. Most of them are from Middlesbrough, but some may have lived in other places before coming here.

Everyone at Rosecroft is here to feel safe, be supported, and get ready for the future. You'll be living with other young people who may have different experiences, but we all respect each other, help each other, and make Rosecroft a friendly and fun place to live.

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The people who work at Rosecroft

The people who work at Rosecroft are chosen because they want to work with young people and because they are able to help and support you. They will help you think about what has happened and help to plan for your future as your future is important to us.

They are known by their first names. The person in charge is called Kalia. She is responsible for Rosecroft and for making sure that you are provided with the right help and support.

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Most of the people who work at Rosecroft do so all the time and you will see them often. Sometimes there may be other people who help out if extra help is needed. You may see them less often. Eventually you will meet everyone.

Staff will always be available to help and support you and there will always be someone there if you need someone to talk to.

Faces you will see around the home

Ann English, Residential Manager



Hi, my name is Ann and I'm the Residential Manager here at Rosecroft .I spend my free time with my horse Sally, looking after her but I no longer ride as she is retired. I also love beach holidays where I can be nice and Clean for a change.

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Lizzy Adams, Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker



Hi, my name is Lizzy, and I love being outdoors especially in the summer when I go on walks to places like Roseberry Topping or the Lake District. I have been travelling and want to visit more places all around the world. I like to chill out in my kitchen with friends and cook nice food with my music on and love going to gigs and festivals like Glastonbury.

Andrea Duncan, Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker



Hi, I'm Andrea. I love to travel and see new places, mostly in the sun. I adore my little dog's Winston & Casper and going on walks with them. I am also a TV freak and watch everything.



Melanie Hartley, Residential Support Worker

Hi, I am Mel – I have enjoyed working at Rosecroft since September 2017. In my free time I love spending time with my family and going on holidays. I love gardening and decorating. I don't really like spicy food.



Anthony Herlingshaw, Residential Support Worker

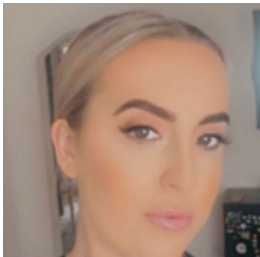
Hi, my name is Anthony I have enjoyed working for the homes since June 2018. In my free time I love spending time with my kids going swimming and going to theme parks.

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Anne Marie Kelly, Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Anne Marie. I love to go walking and swimming. I love to read a good thriller book. I love to cook and bake and like holidays in the sun



Emily Dodgson, Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Emily. I love taking my daughter competing/showing with the horses. I spend my free time shopping, socialising, and eating.



Isobel Stephenson, Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Isobel. I enjoy going for walks on the beach with my dog, Bobbie who is a Golden Labrador. I like to cook, especially baking cakes.

I also love going to concerts, my favourite band is The Killers who I saw at the Riverside stadium.



Kevin Walpole, Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Kevin. I usually spend my free time with my family. I like to go fishing, walk the dogs and love to watch Rugby.



Bethan Parker, Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Bethan. I like to spend my free time with my brother and my cat. I like to watch all kinds of series on TV. I also make a banging cheesecake!!

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Terry McNeill, Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker

Hi, my name is Terry and I enjoy watching and playing sports, mainly football and rugby but my favourite sport is Judo where I'm a 1st Dan Black Belt and Level 2 coach. I like to go to watch the Boro play and like going to gigs and concerts.



Angela Jacques, Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Angela and my favourite colour is red. I like all types of animals; my favourite are dogs and I love spending time with my grandchildren in my spare time.



Sam Brown, Casual Residential Support Worker

Hi, my name is Sam. I enjoy spending time with family & friends, going to the cinema and travelling especially to sunny places! I enjoy keeping fit often taking part in the great north run. My all-time favourite TV programme is Friends. I also have a cat called Ali and love animals.

#Key Workers

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Everyone who works at Rosecroft will try to help you, but one or two people will be responsible for working more closely with you and trying to help. They are called a “Key” worker because one of their jobs is to ensure that there is a close “Key” between you and your social worker and any other person who is working with you.

They might:

- Help you make contact with people who are important to you.
- Contact people on your behalf.
- Attend meetings with you.
- Express your opinion at meetings if you do not want to attend.
- Go with you to appointments.
- Help you to think about what you want.
- Spend additional time with you so you are able to talk about any issues or problems.
- Help you understand what has been agreed at meetings.

- Help you plan for the future.
- Signpost access to files and recordings. Young people and families can request to see information on file about themselves.
- Help support you in your skills towards being independent.

MY KEYWORKER IS:

Routines

Monday - Friday

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- Every morning staff will follow your plan and make sure you are up and ready for the day.
- Every day, you'll have a bath or shower and brush your teeth. This helps you stay clean, healthy, and feel good! Staff will remind you and help if you need support.
- If you are not in full time education or employment you will be expected to have support or learning sessions in the home. These are to help you build skills for your future.
- Staff will also complete several checks on you throughout the day to ensure you are safe and okay. These may be a mixture of visit, text or telephone calls.
- You will have an allocated day of the week when you receive your pocket money or allowance, on this day staff will make sure your bedroom is clean and tidy. Staff will help you with this.
- You'll have a weekly session at Rosecroft to plan your week with staff. This helps you stay organised and on track.
- You will be expected to do any necessary laundry each day and staff will help you learn how.
- On a Sunday staff make a menu for the week of meals. You will help choose the menu, so it has food that you like
- Staff will help you learn how to prepare and cook meals so you can feel confident in the kitchen.
- You'll have a set time to return to Rosecroft each day, so staff know you're safe and settling in for the night.

- To help you sleep well and feel ready for the next day, staff will support you in creating a calm bedtime routine.
- It's important to remember that other people live at Rosecroft too. We all share the space, so we need to be kind and respectful—especially by keeping noise levels down. This helps everyone feel calm, safe, and happy in their home.

Examples of Support Sessions at Rosecroft

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Exploring current traineeships	Job hunting	CV building
Independent living support	Interview skills workshop	Cooking classes
Online safety	Money matters workshop	Emotional support/strategies
Hobbies	Activity Clubs	Homework

Saturday-Sunday

- On a weekend, it's nice to stay up a bit later but we still need to get to sleep on a night, so we are well rested.
- To help your body and mind get ready for sleep, it's a good idea to turn off electronics like your iPad or TV and put your phone away.

- It's sometimes nice to have a lie in on a weekend and staff will complete their 1st check on you a little later.
- If there's something fun, you'd like to do on the weekend—like going out, doing an activity, or trying something new—just let the staff know!
- Every Sunday, we love to cook a yummy Sunday lunch together! It's a great time to help in the kitchen, learn how to cook, and enjoy a nice meal with everyone.
- Every now and again we might have a takeaway on a weekend after a young person's meeting. We also like having movie nights and watching Netflix's again you are welcome join us.

We ask all those who live and work at Rosecroft to:

- Be kind to everyone
- Make sure yourself and others are safe at all times
- Not bring drugs, solvents, or alcohol into the home
- Not light fires or burn candles
- Be considerate of others on a nighttime and keep noise levels down and allow people to get to sleep as we understand this is important for your education.
- Be respectful of other people's space and keep visitors downstairs
- Be considerate about who you are bringing into the house and how this may affect others.

Internet and Wi-Fi



At Rosecroft we understand that the internet and access to this is important to you for your development and growth as young people. We have a responsibility to keep you safe and if you choose to access the Wi-Fi within the home you need to understand that your usage will be monitored to ensure that you are safe. Prior to accessing it we would ask that you complete a one to one with your Link Worker so that you understand about the risks and keeping yourself safe and complete a digital passport.

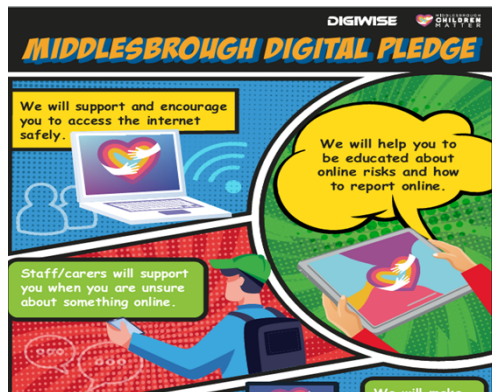
We want you to keep your username and password safe and secure don't give them to anyone and please don't access anyone else's.

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When using social media please don't post anything offensive or upsetting to anyone, if you do your access maybe limited and if this happens to you, please speak to staff about this.

Please don't share any picture that you or someone else would find upsetting and always ask permission before uploading any pictures of your peers or staff.

Should issues arise access to the internet could be limited whilst we support you to improve your understanding by completing one to ones or group work around keeping yourself safe prior to using the internet again.



ng Stan



Clothing

We understand the need to look good and that new clothes are a very important part of this. So that you can go shopping and buy the clothes you like you will be given a monthly clothing allowance. If you're 16 or over this will be £85 a month and if you're under 16 then it will be £70 per month. However, if you need clothing for school or a particular activity i.e. the gym then we will purchase this for you.

Pocket Money

We know that alongside your essential items you also need a bit of spending money so that you can buy some nice treats, that new game/DVD/eyelashes etc. you want or maybe some new makeup. To help you do this you will be given a weekly pocket money allowance. At age 11 you will receive £9 and will receive an increase per year to a maximum of £16 at 16 years.

Toiletries

It is important to your personal health and hygiene that you have access to toiletries. We will provide these for you and will be able to support you if you have any particular needs. We will also provide more non-essential toiletries such as fake tan, however, the amount will be agreed between yourself and staff.

Hair

We understand the need to look good and we want to support you in this. So that you can maintain your current hair style we will provide support with paying for hair maintenance.

Growing up

We will do our best to prepare you for adult life with this in mind at 16 you will get a weekly budget of £73.14 a week. We will help you to learn about paying bills £20 will be taken and put aside for gas, electric, water and rent. This will leave you £53.14; you will be expected to complete a food shop each week and staff will support you to budget for this. It's important to us that you are able to budget your money when you move on from living with us. The remainder of your money will be expected to cover the cost of things like clothes, haircuts, toiletries, and activities. You will get £100 every six months to spend on clothing. If you want to complete a savings plan staff will help you with to.

Meetings and agreements

When you are planning to move to Rosecroft we will come with your social worker to discuss with you what life will be like, what we would expect of you but also what you expect from us as your views, wishes and feelings are at the heart of everything we do.

We will talk to you about:

- Who you can visit
- What time you need to come back
- Who can visit you
- Meals
- Bedtimes
- Money
- Anything else that is important to you



All these things will be different for everyone. We will listen to what you say and try to ensure that we do as much as we can to make Rosecroft a place where you feel comfortable.

We will ensure that we speak with you on a regular basis so that you have time to express your views and opinions. We will also ensure that there is always someone available for you to talk to.

Fun and Activities

There are lots of fun things to do at Rosecroft, and you get to choose what you'd like to take part in! If you already go to clubs or activities outside the home, staff will help make sure you can still go.

Each week, staff will help you make your own activity planner. This is where you can decide what you'd like to do during the week/weekend—whether it's something new or something you already enjoy.

At Rosecroft, we have:

- Loads of films and Netflix
- Arts and crafts
- Board games
- Baking
- Pamper evenings
- And much more!

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If you've finished school and are getting ready to live more independently, you'll start learning how to manage your money. This means planning how to spend and save, especially for activities that cost more. Don't worry—staff will help you with your budget and show you how to find free or low-cost things to do in the local area and even further away.



© Can Stock Photo



Staying safe when out and about

As we truly care about you, we need to know that you are safe when you are out and about. We will ask you to keep in touch with us whilst you are out so we know that you are ok.

If you do not come home when we expect you to we will worry about you. We will discuss with you what steps may need to be taken to keep you safe should you not return, we may need to inform the police or your family.

We work closely with the police and Barnardos to ensure you are safe. These are some of the faces you may see around the home.

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You will see PCSO Richardson and PCSO Woollas from time to time as he enjoys visiting your home to see how you are doing and if there is anything he can do to help you. If you want to speak to him about anything at all, please just ask a member of staff and they will get in touch.



Martyn O'Riordan

Hi, I am Martyn. My currently role is a missing from home worker. This involves visiting young people and families when the parents or carers have reported their child / young person missing. I talk to young people and try to find out about the reasons why they went missing and to offer support. I am independent from Police and Social Workers, this gives young people room to discuss things about their parents/carers, placement, or anything else that might

be a problem. I can raise concerns and anything the young person is unhappy about on their behalf. Hopefully this will help to change the situation and may lead to the young person not going missing anymore.

Religion and Culture

If you want to attend church or you have a particular culture or custom that you would like to follow, then we will support you in this.

If at any point you want to change your religion or start practicing a religion then we will support and guide you in this. If you're interested in attending any festivals please let us know, from time to time we may suggest that we all attend an event this is just to improve our understanding of the cultures you may meet in your life.

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Health and Hygiene

We want to help you to be healthy. We will speak open and honestly with you about health and hygiene and will ensure someone is always available if you need to talk about this. We will talk about the dentist and the doctor. If you like the ones you have seen before we will try to arrange for you to carry on seeing them.

We will help you attend any appointments. If you are worried or unsure about anything you can discuss this with your Link Worker, social worker or any of the people who work at the home. They are there to help you.

Page 26 We hope you will not smoke, but if you do this must only be in the back garden when you're at Rosecroft. You are also not allowed to smoke or vape in your room as this is a serious fire hazard and we need you to keep yourself and others safe. If there are any smoking materials left around these will be confiscated. We will try to help you stop smoking.

We will encourage you to wash and clean your teeth.



Education/Training/Employment

Education/Training/Employment will be discussed with you when you come to live at Rosecroft. We understand it is important for your future for you to be in some form of education, traineeship or employment and we will support you to succeed in gaining this depending on which path you choose.

As we want you to succeed we will support you in:

- Making sure you have the right clothes and equipment
- Waking you up on time
- Making you a healthy breakfast before you go and ensuring you have lunch for the day
- Any tasks you may have
- Going to any meetings
- Helping you celebrate when things are going well
- Working hard to achieve your goals

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Keeping you Safe at Rosecroft

The grown-ups who work at Rosecroft are here to help keep you safe and happy. Sometimes, it might feel like they're getting in the way or stopping you from doing things—but they're doing their best to look after you.

If a staff member asks you not to do something, it's usually because they're worried it might be unsafe for you or someone else. If you ever feel something is unfair, you can always talk to a staff member—they're here to listen and help.

Sometimes, you might want to tell someone something private. Staff will try to respect that, but if they think you or someone else might be in danger, they may need to talk to your social worker or even the police to help keep everyone safe.

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To help keep Rosecroft safe:

- There are cameras outside the building.
- There's a sensor on the landing door, so if you go downstairs at night, staff will know and can come to support you.

We're all here to make sure you feel safe, cared for, and supported.

Staff will check in with you throughout the day to make sure you're okay.

**SAFETY
MATTERS**

These checks might be:

- A quick visit to see how you're doing
- A phone call if you're out and about

It's just one of the ways we make sure you're safe, supported, and doing well.

Anti-discriminatory practice and anti-bullying

Everyone at Rosecroft is expected to promote equal opportunities and challenge any form of discrimination. This includes those who live at Rosecroft and those who work at Rosecroft.

Page 29 We will make sure someone is available to talk about this and ensure that everyone is aware of their rights.

No one should be bullied at Rosecroft. Young people should not bully each other or bully the people who work there. The people who work there must treat everyone with respect.

Bullying can include name-calling, teasing, threatening, hitting, stealing, or damaging property.

Anyone who feels that they are being bullied must tell someone immediately so it can be stopped.



Managing difficult times

There are times when everything seems very difficult and upsetting, or when someone can make you feel angry. This happens to everyone. We will try to help you find ways to manage this.

Usually this means that you will be able to talk through what is wrong, or you may just need some time to yourself. A walk or some time out may help.



If you cannot manage your upset or anger and you try to hurt yourself, hurt someone else or seriously damage the home then the people who work in the home will help you. We will make sure we are here to talk through your problems and try to offer solutions, we will always be there to support you.

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We expect everyone to be respectful to each other, to staff and to property. However, we understand that sometimes life can become frustrating and that we can say things that we regret or do things that we are sorry about. We will be there to support you through these difficulties and to help you find better ways to manage your frustration or anger.



At Rosecroft we try to talk about problems and come up with solutions together. We try to think about how our behaviors have impacted on others and think about how we can avoid this happening again.

Celebrating good times

It is important to everyone that they feel someone notices when something goes well.

Rosecroft is a place where we will help you to enjoy life and where we will support you to achieve great things. We are very focused on you having positive outcomes.

We are always looking for a reason to celebrate! We will talk to you about this and think with you about what you would like to achieve and how we will celebrate.

For example, you might do really well at school/college or work and we might buy you a game or go out for a meal.

You might manage a difficult meeting really well and we might go shopping with you afterwards to get something nice.

We want to help and support you in any way we can.



Your Room at Rosecroft

At Rosecroft, you'll have your very own bedroom. It's your space to relax, take a break, and feel comfortable. In your room, you'll have a small box with a lock where you can keep special things that matter to you.

If you have something valuable and you're worried it might not be safe in your room, just let a staff member know—they can look after it for you.

There's also a laundry room where you can wash and take care of your clothes. Don't worry—staff will be there to help you learn how to do it. We think it's really important to help you become more independent and confident.



Room searches

To help keep everyone safe at Rosecroft, staff might sometimes need to check inside bedrooms. This doesn't happen very often, and only if there's a good reason—like if they think something unsafe might be there.

Most of the time, you'll be told before a room search happens. If that's not possible, staff will always let you know afterwards.

In very rare situations, the police might search a room if they think a crime has happened.

Staff have master keys to all the rooms, so they can get in if they need to. But they'll always try to talk to you first and explain why.

Remember, this is all about keeping you and everyone else safe.

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The National Youth Advocacy Service

This offers independent and confidential information, advice advocacy and support to young people who want to have their wishes and feelings heard in circumstances where decisions are being made about their life. It offers help to young people;

- In need or despair
- In trouble
- In care or leaving home



- With difficulties at school
- Who feel they are not being listened to

You can contact them:

On Freephone 0808 808 1001 Mon –Fri 9am – 6pm

Or telephone 01516498700 (Head office) Mon – Fri -9am -5pm

Or send an Email to info@nyas.net or main@nyas.net

or send free post to: NYAS Tower House, Tower Road, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH411FF.

Email nyas@charity.vfree.com

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Web site www.nyas.net

As part of making sure that all of the young people in a home are kept safe and their best interests are met by the staff, an Independent Visitor must visit the home every month to check this. They are not employed by the council and the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) provide this service for this home.

The Independent Visitor checks records, interviews staff, speaks to parents, professionals and the young people in the home. After the visit, the Visitor writes a report that is sent to the Manager so that all staff and young people can read the report. Sometimes there are recommendations in the report and the manager needs to consider them and decide what will be done. The report is then sent to Ofsted.

Sometimes your Independent Visitor might change, and that's okay. But it's usually better if they

stay the same person. That way, you can get to know them, feel comfy talking to them, and build a good friendship.

We'll give you a little profile about your Independent Visitor. It will have their photo, tell you what their job is, and share a few fun facts about them—just like we do for the staff team!

Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO)

Independent Reviewing Officers are there to make sure that you are being treated well and that your views and wishes are being listened to. They will chair your review meetings and will make sure the agreement that was made when you came to Rosecroft meets your needs. They will also make sure that other people do what they agreed to do.

It is very important that your IRO knows how you feel and what you want to happen.

An IRO's role includes quality assuring a child/young person's plan.

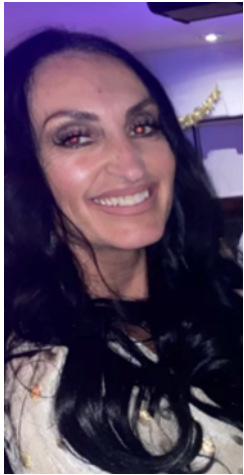
Worried or unhappy?

If you are feeling unhappy or worried then talk to someone, most problems can be sorted out.

From time-to-time senior managers will visit the home and they are always happy to speak with

you. The faces you may see are:

Tara Rudd, Service Manager for Supported Accommodation and Residential



Hi, my name is Tara, I'm the Registered Service Manager for supported accommodation and residential homes. That means I help make sure everything runs smoothly and safely.

You might see me around because I love visiting the homes, chatting with you, and talking to the staff. I'm here to listen, help, and make sure you feel happy and supported.

I love to climb mountains, go on holiday and spend time with my family. I can also cook an amazing parmo!

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If you feel that you wish to complain
About something which has happened request a complaints form.

Rosecroft is run by Middlesbrough Council.

The Corporate Complaints Manager is Claire Roberts and for point of call is Michael Hooker and Claire Risker and you can contact Michael on 01642 729815 and Claire on 01642 729459.

Every month an Independent Person visits Rosecroft to check that all is as it should be. If you

are not happy about something that has happened tell them.

You could also consider telephoning **Child Line** – 08001111, or the **National Youth Advocacy Service** 0800 616101.

You can also make a complaint to **OFSTED** (Rosecroft Registration Number: SC472392)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) is Amanda Spielman.

You can contact OFSTED on 0300 123 1231.

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The address is OFSTED, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,
Manchester, M1 2WD.

Dame Rachel de Souza

Children's Commissioner for England.

Dame Rachel and her team help protect the rights of all children in England.

She will make sure children are:

- Listen to



- Be able to tell other people your views and interests
- Be a part of the decision making about you and your future.

Dame Rachel brings matters that affect children and young people's rights to the attention of Parliament, local government and others.

**You can get in touch with Dame Rachel and the team @:
Office of the Children's Commissioner-
Advice and assistance.**
Freephone (0800 528 0731) this phone number is free from
landline, but may cost from mobile
or post to:
Children's Commissioner for England
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London SW1P3BT
You can also phone:
Coram Voice: 0808 800 5792

Final thoughts

We hope that you will enjoy life at Rosecroft.

We understand that it may not always be easy, however, we will always be there to help and support you.

Rosecroft is managed by Middlesbrough Council, our ethos is rooted in building authentic, therapeutic relationships using Dan Hughes' PACE model as our foundation.

We have also

signed up to "The Pledge" and has committed itself to supporting young people to be cared for and cared about.

There is more information about "The Pledge" and about the "We Matter Group" at Rosecroft – ask your Link Worker for more information.



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Rosecroft Children's Home (SC472392)

Statement of Purpose



Ann English January 2026 – January 2027



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QUALITY AND PURPOSE OF CARE

1. The Range of Needs of Children and Young People at Rosecroft

At Rosecroft, we care for a maximum of 5 children and young people aged 11–17, who have often experienced early-life trauma, disrupted attachments, and difficulties with emotional regulation. We respond with Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy in every interaction, knowing these qualities are essential to building trust and promoting healing.

Our young people may present with a variety of social, emotional, and behavioural needs—including challenges related to mental health, education, offending behaviour, substance use, and significant difficulties in forming safe relationships. We meet each young person where they are, not where we expect them to be. By staying curious about the meaning behind behaviours and maintaining an accepting stance, we can gently explore the unmet needs they may be expressing.

We understand that each child's journey is unique. Our team forms safe, secure, and nurturing relationships to offer a predictable and caring environment where playful engagement builds connection, and empathic listening creates space for emotional growth. Every placement is considered individually to ensure our environment is the right fit to support a young person's progress toward independence and wellbeing.

At Rosecroft, we approach every referral with openness, curiosity, and a commitment to understanding the individual needs of each child or young person. We recognise that every individual is unique, and we are dedicated to ensuring that Rosecroft is the right environment where they can feel safe, supported, and valued.

Children and young people may join us for varying lengths of time. Some may stay for a short or medium-term period while we support their transition to an alternative placement or a return to their family home. Others may remain with us for longer durations, sometimes over several years, as we continue to support their ongoing growth and development.

Upon receiving a referral, the Service Manager and/or Head of Service will engage in a considered and balanced discussion with the Registered Manager (or their representative) regarding the proposed admission. In addition, we liaise with professionals from the child or young person's care team to gather a comprehensive understanding of their needs. This collaborative and informed approach ensures that decisions are made in the best interests of the young person, with careful matching and risk assessment taking place prior to acceptance.

Rosecroft typically cares for children and young people aged between 11 and 17. In some cases, where it supports a young person's transition to adulthood, we may continue to provide this support for a short period beyond their 18th birthday. This is done sensitively and in partnership with their personal advisor, ensuring role clarity and that the care of the children and young people living in the home is not impacted.

On rare occasions, we may consider a referral for a child under the age of 11. In such instances, we take additional care to assess whether Rosecroft is the most appropriate setting, always prioritising the needs, age, and wellbeing of the children and young people already living in the home.

At Rosecroft, we are committed to working collaboratively, listening actively, and approaching each situation with curiosity and compassion. Our goal is to understand how best to support every child and young person who comes to live with us. We strive to ensure that each individual feels accepted, valued, and empowered throughout their time at Rosecroft.

Children will undergo regular assessments during their stay to identify the most appropriate options for their subsequent accommodation. If independent living is deemed unsuitable, the home will collaborate with social care services and other providers to explore alternative provisions that meet the needs of the young people. These alternatives may include supported accommodation and supported lodgings.

Where appropriate, Rosecroft will also operate within the Staying Close Framework, offering continued support for up to three months after a young person turns 18. While this provision is scheduled to be phased out in 2026, we remain committed to maintaining positive relationships and ensuring that young people continue to feel supported—both physically and emotionally—as they transition into adulthood.

2. Our Ethos, Philosophy, and Outcomes

At Rosecroft, our ethos is rooted in building authentic, therapeutic relationships using Dan Hughes' PACE model as our foundation. We believe that recovery from trauma and the development of resilience is possible through consistent, nurturing connections built on Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy.

Playfulness allows us to bring joy, humour, and lightness to interactions, helping young people feel safe enough to engage and explore.

Acceptance means we embrace each young person as they are—not judging them by behaviours but validating their experiences and emotions.

Curiosity guides us in understanding what's beneath a young person's actions—asking “what happened to you?” rather than “what's wrong with you?”

Empathy ensures that every young person feels deeply heard, emotionally supported, and genuinely cared for.

We are committed to walking alongside our young people as they transition into adulthood. Through the Staying Close framework and in partnership with personal advisors, where appropriate, we continue to offer meaningful connection and support beyond the age of 18, recognising that personal development does not end at a specific milestone.

Our support extends into early independence, ensuring that transitions are not abrupt, but instead are relational, thoughtfully planned, and emotionally safe.

We aim to equip every young person with:

A strong sense of self-worth

The capacity to form healthy, lasting relationships

Practical life skills and educational achievement

Emotional resilience and the confidence to face life's challenges

By embedding PACE throughout our practice—from everyday interactions to structured support planning—we create a home where young people can truly feel safe, understood, and hopeful about their future.

Our Vision – Rosecroft (PACE-Informed)

At Rosecroft, our vision is to offer care that feels safe, meaningful, and full of possibility. We work in a way that is relational, restorative, and guided by curiosity, empathy, acceptance, and playfulness—known as the PACE approach. Every child or young person we support is seen as unique and valued, with their own story, strengths, and potential. Our commitment is to walk alongside them, not just as professionals, but as people who genuinely care.

We believe strong relationships are the heart of healing and growth. By being emotionally present, consistent, and curious without judgment, our team builds trust, helping individuals understand their world, express their feelings safely, and move forward with confidence.

We provide a nurturing environment that balances structure with flexibility. Boundaries are held with warmth and understanding, and every interaction is an opportunity to strengthen a child or young person's belief in themselves. Within this space, we explore challenges together, celebrate progress, and allow space for mistakes to become learning moments.

A Home that Encourages Growth

Rosecroft offers more than a place to live—it offers a home that embraces creativity, stability, and opportunity. Through individually tailored plans, we help children and young people to build essential life skills and prepare for adulthood at a pace that suits them.

Empowering Children and Young People

All children and young people are invited to have a voice in shaping their care and support. We listen deeply and respond with empathy, acknowledging their hopes, fears, and ideas without judgment. We work closely to co-create their Care/Pathway Plans and support packages, making sure they feel seen and heard every step of the way.

We also understand the importance of making their space their own—encouraging choice in décor and furnishings and supporting them to build a sense of pride and ownership. This is more than aesthetics; it's about belonging.

Learning Through Connection

Our daily and weekly goals are created together with children and young people. They are SMART, bespoke and age appropriate. These goals aren't imposed—they're part of a shared conversation rooted in curiosity: "What do you want to work on?" "How can we help you get there?" We approach setbacks with empathy and use them as springboards for growth.

At Rosecroft, we are committed to ensuring that children and young people have access to positive and meaningful life experiences. We recognise the vital role these experiences play in fostering emotional well-being and preparing individuals for their future journeys.

During their time with us, children and young people are supported in a nurturing and empowering environment to develop essential skills such as independent living skills, cooking, personal care, and personal safety.

We take a person-centred approach, remaining curious about interests and aspirations, and tailoring our care and support to help children and young people to explore and develop the skills they wish to learn.

In addition, we actively encourage participation in a wide range of life skills and enrichment opportunities that promote confidence, resilience, and personal growth. Our dedicated team is committed to listening, guiding, and supporting each young person, ensuring they feel accepted, valued, and empowered as they progress toward independence.

Belonging and Safety

Even as young people move toward independence, they remain connected to Rosecroft. This ensures they feel part of a community that continues to care—someone to talk to, somewhere to turn. Regular assessments ensure that support evolves with the young person, never leaving them to face life's challenges alone.

We maintain regular contact and involvement through safe, familiar staff who understand their history and hopes. Safety checks and wellbeing monitoring are delivered in a respectful, collaborative manner, focused on shared responsibility rather than surveillance.

Relationships at the Core

We place huge value on meaningful, therapeutic relationships. Through everyday moments—sharing a meal, during activities, going for a walk—we build trust, joy, and connection. Our staff bring playfulness into the home to lighten difficult moments, acceptance to make children and young people feel safe just as they are, curiosity to understand behaviours without blame, and empathy to validate emotions.

We support children and young people to maintain positive family connections where appropriate, recognising that these relationships can be complex and deeply important.

Support and Inclusion

Rosecroft is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Every care plan is person-centred, shaped around identity, values, and lived experience. We collaborate with a wide range of agencies to ensure our children and young people can access education, healthcare, community opportunities, and specialist support.

Our education lead promotes access to learning and celebrates attendance and achievement. We don't expect perfection—we expect effort, courage, and a willingness to grow.

Celebrating Progress

We understand that mistakes are a natural part of learning and growing up. Our staff respond with compassion, help children and young people reflect, and support them to bounce back. We offer praise, encouragement, and rewards to reinforce resilience and positive risk-taking.

Our hope is for all to leave Rosecroft with not only practical skills, but with a deep sense of self-worth, emotional insight, and belief in their future.

We aim to ensure that children and young people are able to develop and maintain respect, self-reliance and self-care skills and enable them to make informed, age-appropriate decisions, concerning their present and future so they can achieve a successful transition into independence and adulthood.

We will work with young people to aid their transition into adulthood and independence and support them to overcome barriers to their achievement. The aim is to help them to become autonomous young adults fully equipped with the life skills, resilience and motivation to succeed whilst continuing to provide support if needed.

At Rosecroft, we are committed to supporting young people beyond the age of 16 by ensuring they are fully prepared for the next stage of their journey. All young people residing with us post-16 are supported to obtain the necessary documentation and are registered with Tees Valley Homefinder, enabling them to access suitable move-on accommodation when they are ready for this transition.

The Care versus Support Assessment Tool is reviewed regularly during care team meetings in collaboration with the young person's social worker. If the assessment identifies that a young person's needs have shifted from care to support, and this aligns with their care plan, they may be discharged from Rosecroft. This may lead to a transition into independent living, a return to family, or a move into supported accommodation.

We are committed to ensuring that all transitions are planned, phased, and person-centred. Where a young person is moving into independent accommodation, a Staying Close plan will be offered—tailored to their individual needs and incorporated into their wider care and pathway plans. Although this provision is being phased out in 2026, it will continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains responsive and effective and in conjunction with personal advisors to limit duplication.

If accommodation is secured while the young person is still residing at Rosecroft, they will receive care and support both within the home and in their individual flat. This dual arrangement provides a secure base while gradually building their independence. Young people will be supported to split their time between the home and their flat, with overnight stays introduced progressively, based on their confidence and ability to manage independently.

No young person will remain in their flat for longer than 28 days without a completed Care versus Support Assessment. To remain in the flat beyond this period, the assessment must confirm that the young person possesses the necessary skills to live independently and that their needs can be met through support rather than care.

Young people are also supported with the personalisation and furnishing of their flats, in line with their setting home allowance. They are encouraged to take an active role in decorating their space, fostering a sense of ownership and pride. All flats are subject to regular welfare checks and monitoring by Rosecroft staff to ensure that young people receive the appropriate level of care, support, and guidance. Our ultimate goal is to equip each young person with the skills and confidence to live independently, while continuing to offer emotional support and connection throughout their transition into adulthood.

The core body of work we do is based around improving outcomes for young people. We put children and young people at the centre of our work and ensure best outcomes through relationship building, robust safety planning, clear, appropriate, and achievable goal setting, and creative care planning.

Rosecroft recognises the well-being of each child is paramount and will work within a multi-agency approach to ensure the best possible care is provided. This includes working openly and in partnership with children and young people and their families, friends and carers to offer purposeful and planned care in order to meet their individual identified needs. Rosecroft will support the children and young people, where suitable, to have positive contact with their family, including supervised contact arrangements, which can result in the young people spending overnights at their family's homes.

Rosecroft seeks to achieve outcomes for young people in a number of areas of their lives and supports them in achieving personal goals. General outcomes will include supporting children to achieve in education/traineeship/employment, understand and manage their behaviours, maintain good health (physical and emotional) and skills which will prepare them for independence. The home focuses on delivering achievable outcomes for children and young people and follows The Quality Standards/ Children's Homes Regulations (April 2015). The Registered Manager and staff ensure that safeguarding activities and the PACE approach are embedded in the service and health and safety legislation are adhered to.

The services are kept under review through Care Planning, Risk Assessment and various quality assurance processes within the home including auditing and regular Regulation 45 inspection by the Registered Manager. In addition, Rosecroft has an Independent Visitor, who visits the home at least once per month and carries out an inspection based on the requirements of Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations. Ofsted carries out an inspection and produces a report, which includes 'Overall Experiences and Progress of the Young People', how young people are 'Helped and Protected' and the 'Leadership and Management' within the home. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement. Other monitoring procedures include Health and Safety and Food Hygiene inspections as well as regular, statutory servicing of equipment.

Rosecroft identifies the importance of developing a therapeutic relationship with the children and young people. This can be achieved by spending time with children, listening to them and building a relationship based on Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy to achieve understanding mutual trust and respect. The staff team achieve this through engaging in activities, pursuing hobbies and providing opportunities to have new experiences and encouraging inclusion in the wider community. Staff will provide support sessions and workshops within Rosecroft. This will allow young people to progress through developing healthy social relationships, confidence, self-esteem, emotional resilience and life skills.

The Registered Manager ensures the staff team has a good quality learning programme including induction training, post qualifying and in-service training to enhance individual skills and keep staff up to date with policies, procedures, and legislation. This can include focused training such as PACE, trauma independent living assessment tools, attachment, self-harm, mental health awareness, eating disorders, substance misuse and sexual health.

Young People are encouraged to be involved in the planning of their care to meet their needs and stage of development and the day-to-day operation of the home. This may be achieved through general discussion, key worker sessions and house meetings and will include aspects of the operation of the home such as meal and activity planning and daily routines as well as an agreed support package which will include how staff and the young person will work together in developing their independence. Young People are supported to attend meetings to have their voice heard and have access to an Advocacy service if they require.

Rosecroft actively promotes a healthy lifestyle and positive emotional and physical wellbeing. This is done through support sessions around healthy meal planning, practical food shopping, healthy lifestyle choices, keeping active and mindfulness sessions.

Children at Rosecroft may present distress through challenging behaviours for a number of reasons. The staff team is suitably skilled and experienced in understanding the reasons behind the behaviour they are presented. They treat young people with unconditional positive regard to support them through difficult times and discuss with young people why they may be experiencing distress and provide strategies to manage their feelings and emotions. Rosecroft adopts proactive strategies to understand what the young person may be experiencing, including any identified triggers which may be presented to staff through behaviors that challenge them and use incentives, praise and rewards to ensure a consistent approach by identifying clear boundaries which provide safety for the young person.

Whilst at Rosecroft it is important for Young People to have positive life experiences which will help improve emotional well-being and prepare them for adulthood. The staff team hold high aspirations for the young people and will support them to develop skills such as cooking, personal care and safety and to promote young people's engagement in other "life skill" opportunities.

3. The Accommodation Offered by Rosecroft

At Rosecroft, we create a warm, nurturing environment where young people feel they truly belong. The house is intentionally designed to be more than just a residence—it is a home where every young person feels safe, seen, and valued. Our approach to the physical space is an extension of our commitment to Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy.

Each young person has their own fully furnished bedroom, which they are encouraged to personalise. Involving young people in decorating their spaces fosters a sense of ownership and comfort. These choices reflect our playful invitation for them to express their identity and feel proud of where they live.

The layout of the home is thoughtfully designed to support both connection and autonomy. Shared communal spaces like the main lounge and snug offer opportunities for relationship-building, while quiet areas provide privacy and space for reflection. We meet each young

person with curiosity about how their surroundings can support their growth and help them feel at ease.

The facilities include:

- A welcoming lounge for relaxation and social interaction
- A snug filled with music, games, and opportunities for creative play
- A shared dining area that encourages mealtime connection
- A well-equipped kitchen for both independent and supported cooking
- Gardens that provide space for play, fresh air, and calm
- Several toilets and bathrooms to ensure comfort and privacy.
- A calm, well-equipped sleeping area, including five bedrooms for young people and comfortable spaces for staff support (*young people will always have their own bedroom – however, where appropriate and agreed within the Care Plans, Siblings of the same gender and similar age, can share a bedroom. This will not have an impact on the maximum number of young people accommodated within the home*).

To ensure safety, Rosecroft has CCTV, which monitors the external areas of the property. There is also a burglar alarm fitted within the home. These are in place to protect the house. There is an alarm on all fire doors, which make a noise to alert staff when a person leaves or enters the home. This will be discussed with the young person, family and social work team on arrival, so they understand and feel secure.

All areas are maintained with care and respect. By doing so, we model empathy—showing our young people they deserve to live in a clean, safe, and respectful environment. We support each young person in learning how to take care of their space, encouraging pride in their environment and a sense of responsibility.

Staff work alongside young people, helping them develop practical independent living skills through encouragement, scaffolding, and gentle persistence. At every stage, we ensure our young people know they are not alone. Whether they are taking their first steps toward independence or facing moments of uncertainty, our team responds with steady presence and PACEful support—reminding them that they are capable, cared for, and connected.

4. The Location of Rosecroft

Rosecroft is located in a quiet, welcoming neighbourhood in Acklam, Middlesbrough (within the Ayresome Ward). The setting reflects our commitment to providing a secure base—a calm and stable environment where young people can feel safe, valued, and connected to the wider community.

The area is well-served by public transport, with easy access to shops, libraries, parks, seaside locations, and cultural venues. These accessible local resources support our playful engagement with young people, encouraging them to explore, try new experiences, and find joy in everyday life.

We take time to understand what each young person enjoys and what community spaces might suit them best. With curiosity, we ask questions like, “What would you like to try this week?” or “What helps you feel relaxed when you’re out and about?”—always inviting young people to shape their routines and build connections outside the home.

Rosecroft’s location also enables young people to remain close to familiar places—like schools, family, friends, and health services—supporting smoother transitions and reducing feelings of loss or disconnection. This is particularly important for those with disrupted attachment histories. By maintaining continuity where possible, we accept and honour each young person’s story and sense of belonging.

The local setting not only supports independence and life skills but also offers opportunities for inclusion, identity-building, and emotional well-being. Whether it’s a walk in the park, a trip to the seaside, or joining a local activity group, we use every opportunity to nurture our young people’s self-esteem, encourage positive risk-taking, and offer empathetic support as they step into new experiences.

At Rosecroft, the surrounding community is not just a backdrop—it is part of the therapeutic landscape we offer, where healing, learning, and connection happen inside and outside the walls of the home.

5. Supporting Cultural, Linguistic, and Religious Needs in Rosecroft

At Rosecroft, we celebrate each young person’s identity in its full richness. We recognise that a strong sense of self—rooted in culture, language, and faith—is central to emotional well-being and healing from trauma. Our approach is deeply grounded in Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy.

From the moment a young person joins us, we begin building a relationship where they feel seen, heard, and respected for who they are. We accept and embrace their background and support them in continuing practices that are meaningful to them—whether this involves attending a place of worship, following specific dietary preferences, observing cultural traditions, or using their preferred language to express themselves.

Our team stays curious, asking open questions like:

“What’s important to you about your culture or beliefs?”

“Are there any celebrations or traditions you’d like us to know about?”

“How can we help you feel more at home here?”

These conversations help us understand not only what young people need, but what brings them comfort, joy, and pride.

We respond with empathy—acknowledging that past experiences may have left young people feeling isolated, misunderstood, or ashamed of parts of their identity. At Rosecroft, we gently counter this by affirming their right to be fully themselves, without judgment or pressure.

Where necessary, we will engage interpreters, provide culturally appropriate resources, and adapt care routines to meet specific needs. Our food options, clothing guidance, and activity planning are all flexible and inclusive. Young people are invited to be involved in decisions about these aspects of their life, reinforcing their agency and voice.

In every interaction, we show young people that their heritage is not only accepted—it is welcomed and respected. By doing so, we help build a foundation of trust, security, and belonging, allowing them to develop a strong, integrated identity that supports lifelong resilience.

6. Complaints and Being Heard

At Rosecroft, we believe every young person, family member, or professional should feel safe, heard, and valued. Creating a space where concerns can be shared without fear is a vital part of building trust—especially for those who may have had experiences of not being listened to in the past.

We approach complaints and feedback with Curiosity and Empathy. We don't see complaints as problems—they are opportunities to learn more about what a young person needs and how we can improve. When someone raises a concern, we ask, "What are they trying to tell us?" and "How can we show them that their voice matters?"

Young people are encouraged to speak openly with any staff member about how they are feeling. We regularly remind them that it's okay to say when something doesn't feel right, and that adults around them will respond with Acceptance and care—not punishment or dismissal.

We also use Playfulness where appropriate to reduce anxiety around formal processes. For example, young people can share their views in relaxed conversations, during shared activities, or with the support of trusted adults or advocates. Feedback can be written, verbal, or drawn—whatever feels most comfortable to them.

Young people, parents, and carers are given clear information on how to raise concerns and are supported through the process. We also ensure that all residents have access to advocacy services and know how to contact independent bodies like Ofsted, NYAS, and the Children's Commissioner.

Our team is trained to respond to all feedback—positive or negative—with openness and without defensiveness. Every concern is followed up carefully and respectfully, and we keep the young person informed throughout, reinforcing that their feelings and experiences are important.

Above all, we want every young person to know: Your voice matters here. We want to hear you, we will believe you, and we will act to make things better.

Rosecroft is visited by an independent person once a month to undertake a Regulation 44 visit in accordance with the Children's Homes regulations. The home will be inspected by an OFSTED Inspector. Parents and children can also contact Ofsted, if they wish to make a comment or complaint:

Telephone number: 0300 123 1231

Address: Ofsted
 Piccadilly Gate
 Store Street
 Manchester
 M1 2WD

To make a complaint please contact Michael Hooker or Claire Risker, complaints officer for Middlesbrough Council.

Phone	01642 729815 – Michael; 01642 729459 Claire
Post	Fountain Court, 119 Grange Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 2DT
Email	Michael_Hooker@ middlesbrough.gov.uk; Claire_Riskier@middlesbrough.gov.uk

7. Accessing Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies

At Rosecroft, safeguarding is not just a procedure—it is a relational commitment. We ensure that every child and young person knows they are safe, protected, and cared for, and that every professional or family member involved in their life can trust that we hold the child’s well-being as our highest priority.

Our approach to safeguarding and behaviour is deeply informed by Curiosity and Empathy. We seek to understand what lies beneath behaviours, rather than reacting solely to what is seen on the surface. This means our safeguarding and behaviour management policies are grounded in therapeutic thinking, clear expectations, and emotional attunement—not control or punishment.

We believe that everyone who cares for or works with a young person has the right to access our safeguarding and behaviour policies. These documents are available upon request and are shared with families, carers, and professionals from the outset of a placement. We also ensure that young people themselves receive explanations about how they will be kept safe, in language and formats that make sense to them. We remain open and transparent at all times.

When young people express concerns—about themselves or others—we respond with warmth and reassurance, affirming that their voices are important. Using Acceptance, we listen without judgment and ensure every concern is recorded, followed up, and shared with the right people. Our staff are alert and proactive, trained to gently explore signs of distress and to act with compassion and immediacy.

Safeguarding isn’t just about protection from harm—it’s about building relationships where young people feel emotionally secure enough to let themselves be seen. At Rosecroft, we understand that when a young person trusts an adult enough to say “I don’t feel safe” or “I’m struggling,” that is a sign of growth. We meet that moment with gratitude, not blame.

We work in close partnership with external professionals and families, believing that collaboration and shared responsibility are essential to safeguarding success. Our policies reflect this and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain responsive, inclusive, and effective.

Views, Wishes and Feelings

8. Consulting Young People About Their Care

At Rosecroft, young people are not just recipients of care—they are active participants in shaping it. We place their views, wishes, and feelings at the centre of every decision, conversation, and plan. This is not just our practice—it is our ethos.

We use Playfulness to make feedback and consultation feel safe and approachable. Whether it's chatting over a meal, engaging during an activity, or reflecting together after a shared experience, we create relaxed opportunities where young people can share their thoughts without pressure or fear of judgment.

We offer consistent Acceptance, reassuring young people that their opinions matter—especially when they're unsure or anxious about expressing them. We listen without correcting or dismissing, validating their perspectives even when we may see things differently.

Through Curiosity, we explore what matters to each individual child. We ask:

“How does it feel living here?”

“Is there anything that would make you feel more comfortable or supported?”

“What's working well—and what isn't?”

We don't just ask these questions—we act on the answers. From daily routines to menu choices, room décor to support strategies, we work alongside young people to tailor their experience of care. We believe every detail is a chance to show them that their voice has power.

Using Empathy, we attune to unspoken feelings and look beyond behaviours to understand what a young person might be trying to communicate. For some, structured conversations may be overwhelming—so we adapt, finding the right time, space, and approach for each individual.

Formal tools such as key worker sessions, house meetings, and feedback forms are complemented by informal, ongoing dialogue. Advocacy services and access to independent visitors ensure that every young person has the chance to be heard by someone they trust.

We know that, for many of our young people, their past experiences may have taught them that their voices don't matter. At Rosecroft, we gently and consistently show them the opposite: Your voice matters. Your views help shape your care. And we are listening—always.

9. Promoting Equality, Inclusion, and Children's Rights

At Rosecroft, we recognise every young person as a unique individual with their own story, identity, and voice. We are committed to creating a home where diversity is celebrated, where discrimination is challenged, and where every child's rights are respected and upheld—not only in principle, but in daily practice.

We meet every young person with Acceptance, honouring who they are without condition. Their race, gender, culture, beliefs, sexuality, ability, or communication style are not things to be tolerated—they are to be valued, protected, and understood. We affirm every young person's right to be fully themselves, free from prejudice or judgment.

Through Curiosity, we seek to learn from the young people we support. We ask questions—not to challenge or change them, but to better understand their world and how they experience it. We are open to their stories, to what matters to them, and to what makes them feel safe, seen, and included.

Empathy is at the heart of our approach to equality. We recognise that many of our young people may have experienced exclusion, marginalisation, or bias. We do not minimise these realities—we validate them, support healing, and work actively to ensure Rosecroft is a place of fairness, dignity, and emotional security.

We also use Playfulness where appropriate to explore difficult topics in ways that are engaging and non-threatening. We offer workshops, creative projects, and group discussions that allow young people to explore identity, rights, and values in a supportive environment that encourages participation and builds confidence.

Children and young people at Rosecroft are supported to:

Know their rights and express them

Access advocacy and speak up when they feel unheard

Be involved in decisions that affect their lives

Challenge discrimination safely and be protected from it

Develop self-respect, self-knowledge, and self-worth

Our staff are trained in anti-discriminatory practice and work to ensure that equality is not simply a policy—it is a lived, relational experience. We are intentional in promoting diverse role models, inclusive language, and accessible communication.

We want every young person to know:

You belong here. Your identity is respected. Your rights are real. And you have the power to be yourself—fully and freely.

Dame Rachel de Souza is the Children's Commissioner for England, and her team help protect the rights of all children in England. Dame Rachel brings matters that affect children and young people's rights to the attention of Parliament, local government and others.

Dame Rachel de Souza and Team	Office of the Children’s Commissioner – Advice & Guidance
Free phone	0800 528 0731
Email	Advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk
Post	Office of the Children’s Commissioner for England, Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London, SW19 3BT

Children and young people are supported, if needed, in accessing The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) which offers independent and confidential information, advice, advocacy and support to young people who want to have their wishes and feelings heard in circumstances where decisions are being made about their life.



For information or advice, please contact NYAS

Phone	0808 808 1001	
Post	“Freepost NYAS”	
Email	help@nyas.net	
Website	www.nyas.net	www.youngpeople.nyas.net
Address	NYAS Tower House, Tower Road, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 1FN	

Education

10. Supporting Children with Specialist Educational Needs

At Rosecroft, we understand that every young person learns in their own way and at their own pace. For those with special educational needs (SEN), we create a compassionate, responsive environment where learning is not just about academic success, but about confidence, connection, and curiosity.

We begin with Acceptance—recognising the whole child, not just their diagnosis or label. We don’t define young people by what they struggle with; instead, we see their strengths, interests, and potential. We reassure them that there is no pressure to “catch up” or “fit in”—just an invitation to explore learning in a way that feels achievable and meaningful to them.

Our staff approach each young person with Curiosity, asking questions like:

“What helps you learn best?”

“What makes learning feel hard?”

“What would make school or learning feel more enjoyable for you?”

This curious mindset helps us tailor support strategies that are flexible, respectful, and led by the child's needs. We work closely with schools, virtual school leads, families, and specialists to develop clear, consistent support that fits into each child's wider care and education plan.

Using Empathy, we attune to the emotional experience of learning—understanding that for many young people with SEN, school may have been a place of shame, anxiety, or failure. We provide emotional reassurance alongside practical help, reminding them that it's okay to ask for support, make mistakes, or try something again.

We also bring Playfulness into learning. From informal projects and creative expression to curiosity-led exploration, we help young people rediscover the joy of learning. Where mainstream education is not currently possible, we provide alternative routes such as:

Distance learning and online education platforms

Accredited AQA units and vocational qualifications

Project-based and experiential learning

1:1 or small group tuition tailored to interest and ability

We ensure staff receive training and guidance specific to individual SEN profiles, and where needed, involve occupational therapists and education professionals to make adaptations to the learning environment.

At Rosecroft, we hold a simple belief: Every young person can learn, and every young person deserves to feel proud of their achievements—no matter how big or small.

11. Educational Provision

While Rosecroft is not a registered school, we place a high value on learning as a lifelong process, not just something that happens in a classroom. We view education as a gateway to confidence, purpose, and self-belief—and we are committed to supporting every young person to engage with learning in a way that works for them.

Even though we do not provide formal schooling on-site, we take a proactive and playful role in each young person's educational journey. Our team works with local schools, virtual schools, and education services to ensure continuity, stability, and access to appropriate learning environments.

When a young person is not in school or struggles with education, we meet this with curiosity, not criticism. We explore:

What learning has felt like for them in the past

What gets in the way of engagement

What goals feel meaningful and motivating

We understand that learning difficulties, trauma, or negative school experiences may have led to disengagement. With empathy, we take time to rebuild trust—offering encouragement, creating structure, and celebrating small steps forward.

Young people are supported in creating Personal Education Plans (PEPs) where their voice is central. We encourage them to express what helps them learn, what they'd like to achieve, and how we can walk alongside them.

Our staff are trained to identify educational barriers and provide:

Daily support with homework and organisation

Encouragement to attend school or college with positive reinforcement

Coordination with SENCOs, teachers, and virtual school leads

Help with preparing for exams, applications, or career pathways

Through this approach, we show young people that learning isn't about being perfect—it's about growth, discovery, and having the courage to try.

At Rosecroft, you don't have to be top of the class to be proud of yourself—you just have to keep showing up, and we'll be right beside you.

12. Promoting Educational Achievement for Young People

Although Rosecroft is not a registered school, we are fully committed to ensuring that every young person in our care is supported to achieve their educational potential. We understand that school is not just about grades—it's also about belonging, identity, and hope for the future.

We approach education with Curiosity, asking young people:

“What do you enjoy learning about?”

“What would help you feel more confident in school?”

“What do you dream of doing in the future?”

By listening deeply and accepting where each young person is in their learning journey—whether re-engaging after a break, pursuing vocational goals, or overcoming anxieties about the classroom—we show them that we are alongside them, not ahead of them.

We work collaboratively with schools, colleges, and virtual schools to secure appropriate placements. From the moment a young person arrives at Rosecroft, we prioritise educational access and stability. We ensure that clothing, equipment, and routines are in place so that young people are ready and able to learn—emotionally and practically.

We use Empathy to acknowledge that returning to education can bring up feelings of fear, failure, or frustration. Staff offer emotional containment and reassurance, never minimising those feelings but walking through them together.

For young people who struggle with mainstream settings, we provide flexible, alternative options such as:

Home tuition or small group learning

Functional skills programmes

Vocational training

Therapeutic education activities

AQA unit awards and distance learning

We also introduce Playfulness where possible—celebrating effort, using games and creativity, and helping young people rediscover joy in learning. We reward attendance, effort, and engagement with praise, incentives, and positive feedback, helping build the self-esteem that supports long-term success.

Staff maintain strong links with education providers by attending PEP reviews, parent-teacher meetings, and liaising regularly with teaching staff. We are also active in making good use of the Pupil Premium to enhance learning opportunities.

At Rosecroft, we believe that every young person deserves to experience success in learning. We don't just support education—we believe in the young people doing the learning.

Enjoyment and Achievement

13. Enjoyment and Achievement

At Rosecroft, we believe that joy is healing. Positive experiences—whether creative, physical, social, or playful—are vital not only for development but for recovery from trauma. We make enjoyment a central part of life in the home, not as a reward, but as a right.

We use Playfulness to help young people reconnect with fun, adventure, and laughter. We know that for many, childhood may have felt unsafe or rushed, and we gently offer opportunities to re-experience those moments in a safe, nurturing way.

Whether it's bowling, painting, visiting the seaside, joining a gym, or simply playing a board game at home, these activities build relationships, confidence, and memories. We encourage young people to try new things, and we are always curious about what brings them happiness:

“What have you always wanted to try?”

“What helps you relax or feel proud of yourself?”

“What does fun look like for you?”

We don’t assume what’s enjoyable for one young person will be right for another. Our approach is individualised, flexible, and led by each young person’s interests, strengths, and emotional readiness.

Through Acceptance, we recognise that some may initially resist joining in or fear failure. That’s okay. We never force participation. Instead, we stay close, continue to invite, and offer reassurance that they can move at their own pace.

Using Empathy, we support young people through the emotional ups and downs that can come with achievement. We celebrate successes—big or small—with genuine warmth, not performance pressure. For some, making a phone call, attending a group activity, or baking a cake might be a huge step—and we honour that with enthusiasm and care.

Activities at Rosecroft include:

Outings to local attractions, cinemas, and parks

Arts and crafts, music, and cooking

Sports and physical fitness, both structured and informal

Community involvement and volunteering

Creative exploration like journaling or photography

We help young people build resilience, self-expression, and connection through shared experiences, while encouraging autonomy and choice. In doing so, we reinforce the message: “You are capable. You can succeed. And you deserve to enjoy life.”

Health

14. Supporting Health and Wellbeing

At Rosecroft, we believe that health is more than physical care—it is emotional safety, relational connection, and compassionate understanding. Many of our young people arrive having experienced disrupted or neglected healthcare. Through consistent, PACE-informed care, we help restore their trust in both their bodies and those who support them.

Our approach begins with Empathy. We understand that visiting a doctor, talking about personal issues, or managing mental health challenges can be overwhelming—especially for those who have felt dismissed or unheard. We walk alongside young people at their own pace, offering reassurance and validating their experiences.

We meet every child and young person with Acceptance—never shaming or criticising for missed appointments, difficulties with hygiene, or reluctance to engage with services. Instead,

we say, “We get it—it’s hard sometimes. Let’s figure it out together.” Through this, we build emotional safety that enables young people to re-engage with their own self-care.

With Curiosity, we explore the root of difficulties:

“What does being healthy mean to you?”

“What makes it hard to ask for help?”

“What’s worked—or not worked—for you in the past?”

We use these insights to create tailored Personal Health Plans that include emotional wellbeing, physical needs, sexual health, and self-care routines. These plans are flexible, respectful, and co-created with the young person, reflecting their voice and values.

Our team supports:

Registration and attendance at GP, dental, and optometry appointments

Access to specialist mental health support (e.g. CAMHS, crisis teams, counselling)

Emotional wellbeing activities such as mindfulness, journaling, or body-based therapies

Developmentally appropriate sex and relationship education

Health education around sleep, diet, exercise, and emotional regulation

Playfulness also plays a role. We reduce anxiety by incorporating health into everyday life—through cooking healthy meals together, trying new sports, or having relaxed conversations about puberty or self-esteem.

We carefully monitor the effectiveness of all interventions and work closely with professionals to ensure support is joined-up and purposeful. All staff receive training in physical and emotional health, including trauma-informed approaches, attachment, and mental health first aid.

Where medication is needed, it is managed with care, dignity, and understanding. Young people are supported to take ownership of their medication safely, where appropriate.

Above all, we communicate this message to each young person:

Your health matters. You are worthy of care. And we are here to support you—body, mind, and heart.

Medication and Health Support at Rosecroft:

At Rosecroft, we understand that some children and young people may need to take medication from time to time—whether occasionally or regularly. This could include prescribed medications from a doctor, non-prescribed remedies, or controlled medications. Our priority is to make sure this is done safely and in a way that supports each young person's wellbeing.

Medication is stored securely in a locked cabinet, unless it has been carefully assessed as safe and appropriate for a young person to look after their own medication. When that's the case, we'll support them with guidance and encouragement to take it as prescribed.

When medication is prescribed by a doctor, staff will follow the instructions provided by the pharmacist. For non-prescribed medication, such as over-the-counter remedies, we follow the guidance on the original label to make sure it's given safely. Only staff who have received the right training will give medication, and they always check the dose and keep careful records to help everyone feel confident and informed.

Sometimes, young people may be able to take responsibility for managing their own medication. If this feels right and has been assessed as safe, we'll support them to do so in a way that helps them feel trusted and capable.

We also use what are known as "homely remedies"—these are everyday medicines you can buy in a pharmacy for short-term concerns like toothache, headaches, coughs, or colds. These will only be given with permission from a parent, carer, or someone with parental responsibility. For example, if we need to give Paracetamol, staff will first check to make sure the child hasn't already had any other medication containing Paracetamol that day.

We approach all aspects of medication with care, curiosity, and empathy—supporting young people in a way that helps them feel safe, respected, and involved in decisions about their health.

Positive Relationships

15. Promoting Contact with Families and Friends

At Rosecroft, we understand the vital importance of safe, nurturing relationships. Whether with family, carers, friends, or trusted adults, these bonds form the emotional scaffolding that helps young people feel grounded, connected, and valued. Wherever appropriate, we work actively and sensitively to support contact and reconnection.

Our approach begins with Empathy. We know that relationships can be complicated filled with both love and pain. Young people may carry deep feelings about family, including grief, loyalty conflicts, or fear of rejection. We provide a safe emotional space where these feelings can be explored without judgment.

With Curiosity, we ask questions like:

"Who are the people that make you feel safe or happy?"

"Is there someone you'd like to reconnect with?"

"What does family mean to you right now?"

We help young people make sense of their own relationship stories, and we work with them to build or rebuild safe connections, at a pace that feels manageable and affirming.

We use Acceptance in recognising the uniqueness of every family dynamic. We don't impose assumptions or expectations. Instead, we validate each young person's experience—whether they long for contact, fear it, or feel ambivalent. We listen, support, and adapt based on their emotional readiness and legal circumstances.

We also bring Playfulness into the process where appropriate. A phone call home can become a positive ritual, a visit from a sibling can include shared games or activities, and a family outing might involve a trip to a favourite café or park—all of which help build joyful new memories and reduce anxiety around contact.

Our support includes:

Facilitating regular, meaningful contact with parents, siblings, extended family, and friends (when safe and agreed)

Providing transport and supervision where required

Helping prepare for visits emotionally and practically

Maintaining weekly contact with families to share updates and build trust

Welcoming visits to the home in a way that respects the privacy and safety of all young people

We also work with external agencies—social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers, and advocates—to ensure that all contact is child-centred, safe, and in line with each young person’s care plan and wishes.

Above all, we communicate this message: You are not alone. You deserve meaningful connections. And we will support you in building and sustaining the relationships that matter most to you.

Protection of Children

16. Surveillance and Monitoring

At Rosecroft, the safety and well-being of our young people is our top priority—but we believe that safety is best achieved not through control, but through trust, connection, and understanding. Our approach to monitoring is grounded in the principles of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy, ensuring that protective measures are never intrusive or punitive, but relational and respectful.

We view all forms of monitoring—whether staffing levels, physical safety checks, or the use of alarms—as tools to help young people feel secure, not watched. We are curious about how each young person experiences boundaries and structure, and we involve them in conversations about what helps them feel both free and safe.

We explain clearly and sensitively the reasons for any safety measure, whether it’s external CCTV (used solely for building security), alarmed doors, or fire systems. Using Empathy, we validate that such measures can feel uncomfortable or even triggering for those with past experiences of surveillance or institutional care. We create space for these feelings to be explored and understood.

With Acceptance, we recognise that each young person may respond differently to the experience of being in a shared residential setting. Some may test boundaries as part of

rebuilding trust; others may need more reassurance and guidance. We meet each of these responses with calm, consistency, and attunement—not judgment.

Our safeguarding structure includes:

External CCTV to monitor property boundaries (not used inside the home)

Alarmed exits to alert staff discreetly when doors are opened—discussed in advance with young people and agreed through individual plans

Visitor identity checks and sign-in procedures

Staff presence and supervision tailored to emotional and behavioural needs

Regular risk assessments carried out with young people's involvement where appropriate

We use Playfulness even in safety planning—normalising routines like fire drills, encouraging participation, and helping young people understand that being safe doesn't mean being restricted. Safety becomes something we do with them, not to them.

Ultimately, we want every young person at Rosecroft to experience a deep sense of internal safety that goes beyond physical security. By nurturing relationships of trust and using clear, compassionate communication, we help them move from external control toward self-awareness, responsibility, and independence.

You deserve to feel safe—and we will work with you to make sure you do, in a way that respects your dignity and voice.

Safeguarding:

We take a proactive and trauma-aware approach to safeguarding:

All staff are carefully recruited, trained, and supervised to ensure their values and behaviours align with a safe, caring environment.

Health and safety checks are completed regularly, and the building is equipped with CCTV outside, an internal alarm system, and secure entry processes.

Staff presence is always sufficient to meet young people's needs—physically and emotionally.

Staff respond with empathy and curiosity to any changes in behaviour or mood, knowing these can be signs of distress or unmet needs. Safety plans are in place to reduce harm, and young people are encouraged to share worries in a space where they know they will be believed and supported.

We avoid leading questions and are honest about confidentiality so that young people feel safe to disclose concerns. Concerns are always discussed with the Service Manager, and we work closely with Independent Reviewing Officers, social workers, and other safeguarding partners.

If a young person is ever at immediate risk, we act swiftly and with clarity, involving emergency services when necessary. We follow local safeguarding procedures and ensure the young person's voice remains central throughout.

MACH - Multi-Agency Children's Hub on 01642 726004; or

Out of "office hours" contact the **Emergency Duty Team** – 01642 524552

Health & Safety and Emergency Preparedness:

We take health and safety seriously. Fire alarms, safety equipment, and secure storage of hazardous items are all part of our daily routine. Staff know how to respond in emergencies, where to find safety cut-offs, and how to manage evacuations calmly and confidently.

Evacuation procedures are regularly discussed with young people so that if an emergency arises, they feel reassured and prepared—not frightened.

Empowering Staff to Protect and Support

Staff are trained in safeguarding, fire safety, and COSHH. They ensure:

The building is secure, and visitors are verified and supervised.

Young people's privacy and autonomy are respected while maintaining boundaries for safety.

Visitors and contractors are briefed on emergency procedures.

All staff and volunteers understand and uphold our no-smoking policy and medication procedures.

Whistleblowing concerns are taken seriously and can be raised confidentially through an independent hotline or internal procedures. Staff feel supported to speak up for young people and for each other when something doesn't feel right.

whistleblowing hotline on 0800 9179 247, which is overseen by Veritau.

You can report any concerns to us by email to: whistleblowing@middlesbrough.gov.uk

When a Child Goes Missing:

We know that sometimes children may go missing. This is never just about "going out"—it can be a signal of distress, curiosity, or a need for connection.

Our Missing Policy, guided by the Philomena Protocol and Cleveland Police, creates a clear but compassionate framework for how we respond. We treat every situation individually and without blame, exploring the "why" with curiosity and empathy. Our team works alongside the child, social worker, and family to understand and reduce future risk.

When a child returns, they are met with warmth and safety—not punishment. Their voice matters, and we listen without judgment. Updates are shared with the child’s network, and their risk plan is reviewed with their input, ensuring they feel seen and heard.

17. Behavioural Support and the Use of Restraint

At Rosecroft, we believe that all behaviour is communication. Behind every outburst, withdrawal, or refusal lies a story—a need, a fear, or an unmet emotional experience. Our response is never about control or correction. Instead, we lead with Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy to build relationships where healing and growth can happen.

We begin by creating a sense of safety and connection. When young people feel truly seen and accepted, even in their most difficult moments, they begin to trust. We hold firm, kind boundaries—not to punish, but to protect and reassure. Our message is always: “You are safe. We are here. You’re not in trouble—we’re just trying to help.”

Using Curiosity, we ask:

“What might this behaviour be telling us?”

“What is the young person needing or protecting themselves from?”

“How can we respond in a way that soothes, not escalates?”

Our team is trained in therapeutic, trauma-informed approaches and uses individual Safety Plans that are developed with each young person. These plans include preferred calming strategies, known triggers, and support techniques that honour the young person’s history and emotional needs.

With Empathy, we acknowledge that many of our young people have been judged, blamed, or rejected because of how they behave under stress. We work to rewrite that experience. Instead of asking “What’s wrong with you?” we ask “What happened to you?” and “How can we support you through this?”

Playfulness helps defuse tension, rebuild connection, and offer young people a way back to relationship after a challenging moment. Whether it’s a smile, a light-hearted comment, or a shared moment of fun, we use it to reestablish trust without shame or fear.

We use praise, positive reinforcement, and restorative conversations far more often than consequences. When a young person feels proud of a small step—using words instead of actions, walking away instead of lashing out—we celebrate that as progress.

Physical restraint is used only as a last resort and only when absolutely necessary to prevent serious harm. All staff are trained in PRICE (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment), and their competence is regularly assessed. Debriefs following any incident involve reflection, repair, and support—for both staff and the young person involved. The goal is always to learn, restore trust, and support regulation.

Our guiding principle is this:

Challenging behaviour is not a failure—it’s an opportunity to connect, understand, and help a young person feel safe in themselves and with others.

Leadership and Management

18. Leadership and Management

At Rosecroft, we know that the culture of a home is shaped from the top down—and the way we lead reflects our commitment to relational, trauma-informed practice. Our leadership team models the same principles of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy that we expect staff to extend to young people.

The Registered Provider of Rosecroft is Middlesbrough Council, and the service is led by a Registered Manager and a Responsible Individual who are deeply committed to nurturing a home that feels safe, consistent, and emotionally attuned.

Rosecroft Children’s Home is maintained by Middlesbrough Council.

Registered Manager’s	Manager – Ann English
Telephone	01642 728821
Email	ann_english@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Address	Rosecroft, 58 Croft Avenue, Acklam, Middlesbrough, TS5 8AX

Responsible Individual	Chris Graefe–Responsible Individual Head of Service
Telephone	01642 727459
Email	Chris_Graefe@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Address	Fountain Court, 119 Grange Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 2DT

Our leadership team creates a climate where staff feel:

Safe to reflect without judgment

Encouraged to bring creativity and warmth into their work

Respected for the knowledge they bring and supported in the areas where they are still learning

This foundation enables our team to offer that same emotional safety and reliability to the young people they support.

We use Curiosity to understand the needs of the team just as we do with the young people. We regularly ask:

“What do you need to feel confident in your role?”

“Where are you feeling stretched or unsure?”

“How can we support you to grow?”

Supervision, training, and development are not treated as tick-box exercises but as relationship-based opportunities to reflect, learn, and improve. Leadership at Rosecroft is responsive rather than reactive, supporting a flexible environment where trauma-informed care isn't a technique—it's the culture.

Through Acceptance, we acknowledge the emotional complexity of this work. Staff are encouraged to bring their whole selves into their practice. They are supported to recover from difficult experiences, celebrate successes, and explore challenges in supervision or team meetings, where psychological safety is prioritised.

Empathy within leadership means being emotionally present with the team, especially in moments of pressure. Whether celebrating achievements or navigating crises, leaders are visible, available, and human.

Playfulness has its place in leadership, too. At Rosecroft, we understand that joy and humour are vital to building team morale and resilience. Shared laughter, informal check-ins, and creating moments of connection across the team helps prevent burnout and strengthens bonds.

Ultimately, our leadership isn't about command—it's about connection. Because when adults feel safe, held, and hopeful, they're best equipped to offer that same experience to the young people in their care.

19. Staff Experience and Qualifications

At Rosecroft, the heart of our service lies in the strength of our relationships—and our staff team is central to that. We believe that the best outcomes for young people come from the presence of emotionally available, reflective adults who are grounded in the principles of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy.

Our team is made up of skilled, compassionate professionals from a range of backgrounds, each bringing their own strengths, lived experiences, and commitment to relational care. What unites them is their shared belief that connection is the foundation of healing.

We place a strong emphasis on recruiting the right people, not just those with the right qualifications. We look for individuals who are open, warm, and willing to grow. Technical knowledge can be taught; emotional presence and authenticity are essential.

With Curiosity, we get to know our staff—what motivates them, what challenges them, and how they work best. We support continuous professional development by asking:

“Where would you like to grow?”

“What would help you feel more confident in your role?”

“What are you most passionate about when working with young people?”

Staff are offered a comprehensive induction and are supported to achieve or already hold recognised qualifications, including:

QCF Level 3 and 4 Diplomas in Residential Childcare or Children and Young People’s Workforce

QCF Level 5 Leadership and Management

Specialist training in mental health, trauma, substance misuse, self-harm, and child development

Training is not one-off—it is ongoing, evolving alongside the needs of our young people and the team. Our staff receive dedicated learning in PACE, attachment theory, relational practice, and restorative approaches.

Through Empathy, we create a culture where staff can be open about the emotional demands of the work. Supervision is regular, reflective, and supportive—not just to review performance, but to nurture well-being and personal growth. Staff are encouraged to bring both professional challenges and personal reflections into these sessions.

We use Acceptance to recognise that we all have areas for development, and that mistakes—when reflected on—can be powerful learning moments. Staff are not expected to be perfect, only to be present, open, and committed to learning.

And we don’t forget the importance of Playfulness—in team building, in daily routines, and in maintaining morale. Shared joy, laughter, and creativity are essential to sustaining a positive team environment that mirrors what we hope to provide for our young people.

At Rosecroft, our staff are not just employees—they are trusted adults who offer safety, stability, and hope to the young people they support. We invest in them, because they are investing in lives.

A full list of the staff who are permanently employed to work at Rosecroft, their qualifications, and length of service is included below.

Name, Position Held	Start Date	Qualifications
<i>Registered Manager</i>	TBC	
Ann English <i>Residential Manager</i>	14 th January 2026	NVQ 3 Caring for Children and Young People NVQ 3 Assessing Vocational Achievement NVQ 4 Health and Social Care Children and Young People QCF 5 Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services
Elizabeth Adams <i>Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker</i>	23 rd September 2021	QCF Level 3 Children & young people's workforce
Andrea Duncan <i>Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker</i>	5 th March 2018 Senior Role July 2021	Induction training Level 4 Children, Young People And Families Practitioner In Residential Childcare
Terry McNeill <i>Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker</i>	Permanent transfer to Rosecroft May 2024 (22 nd June 2020 FFF)	QCF level 4 Working with Young People in Residential. PRICE trainer Non-Violence Resistance (NVR)
Isobel Stephenson <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	Permanent transfer to Rosecroft December 2023 (August 2020 Firtree)	NVQ level 3 in health and social care. QCF level 4 Residential Childcare qualification.
Anthony Herlingshaw <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	Transferred from Holly Lodge to Rosecroft in April 2019. (June 2018)	BA (hons) Criminology and Youth Studies. PRICE trainer
Melanie Hartley <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	August 2019 permanent October 2017 Casual	QCF Level 3 Children & young people's workforce
Anne Marie Kelly <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	11 th July 2022 (May 2020 FFF service)	CYPFP Level 4 Apprenticeship Level 3 QCF Housing Level 3 and 4 NVQ Parent Support Advisor

Emily Dodgson <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	Transferred to Rosecroft May 2023 (February 2022 Firtree)	Level 3 Children and Young People's Workforce
Kevin Walpole <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	24 th July 2023	Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare Level 4 Children, Young People and Families Practitioner in Children's Residential Care
Bethan Parker <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	3 rd April 2024	Level 3 Children's Play, Learning and Development – Early Years Diploma of Higher Education in Children, Young People and Families Working towards QCF level 3/4 Residential Childcare qualification.
Angela Jacques <i>Residential Support Worker</i>	Transferred to Rosecroft September 2024 (July 2023 Holly Lodge; September 2021 Willowtree)	Working towards QCF level 3/4 Residential Childcare qualification. PRICE
Vacancy <i>Residential Support Worker</i>		
Samantha Brown Casual Residential Support Worker	19 th January 2026 (12 th July 2021, transferred to Firtree 8 th December 2023, Returned to Rosecroft 1 st July 2025 (Casual from 1 st January 2025)	BA Marketing & Retail Management QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health & Social Care in Children and Young People's Services. QCF Level 3 Children & young people's workforce

Dates in brackets are those when the employee started employment with previous residential provider or other areas of service in partnership with the Local Authority.

Staff Team Experience

Ann English – Residential Manager

Ann began as sessional worker in August 2001 with Five Rivers progressing to a permanent post in 2002. Remained with Five Rivers until 2014 after which the contract returned to Middlesbrough Council. Ann left to join private residential childcare companies as Deputy Manager in 2015 progressing then to Registered Manager in the same year until 2020. Covid-19 meant reassessing career due to family needs and de registered taking a three month break before returning as Team Leader. Ann returned to Middlesbrough Council as residential support worker in November 2021 before progressing to deputy manager in April 2022.

Elizabeth Adams – Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker

Lizzy has worked within residential child care services since 2011, starting as a casual worker for Five Rivers. Lizzy then progressed to a full time position with Middlesbrough Council. Lizzy completed her QCF level 3 in children and young people's workforce, before taking some time out to go travelling. On return Lizzy worked within Residential childcare for two private companies building up further experience/ knowledge one whereby she was a Team Leader and supported the homes manager. In July 2021 Lizzy was successful in obtaining a senior role at Rosecroft.

Andrea Duncan – Senior Residential and Edge of Care Worker

Andrea previously worked within the custody of HM Court Services for 17 years. She gained knowledge and experience in managing challenging situations, stressful incidents and supported vulnerable people. Andrea began working in Fir Tree in March 2018 and then was successful in gaining a senior role at Rosecroft July 2021.

Terry McNeill – Senior Residential and Edge of Care worker

Terry has been working with Children and Adults with a varied range of needs and backgrounds for over three years throughout my time with the Probation Service and within the Independent Care Sector supporting young people who are 16+ with their independence skills whilst in semi-independent living for indigo care prior to starting work for Middlesbrough council in April 2020. Since starting with Futures for Families Terry has worked at a number of different Middlesbrough council children's homes. Terry transferred to Rosecroft on the 1st May 2024.

Anthony Herlingshaw – Residential Support Worker

Anthony graduated from Teesside University in 2017 with a degree in Criminology and Youth Studies. He also has experience working in alcohol and substance misuse services. He also has experience working in youth clubs and a prison setting whilst completing his degree.

Mel Hartley – Residential Support Worker

Mel started working for Middlesbrough Council as a volunteer in FRT in 2006. Following this she moved into a temporary position as a family support worker within the social work team, this included working closely with families, supervised contacts and assisting social workers on complex cases. From this role Mel moved over to the contact team in a casual post in 2010 and remained there until taking a casual role within the homes in October 2017 and becoming a permanent staff member at Rosecroft in August 2019.

Isobel Stephenson – Residential Support Worker

Isobel has a lot of experience and knowledge in caring for young people who are looked after due to being a foster carer for over 15 years. Isobel has a passion for working with young people and when she decided to stop being a foster carer she sought out working with children within residential settings. Isobel has an NVQ in children in young people and has completed extensive training within her fostering role that she is able to put into practise within the home. Isobel transferred from one of our sister homes in May 2023.

Anne Marie Kelly – Residential Support Worker

Anne Marie joined Rosecroft in July 2022. Anne Marie has worked in both Primary and Secondary schools in Middlesbrough and has been a SEN Teaching Assistant and went on to be a Parent Support Advisor to 4 feeder primary schools, supporting children/young people

and their families, encouraging positive liaison with school in order for their children to have a positive future.

Anne Marie has also worked with young people and provided support for rehabilitation, developing their work and training skills in order for them to move forward positively and reintegrate back into the community.

Emily Dodgson – Residential Support Worker

Emily has worked with children and young people in a number of support role settings. Emily has worked as support workers and play workers in Daisy Chain and other services. She is passionate about working with young people and has begun her career in residential childcare in February 2022. She has completed her level 3 in children and young people's workforce and is eager to continue her career within Residential Childcare. Emily transferred from one of our sister homes in May 2023.

Kevin Walpole – Residential Support Worker

Kevin left school and trained in the Royal Navy spending 8 years in service before joining the London Fire Brigade rising to the rank of Station Officer. Kevin served across several London stations specialising in Fire Rescue and Urban Search and Rescue before retiring in 2013. Kevin then had a career path change in Residential Child Care since 2019 and started working in Rosecroft in July 2023.

Bethan Parker – Residential Support Worker

Bethan has worked with young people in a number of different settings. Bethan has worked both in educational and residential settings.

Bethan began her career in residential children's services in 2022 commencing her role at Rosecroft in April 2024.

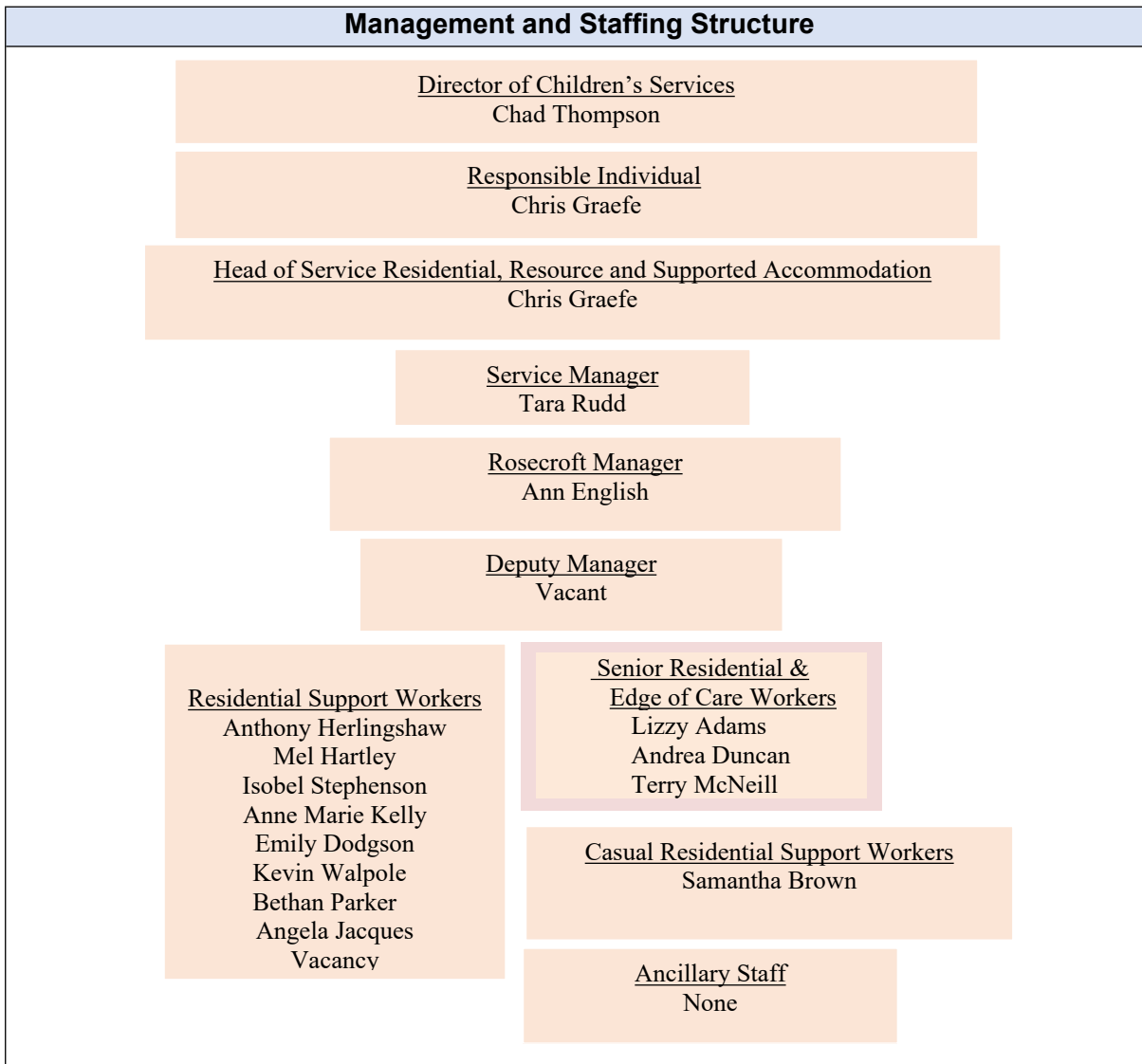
Angela Jacques - Residential Support Worker

Angela has previous experience working with adults who had disabilities and additional needs. Angela has worked in children's residential care working as a casual in the private sector. Angela has worked in our sister services Willowtree and Holly Lodge since September 2021 before joining Rosecroft in September 2024.

Samantha Brown – Casual Residential Support Worker

Samantha started with Five Rivers as a Casual Worker in 2010. During this time Samantha also worked within an EBD school as a Learning Support Assistant. Samantha completed her QCF level 3 before obtaining a full-time position – Resource Worker with Middlesbrough Council. Samantha interviewed for a Senior Resource worker position and was successful, working in this role until December 2017. Samantha then worked for Cambian Group as a Team Leader and soon progressed to Deputy Manager supporting the manager manage both a group home and a Solo provision. Samantha successfully completed her Level 5 qualification in June 2020. Samantha rejoined the council working within the Rosecroft supporting 16–18-year-olds transitioning to independence. In December 2023 Samantha took up the position of Deputy Manager at Fir Tree and then decided to pursue an alternative career path whilst being a casual staff member at Rosecroft eventually returning full time to Rosecroft again in July 2025 as a Residential Support Worker. Samantha has now taken up a deputy manager role within another local authority however remains a casual worker for Rosecroft.

20. Staffing Structure and Professional Supervision



At Rosecroft, our staffing structure is built to ensure that every young person experiences consistent, emotionally available care from trusted adults. We believe that how we support our team is just as important as how we support our young people—because a well-supported adult can offer the safety, security, and connection that children need to thrive.

Our leadership team—Registered Manager, Deputy Manager, and Senior Residential Workers—model the values of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy in their everyday practice. These principles are not reserved for our young people; they are the foundation of how we lead and support our staff.

Each member of the team receives regular, relational supervision—a protected space for reflection, learning, and emotional processing. These sessions are not about fault-finding; they are about holding space for growth. Supervision includes discussions about:

How the work is impacting the staff member emotionally

What's going well, and where support is needed

How PACE is being used in practice

Reflections on behaviour, relationships, and team dynamics

We lead with Acceptance, knowing that staff bring with them their own experiences, triggers, and stories. We foster a culture where it's okay to ask for help, admit uncertainty, or share vulnerability. This helps prevent burnout and builds team resilience.

With Curiosity, we explore not only how staff are supporting young people, but also what might be influencing their responses. We might ask:

“What do you think was going on for that young person?”

“How did you feel in that moment?”

“What might have helped you feel more grounded?”

We encourage peer support, shared learning, and reflective practice across the team. Monthly team meetings provide a space to connect, celebrate successes, explore challenges, and deepen our collective understanding of trauma-informed, PACE-based care.

Playfulness is actively encouraged within the team—because caring for children and young people is deeply rewarding, but also emotionally demanding. We build in humour, informal check-ins, and moments of joy to maintain morale and team cohesion. We celebrate achievements and support one another through the hard days.

Staff who deliver or support education and healthcare within the service also receive role-specific training, supervision, and opportunities to collaborate across disciplines. This ensures consistency of care and reinforces the message that everyone—regardless of role—shares responsibility for relational, therapeutic practice.

At Rosecroft, supervision is not an administrative task—it is a core therapeutic intervention. Because when the adults feel safe, connected, and understood, they are better able to offer that same experience to the young people in their care.

21. Management and Staff Development and Training

At Rosecroft, we see staff development not just as a requirement, but as an essential expression of care—for our young people and for our team. We believe that a well-supported, well-trained team creates a stable, attuned, and emotionally available environment where children and young people can thrive.

Our approach to development and training is built on the principles of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy—the same values we expect our staff to embody in their day-to-day work.

We use Curiosity to explore what each staff member needs in order to grow. Training is not a one-size-fits-all process. We ask:

“What interests you?”

“What feels challenging in your role?”

“Where would you like to deepen your knowledge or confidence?”

From this, we tailor learning pathways that combine core mandatory training with specialised, trauma-informed, and therapeutic input. Topics include:

PACE and attachment-based care

Trauma and recovery

Mental health and emotional regulation

Safeguarding and child protection

Equality, diversity, and inclusive practice

Reflective practice and relational supervision

Our team also receives training in therapeutic behaviour support, de-escalation, and restorative practice. Where applicable, external professionals are brought in to enhance learning through case study reviews, consultation, and joint reflection.

We support Playfulness in learning by encouraging interactive, creative, and reflective methods—team-based scenarios, role-plays, and real-world application that go beyond lectures and checklists. We believe learning should be engaging, relevant, and connected to real relationships.

With Acceptance, we acknowledge that learning is ongoing. We do not expect perfection—we expect presence. Our training culture is about permission to grow, space to reflect, and support to try again. We celebrate when someone says, “I don’t know,” because that’s the beginning of real development.

Supervision, team meetings, and informal reflective spaces are where Empathy comes in. Staff are encouraged to bring their whole selves into the room. We create a climate where emotional honesty is not only allowed—it is welcomed. We support staff through the emotional challenges of care work and recognise that self-care is professional care.

Our leadership team is actively involved in team development—offering guidance, encouragement, and shared reflection. We model relational leadership, which helps to embed these same values into every level of practice.

At Rosecroft, we believe that great care comes from great teams—and great teams are built through investment, encouragement, and trust.

When we support our staff with curiosity and compassion, they are better able to offer the same to the young people in their care.

22. Role Modelling and Gender Representation

At Rosecroft, we understand that young people learn as much from what we do as from what we say. That's why positive role modelling is at the heart of our practice. Every interaction—no matter how small—is an opportunity to model respect, emotional regulation, honesty, and care. We do this through the lens of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy.

We believe that young people benefit from seeing adults who are grounded, emotionally available, and consistent. Our team members intentionally model behaviours that help young people feel safe, connected, and hopeful about their own capacity to grow.

We use Playfulness to show that relationships can be safe and joyful. A shared laugh, a light-hearted moment, or a creative activity becomes a way to build connection and teach emotional flexibility. These experiences help young people begin to trust again and believe that not all adult-child relationships are transactional or threatening.

Through Acceptance, we show young people that it's okay to make mistakes, to have off days, or to feel vulnerable. Our staff model how to take responsibility, offer a genuine apology, or manage stress in healthy ways. This helps young people internalise the idea that they, too, are allowed to be human and still be valued.

With Curiosity, we explore what each young person needs from the adults around them. Some may need nurturing, others structure; some need calm, others humour. Our team reflects a diversity of personality and style, so that every young person has the chance to connect with someone who feels relatable and safe.

We are intentional about gender representation, ensuring that young people have access to a balanced mix of male and female role models, as well as individuals from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. We actively challenge gender stereotypes and affirm that strength comes in many forms—gentleness, patience, leadership, vulnerability, and empathy.

We also support staff to reflect on how their own identity, values, and emotional responses influence their interactions. Team discussions, training, and supervision all include space to think about how gender, culture, and personal history play a role in relationship-building.

At Rosecroft, role modelling isn't about being perfect—it's about being real. It's about showing up with honesty, warmth, and respect so that young people can learn, through experience, what safe, respectful relationships feel like—and begin to build those in their own lives.

Care Planning

23. Care Planning through the Lens of the PACE model

At Rosecroft, care planning is not a process we do to a young person—it's something we create with them, through relationship, respect, and trust. Rooted in the principles of Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy, our care planning ensures that every young person feels involved, heard, and empowered in shaping their own journey.

We begin with Curiosity—not just about what support a young person might need, but about who they are as a person. We ask:

“What matters to you?”

“What are your hopes, worries, and goals?”

“What would help you feel more settled, supported, and seen?”

From these conversations, we build care plans that reflect more than routines or risk assessments—they reflect the young person's identity, voice, and evolving needs. Every plan is individual, relational, and flexible.

With Acceptance, we acknowledge where each young person is starting from. We don't expect immediate trust or engagement. We let them know it's okay to feel unsure or resistant. Their pace is respected, and we adapt plans as their confidence grows and their needs change.

Plans are co-created with the young person, their family (where appropriate), and the professional network. This shared ownership helps reduce feelings of powerlessness and builds connection across the team around the child.

Empathy guides how we respond to the emotional experiences embedded in planning. For many young people, plans have previously meant rejection, disruption, or being moved on. We work to rewrite that narrative by offering consistency, reliability, and transparent communication throughout the planning process.

We incorporate Playfulness where appropriate—finding creative ways to engage young people in thinking about their future. Vision boards, values cards, role-play conversations, or informal chats over games or walks can all become ways to access their voice and encourage aspiration.

Each care plan includes:

Emotional and relational needs

Health and wellbeing support

Educational goals and plans

Independent living skills

Identity, culture, and communication preferences

Contact with family and friends

Risk management and safety planning

Young person's wishes, hopes, and input

We regularly review and update care plans in partnership with the young person. These reviews are not box-ticking exercises—they are opportunities to reflect on progress, revise goals, and build confidence in next steps.

At Rosecroft, our message is clear:

“This is your life. This is your plan. And we are here to walk it with you—every step of the way.”



Joint Protocol for working with 16 or 17 year olds who are threatened with homelessness

Version 3 January 2026

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Foreword

We are committed to promoting and continuing the essential joint working between Children’s Services and the Housing Solutions Team in Middlesbrough. We strive to ensure the effective management of housing crises for 16 and 17 year olds. We know how important suitable accommodation is for children as they approach the transition into adulthood and we understand that good housing underpins success in all other areas of life. As leaders we are committed to working together in partnership, and also in engaging and partnering with all other corporate and community partners who can help us to support young people to succeed and prosper.

Annabel Bates, Corporate Director of Children's Services



.....

Louise Grabham, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health.



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The purpose of this joint protocol

Whilst they are often referred to as ‘young people’, all 16 and 17 year olds are legally children until they reach the age of 18. Because of this, Children’s Services and Local Housing Authorities have different statutory duties to 16 /17 year old children who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Children’s Services and the Housing Solutions Team will work together to prevent homelessness amongst young people aged 16 and 17. This protocol outlines how we will respond to young people aged 16/17 years and aspires to achieve a set of co-ordinated services which set out a ‘Positive Pathway’ in Middlesbrough for this group of young people.

Understanding the legal duties to 16/17 year olds who are or may be homeless, as well as being alert to the breadth of safeguarding issues relating to teenagers, are critical aspects of our work in Middlesbrough with young people.

The purpose of this joint protocol is to ensure that young people are not ‘passed around’, being sent between Children’s Services and the Housing Solutions Team, but that they and their parents (or those with parental responsibility) get from Middlesbrough Council a timely and helpful response, which focusses on the well-being and safety of the young person and supports them to remain with family wherever it is safe to do so.

This protocol is developed in line with (R (G) v Southwark LBC (2009) which clarified the legal position, in terms of where responsibilities lay between Children’s Services and Housing Authorities in the case of a homeless 16/17 year old. It also clarified the interplay between Section 20 and Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. (see appendix 1)

Partners to the joint protocol

This protocol has been jointly written and been agreed by the Children’s Services and the Housing Solutions Team.

There are other partners we work with which play a key role in supporting young people aged 16/17 and their families. These agencies include:

- South Tees Youth Justice Service;
- Health (primary, secondary care and the ICB)
- Education
- Police
- Commissioned Services
- Housing Providers

Shared principles underpinning this joint protocol

Homelessness results in poor life chances for young people as they make the transition to adulthood. We are committed to preventing homelessness and together we will work with young people and their families to achieve this where it is possible and safe to do so.

- The safety and welfare of the young person is paramount.
- All young people aged 16 or 17 will be able to access services, regardless of which service they approach
- We will minimise the number of times young people have to ‘tell their story’ through a joint assessment process and will not send young people from ‘pillar to post’ to meet with different professionals from Children’s Services and the Housing Solutions Team.
- Statutory guidance will be followed when completing joint assessments for young people who present as potentially homeless and in need of accommodation and support services.
- Front line staff will take into account the wishes and feelings of the young people with whom they are working, and provide young people with:
 - Clear and accurate information
 - Understanding and sensitivity to their needs

- Access to independent advocacy
- Earliest intervention will ensure that where it is possible young people will return home or are enabled to live with their immediate family, extended family or another responsible adult in the young person's network.
- Practitioners will have a good understanding of each other's duties and requirement for information sharing and a shared goal to support the young person.
- Practitioners will ensure strong communication regarding the outcomes of joint assessments, and between front line officers. The levels of help a young person receives will be clearly confirmed to all involved.
- The young person will be kept informed of, and involved with, all progress and decisions made.
- Where accommodation is needed, this will be provided based on the assessed needs of the young person and in accordance with the relevant statutory duties of the service which is placing the young person.
- Hotel/B&B is not suitable for homeless 16 /17 year olds and will not be used.

Aims and objectives of the joint protocol

The overarching aim of this protocol is to support positive outcomes for 16/17 year olds threatened with homelessness.

We will achieve this by:

- Preventing homelessness occurring wherever possible through early identification and a timely response.
- Establishing collaborative working between practitioners through shared understanding of the respective legal duties, local shared processes, clarity of procedures and timescales, effective information sharing and timely interventions for young people.
- Making best use of Early Help, mediation services and family group conferencing to reunite families wherever possible
- Devising together easy to access information for young people and their families about preventing homelessness; realistic accommodation options that are available; myth-busting around social housing tenancies for under 18 year olds; the rights of young people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness; other help that is available and how to access that help.
- Undertaking accurate and timely joint statutory assessments which meet both the requirements of Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Assisting young people to make informed decisions by giving them clear information about the outcomes of their assessments and options or resources available and the offer of an independent advocate.
- Ensuring young people have access to suitable short stay/emergency accommodation if required, with continued work with families as appropriate to re-unite young people with parents/extended family or stay with another responsible adult in the young person's network

- Developing a 'Positive Pathway' of accommodation and support for young people who are not able to stay within the family network
- Establishing joint monitoring arrangements in order that information gathered can improve our understanding of any trends, inform service development and commissioning .
- Holding a Young People's Accommodation Panel alongside our accommodation providers to broaden collaborative working and achieve greater consistency with regard to support plans and access to services (see appendix 3)
- Facilitating joint training opportunities to ensure continued understanding of roles and responsibilities and promote collaborative working.
- Reviewing the operational application of the joint protocol on a regular basis in order that there is learning from any disputes or difficulties with cases, as well as those cases where joint working has successfully taken place.

Information Sharing

The success of this joint protocol is dependent on the efficient and effective sharing of information between organisations.

Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team should be aware that consent is not the lawful basis that we would rely on for information sharing.

Information sharing will follow the Council's policies and procedures [Data protection and privacy | Middlesbrough Council](#)

Practitioners will follow the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

- Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency;
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation;
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity and confidentiality
- Accountability

Both Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team will provide privacy notices to young people [Privacy notices | Middlesbrough Council](#)

Young people can object to certain information being shared, after having been informed via privacy notices. This objection should be carefully considered by practitioners.

Practitioners should consider the following factors when sharing information:

- Is the sharing for a clear operational reason?
- Is the sharing allowed or required by law
- Is there a privacy notice supporting this specific sharing
- Would the person reasonably expect this data sharing
- What is the minimum data sharing required for the purpose of joint working?

- Will the benefits of sharing outweigh the risks?
- Have you recorded your decision to share? – including what was shared, who with, why and when. Did you justify why it was necessary and proportionate?

Choice:

The young person will exercise choice to exercise about whether to accept or receive a service from either Children’s Services or the Housing Solutions Team.

Joint working arrangements in Middlesbrough

This part of the joint protocol is set out to reflect what happens when young people present or are referred to either Children’s Services or the Housing Solutions Team, the joint assessment process, the legal duties which might be owed and local processes.

There are some groups of young people aged 16/17 whose circumstances mean that joint additional considerations need to be taken into account if they are homeless or threatened with homelessness. These include:

Young parents

All 16 and 17 year olds are children until they are 18, including young people who already have children of their own. The statutory duties and the joint assessment process will therefore apply young parents aged 16/ 17.

If a 16/17 year old young woman who is pregnant or has a child or children of her own, Children’s Services would undertake an assessment of the needs of the young person and the unborn child.

16 /17 year olds in custody

Where a young person aged 16/17 is in custody, is not already looked after or a ‘relevant child’ and may be homeless on release because they have no accommodation to return to, they will require a child in need assessment before they leave custody. Youth Justice Services would inform the Local Authority of any young person who enters custody on the day they enter and then work in partnership with the Local Authority in respect of planning their release. This is a joint working agreement between Youth Justice Services, Middlesbrough and Redcar Local Authority . The young person’s Youth Justice Service case officer will need to ensure that a referral is made to Children’s Services for a child in need assessment and be involved in the assessment process, as well as any family members and other services.

There is a duty under Section 213B of the Housing Act on the Youth Justice Service to make a Duty to Refer referral, to the housing authority of the young person’s choice. This referral should be made with as much notice as possible.

The joint assessment should explore all possibilities of returning the young person to their family home, their extended family network or to a responsible adult in the young person’s network.

There is a local agreement in place that details the joint working practices between the Youth Justice Service and Children's Services, including the need for appropriate accommodation for young people 16+ who are leaving custody. This should be considered alongside this protocol. The Remand Concordat also sets out how partners should work together to effectively support children going through the remand process, this includes finding accommodation for those at risk of being remanded to Local Authority accommodation and stresses the importance of early collaboration to prevent a child being remanded unnecessarily because of a lack of available accommodation.

Young people from other local authority areas

Where a young person from another local authority area approaches The Housing Solutions Team as homeless, the Housing Act duty to assess the young person's housing needs will be held by Middlesbrough Council. Contact with Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH) will take place to ensure that discussions between the two local authority Children's Services take place. This will establish if it is possible for the young person to return to the area they have come from and which Children's service will be responsible for undertaking the joint assessment.

The welfare of the child is paramount and this should be at the heart of decisions to assist young people from other areas with any immediate and future accommodation needs and wishes if they are homeless. Any negotiation or resolution of dispute concerning which Local Authority is responsible should not override the need to assist the young person with their immediate situation.

Initial Approach to Children's Services

This applies in all instances where a young person who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness makes their first contact with Children's Services, or they are already receiving services. This includes 16/17s who:

- already a child in need with a allocated Social Worker
- or have been referred by another organisation or a Service within the Council e.g. Youth Justice Service
- or have approached Children's Services directly themselves, via the Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub) (MACH)

At this point MACH will take some basic information regarding the young person and their circumstances. If the young person has an active Social Worker, this information will be shared with them.

If the young person does not have a Social Worker, screening will take place by a Social Worker within MACH on the same day of receipt of the referral/contact.

If it is the case that the young person is or could be homeless or at risk of homelessness within 56 days (as identified in the Homeless Reduction Act), a referral should be made to the Housing

Solutions Services under the 'Duty to Refer' to enable proactive work to be undertaken. This will inform the Housing Solutions Team there is a 16/17 year old who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. Note that this will not in any way diminish the responsibilities held by Children's Services, but will formally notify the Housing Solutions Team.

The child will progress to the Assessment team, and the Social Worker will communicate with the Housing Solutions Officer to agree what the next steps will be in terms of undertaking a joint assessment together and any prevention work which could run alongside or in conjunction with this process. The Social Worker will make contact with the child to establish the immediate need for accommodation and the joint assessment will be completed within 72 hours. It will be the responsibility of both the Housing Solutions Officer and the Allocated Social Worker to secure immediate interim accommodation needs in the event the child is homeless prior to the joint assessment taking place.

Initial Approach and provision of emergency accommodation:

Initial approach to Children's Social Care

Where a young person has approached or been referred to Children's Social Care on the basis of being homeless, and if they require short stay or emergency accommodation, in the first instance Children's Social Care will determine if there is someone with parental responsibility who is willing to offer or arrange accommodation for the young person.

If this not possible or appropriate then suitable accommodation will be found, offered and funded under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 until the outcome of the joint assessment is known.

Accommodation needs of 16/17 year olds will be discussed at the young person's panel and appropriate placements made. Emergency accommodation will be provided in one of the crash pads within our supported housing schemes if there is a vacancy.

Where a young person is placed for more than 24 hours under Section 20 they will become a 'looked after child' which entails further duties and responsibilities placed on the Local Authority for that young person.

It must be noted that emergency placements should not be made under Section 17 for a 16/17 year old who is or may be homeless and is not with his or her parent/family. Any placement, even for a short time, would be as a Section 20 placement.

Initial approach to the Housing Solutions Team

If the Housing Solutions Team conducts an initial interview with the young person first and is satisfied there is reason to believe they may be eligible, homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, this triggers the commencement of Section 184 homelessness duty to make enquiries.

An immediate referral will be made to Children's Social Care at this point, requesting joint assessment, comprising of the child in need assessment and the statutory homelessness assessment is carried out.

Where a young person has approached the Housing Solutions Services on the basis of being homeless, and if they require short stay or emergency accommodation, in the first instance the Housing Solutions Service will determine if there is someone with parental responsibility who is willing to offer or arrange accommodation for the young person.

If this not possible or appropriate suitable interim accommodation will be found, offered and funded under Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996 until the outcome of the joint assessment is known. This will never be bed and breakfast or hotel accommodation. A claim for housing benefit can be made at this point.

If they are already known to us, Children's Services will explore placement of the young person into suitable short stay or emergency accommodation.

The Housing Solutions Team will not owe a duty to a 16/17 year old if it is established that the young person is:

- Already a Looked After Child (under Section 20 or Section 31 of the Children Act 1989)
- A 'relevant' child, who is aged 16/17 and has already left care, there will be no further statutory duty owing
- Is not eligible in terms of immigration control
- Is not homeless or threatened with homelessness, because they have somewhere that is available to them and it is reasonable for them to occupy

In these instances a referral must be made to Children's Social Care. Issues regarding the welfare of the young person and safeguarding should be shared.

The Housing Solutions Team will seek to co-operate with Children's Social Care in these instances if necessary, as set out in Section 27 of the Children Act 1989, as long as in so doing it does not prejudice the discharge of their own functions.

When the initial approach is outside usual office hours

Where 16 or 17 year old young people present or are referred as homeless outside of office hours the emergency Social Work duty team will be responsible. The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) operate from 5pm Monday to Thursday, from 4.30pm on Fridays and over weekends and bank holidays.

Children's Services will work with the Youth Justice Service to communicate with agencies including the Police regarding the importance of contacting the Out of Hours Service where there is any 16/17 year old with no accommodation available to them out of usual working hours.

The Joint Assessment process

When a young person is not currently active to Children's Services; a SAFER referral to the MACH will be made. A contact will then be created by MACH for screening. This will be undertaken by a Children's Social Worker within a maximum of 24 hours, who as part of screening will liaise directly with the Housing Solutions Team. It will also include liaison with the young person and the Duty Assessment Team Manager/Social Worker and any other professionals involved with the young person.

The joint assessment will commence immediately following screening. The allocated Social Worker will have a maximum of 24 hours to make contact with the young person and commence assessment, including liaison with Housing Solutions Team. In emergency circumstances, screening and visiting will be completed that day.

Children's Social Care will lead the joint assessment process from the beginning, reflecting the legal position that in the case of children in need of accommodation, the Children Act 1989 has primacy over the Housing Act 1996 in providing for 16 and 17 year olds who are not with their parents or anyone with parental responsibility for them.

All officers are reminded that there are very few exceptions to a 16/17 year old who is homeless not being assessed as a 'child in need of accommodation'.

It is critical that throughout the assessment process, that opportunities to prevent or relieve homelessness are taken jointly.

The joint assessment will involve:

- the young person
- their family
- any other significant family friends
- other agencies or services which work with the young person or the family

The joint assessment will aim to determine the following:

For Children's Services:

- Are they are child in need, as set out in Section 17 of the Children Act?
- Does the need arise because they are homeless and require accommodation?
- Is that need the result of Section 20 (1 (a-c)) or Section 20 (3) or Section 20 (4)
- Do they usually live in Middlesbrough?
- What are their wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation
- What considerations (having regard to the young person's age and understanding) is to be given to their wishes and feelings?
- The reasoning for them presenting as homeless
- Considering impact on any siblings they may have
- Considering to the risk they pose to themselves or others
- Considering if a care versus support assessment been completed/triggered

For the Housing Solutions Service:

- Is the young person eligible in terms of immigration control or other reasons regarding their status in the UK?
- Is the young person homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days?
- Does the young person have a priority need for accommodation?
- What are the circumstances that have led to their current situation of homelessness?
- What are their accommodation needs?
- What are the relevant support needs to be addressed and who will assist them, in order that they can manage in their accommodation (whether this is to stay with family/friends or move into alternative accommodation)

Decisions regarding the ongoing responsibility to provide any accommodation needed will be dependent on the outcome and recommendations following completion of the joint assessment.

Wishes, Feelings and Advocacy

The joint assessment will also consider the young person's wishes and determine the most appropriate pathway for the young person, taking into account the legislative context, the statutory guidance and the importance of, where safe and possible, preventing homelessness and reuniting young people with their families, and supporting them in resolving family tensions and practical challenges.

Independent advocacy plays a key role in supporting the young person. The National Youth Advocacy Services (NYAS) offer an extensive range of support services for children, young people and adults in vulnerable situations across England and Wales [Who We Are | NYAS](#). Both Children's care and Housing Solutions will make young people aware of this service and encourage the role of formal advocacy.

It is important that all workers emphasise the long term positive benefits to remaining in, or returning to, the family home/network and maintaining family relationships where this is safe and appropriate to do so, and that these are focused on.

Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team will work together to conclude the determination of duties under the Children Act 1989 and Housing Act 1996 and where there are duties to assist put in place a suitable package of assistance which reflects the young person's wishes and feelings, is realistic and will best assist the young person in moving on to independence, including retaining supportive social and family networks, plans for education, training and work.

Becoming a Looked after Child

If a young person cannot stay within the family home or extended family or friends network, there will need to be discussions regarding becoming looked after by the Local Authority. Decisions on becoming looked after should be based on full and impartial information about

the practicalities and support offered if a young person is in care, being a care leaver and what would happen if they did not become looked after but decided to be accommodated under Housing Act duties. This work should be supported by an independent advocate appointed by Children's Services.

The child must be provided with impartial, balanced and realistic information about the support that they can expect as a Looked After Child including details of the care plan, where they might live and with whom, regular reviews and social worker visits and subsequently, if the criteria are met, entitlements as a care leaver.

Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team must ensure that a young person who is homeless is informed of their entitlements and receives accurate information about what assistance may be available to them if they do not become looked after, and how any entitlement for assistance will be determined. In particular, young people will need to understand the ways in which a homelessness duty can be ended and the implications of this, for example, where someone is homeless but turns down a 'suitable offer' of accommodation, or the possible risk of being assessed as intentionally homeless.

Working with families

As part of their enquiries, Children's Services and/or the Housing Solutions Team will want to make contact with the young person's parents or carers and conduct a home visit. They may also work with other agencies as appropriate, to gather relevant information and to explore whether or not it is possible and safe for the young person to return home. Of note, it should also be considering any siblings linked to the young person presenting as homeless in terms of any impact upon them.

In some circumstances (where forced marriage, trafficking or sexual abuse, are suspected, for example), it will not be appropriate to contact the young person's parents or carers as this may put the young person at risk. Where there is any concern of a risk to the young person or disclosure of abuse, information must be shared between Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team.

Housing Solutions Officers who are concerned that making contact with parents or carers may place the young person at risk for any reason, must seek guidance from Children's Services before making that contact.

However, in most instances, the use of prevention work, such as home visits, negotiation, mediation and family group conferencing, can assist young people and their families to stay together. This can take place alongside the statutory assessment activity.

Where it is not possible or safe for the young person to return home, other options will be explored by Children's Services and/or the Housing Solutions Team, including the placement of the young person with members of their extended family or friends.

Actions following the outcome of the Joint Assessment

Following the joint assessment, Children’s Services and the Housing Solutions Team will be in a position to determining whether:

1. The young person is a child in need of services under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 or a child in need of protection under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989
2. Children’s Social Care should offer accommodation under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989
3. There are any Early Help Services , or other services which could be provided to meet identified needs
4. Any duties are owed under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996

The outcome of the joint assessment will be communicated on completion, to the young person, and if appropriate, their parents or people with parental responsibility.

In many instances, the child in need assessment will determine that the young person is in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, but does not require housing, because he/she can stay at home, or with their extended family or friends. It will also inform the package of support to facilitate and maintain the return home, and prevent future homelessness.

The following tables outline the roles and responsibilities of each service:

If a duty is owed under Section 17 and Section 20 applies	
Children’s Social Care will:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the assessment outcomes and options for the future with the young person ensuring that they can make a fully informed decision, with advocacy support, on whether to accept the offer of assistance under Section 20. • Consider the suitability of foster or residential care options, subject to the necessary approval. 	

If the young person does not accept the offer of assistance under Section 20	
Children’s Social Care will:	Housing Solutions Team will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the capacity of the young person to make this decision. • Inform the Housing Solutions Team by email of the reasons why the young person refused assistance. • Develop a Child in Need plan for the young person, based on their other assessed support needs. • Inform the providers of the short stay/emergency accommodation if the young person has been placed in emergency accommodation of the date Children’s Services will cease payment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine which duties are owed under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. • If the young person is found to be homeless, accept the relief duty, draw up a Personal Housing Plan and place the young person into suitable interim temporary accommodation under Section 188 and arrange for young person to claim housing benefit. • Liaise with Children’s Social Care about meeting the support needs of the young person and the development of a Child in Need plan.

If the young person accepts the offer of assistance under Section 20	
<p>Children’s Social Care will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the Housing Solutions Team and any other referring agency. • Arrange a placement under Section 20 in suitable accommodation taking over financial responsibility for the young person’s accommodation if they have previously been placed by the Housing Solutions Team • Put in place a care plan in accordance with looked after children procedures. 	<p>Housing Solutions Team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue a decision to end the relief duty if the young person is still within the relief duty and has accepted Section 20, due to them having accommodation available. If the decision on Section 20 is reached whilst the main housing duty is being assessed, a non-priority decision letter will be issued due to them being a looked after child. • Assist Children’s Social Care in finding suitable Section 20 placement options, if requested to do so. • If the young person has previously been placed in emergency accommodation by the Housing Solutions Team, notify the Housing Benefit team that housing benefit entitlement has ceased, and the provider of accommodation that invoices should be directed to Children’s Social Care from this point on.

If the young person is not owed any duty by the Housing Solutions Team but does not accept the offer of assistance under Section 20 of the Children Act
<p>Children’s Social Care will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake further work on their wishes and feelings about becoming looked after and the implications of refusing this when there is no housing duty owed to them • Consider accommodation under Section 17 if they again do not consent to accommodation under Section 20 and ensure this is signed off by senior managers • Draw up a Child in Need plan which reflects the need for both accommodation and other support and how this will be provided

If the young person is homeless but no duty is owed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989

The Housing Solutions Team will:

- Call a case meeting to discuss the decision with Children's Social Care, formulate a plan of support/actions based on the limited set of exceptions to this decision in the case of a homeless 16/17 year old
- Determine which duties are owed under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996
- If they are (or may be) homeless, place the young person into suitable interim temporary accommodation under Section 188 and arrange for young person to claim housing benefit.
- Draw up a Personal Housing Plan setting out how their housing and support needs will be met.

If a duty is owed under Section 17 but Section 20 does not apply because the young person is not homeless

The Housing Solutions Team will:

- Determine if a prevention duty is owed under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and if so, draw up a Personal Housing Plan.
- Liaise with Children's Social Care about meeting the support needs of the young person and the development of a Child in Need plan.
- If there is a change in circumstances and the young person subsequently becomes homeless, re-refer to Children's Social Care for a further assessment.

Financial support for the young person

Provision of financial support is a critical part of the Child in Need plan. Depending on their circumstances, the young person may be able to claim Severe Hardship or Income Support/Universal Credit. However, in order to do this, they will need to satisfy the DWP / Jobcentre Plus that they are estranged from their family.

If a young person is unable to secure crisis benefits, Children's Social Care will need to provide the young person with reasonable living expenses, as a last resort, in accordance with its duties under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

If financial support is requested by the Housing Solutions Team, Children's Social Care will contact the young person to discuss their financial situation. In the event that a request for financial support is declined, Children's Social Care must provide the young person and the Housing Solutions Team (if it made the request) with written confirmation of the reasons for the decision and the process that the young person needs to follow to appeal against the decision or make a complaint.

Escalation process

If any point in the practical working of this joint protocol, or associated procedure, there is disagreement between Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team, then either or

both parties should escalate this to their direct line manager, or where this is not possible, to the next management tier as appropriate.

Disagreements could arise in a number of areas but are most likely to arise around:

- Thresholds for services
- Roles and responsibilities
- The need for action and completion of assessments
- Communication

Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. While often a positive sign of developing thinking within a dynamic process this can be reflected in the immediate term as a lack of clarity in procedures or approaches. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion.

Attempts at problem resolution may leave one worker or agency believing that the child remains at risk of significant harm. This person or agency has responsibility for communicating such concerns through agreed channels.

It is the responsibility of every professional to “problem solve”. The aim must be to resolve professional disagreement at the earliest opportunity and as swiftly as possible always keeping in mind that the child and young person’s safety and welfare is the paramount consideration.

If a professional disagreement arises and the issue cannot be resolved between practitioners, the matter must be referred to the line manager who will discuss with their opposite number in the other agency in the hope that the issue can be resolved.

Failure to resolve disagreements between line managers must be further escalated to the Head of Service within the respective organisations. If there continues to be no resolution, then the matter should be escalated to the Corporate Director of Children’s Services for consideration.

A clear record of decision making should be recorded against the child’s file and the appropriate case management system in other agencies.

Implementation of the joint protocol

Briefings in relation to the protocol will take place across the council and will be provided to key Stakeholders throughout 2025/2026. The protocol will be accessible on the Middlesbrough Council website.

Training

Joint training will be delivered to Children’s Services and Housing Solutions teams. This will be scheduled to take place in January 2026 and regular refresher sessions will be delivered following this.

New starters will meet with colleagues across the two services as part of their induction to make sure they are familiar with the protocol in addition to offering shadowing opportunities.

Reviewing this joint protocol

This protocol will be reviewed quarterly from January 2026 to January 2027

Thereafter it will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation and/or government guidance.

Operational reviews will be held between managers of Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team.

Monitoring

Children's Services will monitor:

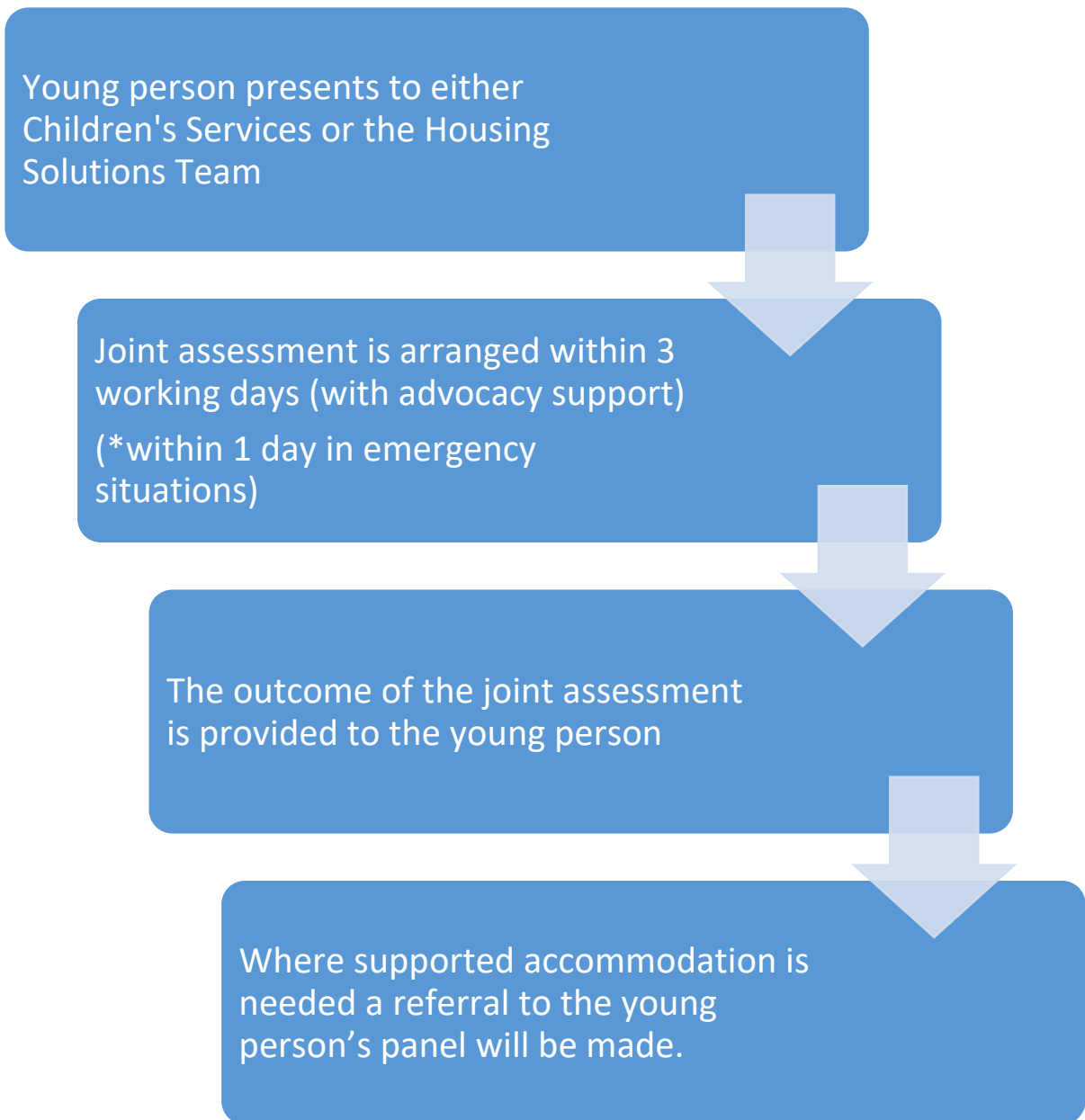
- The number of young people presenting as homeless or referred as homeless to Children's Services. In terms of referrals to the MACH, this will be monitored within the monthly score card.
- The number of young people and timescales for Child in Need assessments carried out by Children's Services of 16 and 17 year olds who have presented as homeless.
- The outcomes for those not owed a section 17 duty.
- The number of young people offered/accepted advocacy
- The number and percentage of young people who become looked after due to being homeless.
- The number of young people who have a Child In Need Plan
- The number of young people who were prevented/return home sustained

The Housing Solutions Team will monitor:

- The number of homeless applications to the Housing Solutions Team.
- The number of Duty to Refer forms received.
- The number of young people accommodated via the young person's panel and outcomes of their placements.
- The number of young people who needed emergency accommodation and/or moved into supported housing.
- The number of young people who were prevented/return home sustained.
- The number who re-presented within 6 months.

APPENDIX 1

The Joint Assessment Process



APPENDIX 2

Young person's Panel Referral Form

YOUNG PERSONS PANEL REFERRAL FORM

Accommodation and Support for Young People

This form is for Supported Housing and Floating Support Services in Middlesbrough

For young people aged 16 to 24 years.

Date of Referral:

Office use only:

Panel Date:

.....

Time:

.....

WHICH SERVICE DOES THE APPLICANT REQUIRE?

Supported Housing Floating Support Services not sure

Has a homeless assessment has already been carried out?

If yes, please state the date:
arrange an appointment.

If no please contact, the housing solutions team on 01642 726800 to

REFERRAL AGENCY DETAILS

Referral Agency:

Contact Name:

Tel No:

Email:

APPLICANT DETAILS:

Full Name: D.O.B: Age:

Address:

Post code:

Contact No: NI NO:

Gender: Male Female Transgender

AGENCIES INVOLVED WITH THE YOUNG PERSON

Social Worker

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

Probation/YOS Worker

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

CPN /Psychiatrist

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

Health Visitor

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

Other

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

HOUSING HISTORY (Please give previous addresses up to 6 years)

Address (most recent first)	Tenure/Landlord	Dates to & from	Reasons for leaving

CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION (Please indicate with an x in any boxes required)

Is the applicant pregnant? Yes/No. If yes what is the expected date of delivery?

Please give details of any children who will be included in the application:

Name(s)	D.O.B.	Does the applicant have parental responsibility?
		Y/N
		Y/N
		Y/N

Are any of the children on the Child Protection Register or are there any Child Protection concerns?

If yes please give details

Has a Child in Need assessment been undertaken? Is the young person a Care Leaver or under S17?

If yes please give details

Does the applicant consider himself or herself to have a disability?

If yes please give details

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Is the applicant eligible for Housing Benefit? Yes/No

Does the applicant receive any other benefits? If yes which?

Does the applicant receive any other income? If yes, what income is received?

Does the applicant have a bank account?

SUPPORT NEEDS (Please indicate the areas where support may be needed)

<p><u>Achieve Economic well Being</u></p> <p>Claiming benefits <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reducing debt <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sorting out utilities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Budgeting <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Obtaining paid work <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Be Healthy</u></p> <p>To develop daily living skills <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Advice on healthy eating <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>To manage your physical health <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>To manage your mental health <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Help with substance misuse <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Make a Positive Contribution</u></p> <p>Develop confidence <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Contribute in services and wider community <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><u>Enjoy and Achieve</u></p> <p>Participate in training/education <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Participate in informal learning activities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Participate in leisure/cultural/faith <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Participate in work-like activities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Gain contact with services/family/friends <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Stay Safe</u></p> <p>Support to maintain a tenancy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Minimise offending behaviour <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Prevent causing harm to self <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Prevent causing harm to others <input type="checkbox"/></p>
--	--

ANY OTHER INFORMATION

(Use this space to provide any other areas of support required, priorities or any further information on the areas highlighted above).

RISK ASSESSMENT (This section must be completed or the referral will NOT be considered)

Please use the categorisation below to assess the likelihood of the risk occurring:

LOW Isolated or occasional instances of non-significant incidents and/or a low potential of incidents reoccurring.

MEDIUM More frequent/regular incidents and/or a more significant nature

HIGH Likely, severe or significant

Does the applicant have a history/is there a risk of any of the following?

(Risk to self and others)

	L, M or H		L, M or H
Violence & Aggression – this includes physical/sexual assault.		Damage to property/Arson	
Verbal Aggression		Drug misuse	
Anger Management		Alcohol misuse	

Describe below potential triggers and who is at risk:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Is there a history of or risk of any of the following?

	L, M or H		L, M or H
Suicide		Self-harm	
Accidental overdose		Misuse of/non compliance with medication	
Abuse from others		Vulnerability	
Mental health issues			

If any identified, please give further information including triggers, details of incidents below:

Is there a history of difficulties regarding previous tenancies?

	L, M or H		L, M or H
Rent arrears/debts		Behaviour of friends	
Neighbour disputes		ASB	
Evictions		Harassment	
Other			

If any identified, please give further details below:

Any Police Involvement

Offence	Date	Caution	Conviction	Spent	No further action

As a professional how long have you know the applicant? Years Months

Is it safe to visit the applicant at home?

If not, is there another safe place?

Is the applicant suitable to share accommodation with other young vulnerable people?
Yes/ No

Has the Applicant ever been refused support? If yes, please state why.

Please provide any other relevant information:

CONSENT

I confirm the information contained in this application is true and includes all relevant information required to assess my referral.

I am aware that if I am applying for supported housing that this referral form will be forwarded to the young person’s panel for consideration.

I give my consent for agencies to obtain further information from all relevant agencies which may include, for example, landlords, police, probation, benefits agencies etc.

I understand that this information will only be made available to providers/organisations that are able to assist me to obtain the correct level of support and enable me to sustain a tenancy.

Signed: (Applicant)..... Date:.....

Signed: (Referral Agency)..... Date:.....

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

The Panel Co-ordinator aims to make sure all applicants are treated equally. In order to ensure the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy it would be appreciated if you would complete your details below.

The information given is entirely confidential and forms no part of any assessment process.

Gender

- Male
- Female

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No

Age range

- Up to 25
- 26 -35
- 36 - 45
- 46 -45
- 56 and over

Marital Status

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Living with partner
- Separated

If you have a disability please give details:

Sexual Orientation

- Heterosexual (sexually attracted to member of the opposite sex)
- Bisexual (sexually attracted to both men and women)
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Undecided

Economic Status

- Job Seeker
- Govt. training scheme/New Deal
- Not seeking work
- Long term sick/disabled
- Full-time work (24 hours or more per week)
- Part-time work (less than 24 hours per week)
- Full-time student

My Nationality is

My Ethnic Origin is:

White	<input type="checkbox"/> British <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish
Mixed	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Asian or Asian British	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Black or Black British	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> African

Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese
English Gypsy/Romany	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irish Traveller or other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Prefer not to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please return with your application.

Thank You

Appendix 3 – Young Persons Panel Terms of Reference

Young Person's Accommodation Panel

Terms of Reference

Version 3 July 2025

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Young Person Accommodation Panel is a forum to discuss the housing and support options for all Young People aged between 16 and 24.
- 1.2 The Young Person Accommodation Panel will act as gateway for Young People into supported accommodation
- 1.3 To provide a joint approach between Housing Solutions and Children's Services to review in detail and follow the progression of the following groups of young people's with the ultimate aim of them having secure long term accommodation.

2. Aims

- 2.1 In a multi-disciplinary forum, consider the accommodation and support needs of Young People in a person-centred way with an overall aim to prevent future homelessness.
- 2.2 To ensure that referrals for Young People are coordinated in a timely and efficient way and are allocated the most suitable accommodation.

- 2.3 To promote communication and partnership working between service providers, referral agencies, and statutory services.

3. Scope of the Panel

- 3.1 The Panel will be split into two sessions limited to considering:

Part 1 - Supported Accommodation Panel

- Referrals that meet the panel eligibility criteria (below)
- Vacancies in Accommodation and Support Services for Young People (below)
- Move-on from Accommodation and Support Services for Young People.

Part 2 – Care Leavers Accommodation Panel

- 16/17-year-olds still in care (regardless of whether they are in the borough or not) to identify and plot the progress of their path to independence.
- 18–24-year-olds in crisis who are former care leavers (such as homeless, in totally inappropriate accommodation or at risk of losing their home)
- Those in staying put arrangements to identify and help progress their path to independence.
- Those in university/educational tied accommodation to identify and help progress path to independence when their course finishes.
- Those in supported accommodation to identify and help progress their path to independence.
- Young People in Young Offenders Institutions to identify and help progress their path to independence.

4. Panel Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1 For consideration at the Young Persons Supported Accommodation Panel, applicants should meet the following criteria:

For Supported Accommodation:

- Aged 16 to 24 years on application
- Be leaving care, homeless, threatened with homelessness, or otherwise at risk for example due to experience of domestic violence.
- Currently live in Middlesbrough, want to live in Middlesbrough and can demonstrate a local connection or are looked after by Middlesbrough Council.
- Have a demonstrable need for a level of housing related support. This will be included on the referral form and discussed at panel by the referring agency representative.
- Have recourse to relevant benefits, grants or private funds to ensure payment for the support service and accommodation in accommodation-based services. Is the young person already claiming Universal Credit?
 - If not, referring agency to make sure I.D. is available prior to placement. If the young person is under 18 and has been referred from children's services/pathways please confirm at panel that Middlesbrough Council will pay the personal allowance

for four weeks until the Universal Credit is in pay, this will help towards service charge, Food and personal care items (This will not exceed £250). This will mean the young person does not start with debt they cannot get out of.

For Dispersed Accommodation with Floating Support:

- Aged 18 to 24 years on application.
- Require support sustain the tenancy.
- Be a resident of Middlesbrough.

N.B. Where an application has been discussed at Panel and Members are unable to allocate an appropriate supported housing placement, floating support maybe then allocated where it is felt that the young person still requires support due to their situation in order to broaden housing options.

For Care Leavers Accommodation Panel:

- Any Young Person aged 16-25 who is or has been Looked after by Middlesbrough Council.
- Any Young Person currently resident in Middlesbrough or who has demonstrable local connection but open to another LA as a Looked After Child or a Care Leave with another Local Authority and their Social Worker wants to explore their accommodation options within the borough.

- 4.2 Referrals that do not meet the panel eligibility criteria will not be accepted.
- 4.3 Where an applicant is accepted by the panel and is referred to a particular Service for further consideration, the eligibility criteria specific to that Service will also need to be met. Providers have the right not to accept a referral to a Service even though the person referred may meet the criteria. In this event the Young Person will be referred back to the panel for further discussion.
- 4.4 Applicants accepted to the panel for consideration may not be guaranteed access to a service, due to service waiting lists. In this event applicants will be placed on a waiting list held by the Service Provider of the service they have been allocated.
- 4.5 The panel offers a range of housing and support options for Young People and it is the panel's intention to match their housing-related support needs with the type of housing and support available from a service. In the event that two (or more) people are eligible for a service and have similar housing-related support needs, priority will be given according to length of time on the waiting list. The following priorities also apply:

For accommodation-based services priority will be given in this order:

1. 16 / 17 year old applicants who are homeless or leaving care with a demonstrable need for supported housing (for example due to lacking independent living skills, experience of domestic violence or exploitation).
2. 18 – 24-year-olds who are homeless or leaving care and have a demonstrable need for supported housing (for example due to lacking independent living skills or experience of domestic violence).

For floating support services priority will be given in this order:

1. 18 – 21 year old applicants ready to move on from other accommodation based services.
2. 18 – 24 year old applicants who are leaving care.
3. 18 – 25 year old applicants with support needs (for example due to lacking independent living skills or experience of domestic violence).

Services offering accommodation to under 18's must be Ofstead registered.

5.0 Accommodation and Support Services

5.1 The Accommodation and Support Panel for Young People acts as a gateway to the services listed below. Referrals to Panel will be given priority into these services:

Commissioned Provider	Service Name	Physical Description	Service Description	Length of service
Changing Lives	Erimus House	30 Self Contained units within Erimus House (including 2x Crashpads) 25 Dispersed Accommodation units with Floating Support	24 Hour staffing within Erimus House. Housing related Support	Up to 2 years
Home Group	Single Key	10 self-contained flats with shared communal areas	24 hour housing related support	Up to 2 years
North Star Housing	Rainham House & Hestia	Female Only Service (18+) Rainham -10 Self-contained 2-bedroom units & 1 Crash Pad Hestia – Units of dispersed accommodation with floating support.	24 Hour staffing in Rainham House. Housing related Support	Up to 2 years – Hestia properties converted to tenancies upon being ready for independence.
Riverside	Stages Academy	42 Units of accommodation for single people age 18-65	24 Hours staffing. Housing related Support	Up to 2 years
Middlesbrough Council	Service Name	Physical Description	Service Description	Length of service
	Community Interventions Team	Officers from within ACT Service to carry out homeless prevention and tenancy sustainment work.	Housing related support, floating support for resettlement, ensuring tenancy sustainability moving forward	Flexible depending on level of need.

5.2 Should it be agreed that more than one service can meet the needs of an applicant then the applicant will have the choice to choose which service they would like.

6. Membership of the Panel

6.1.1 **The Supported Accommodation Panel** will consist of representatives from the Service Providers listed at 5.1 and appropriate representatives and referrers from Children's Social Care, Housing Solutions Team, Community Interventions Team, Pathways, and Registered Social Landlords.

The panel will be chaired consistently as below:

Chair: Housing Service Strategic Lead

Vice Chair: Housing Solutions Team Manager

Alternative: ACT Lead Officer

6.1.2 **The Care Leavers Accommodation Panel** will consist of representatives from Children's Services and Housing and will be chaired and attended consistently as below:

Chair - Service Manager of Corporate Parenting

Vice Chair - ACT Lead Officer

Team Managers – Pathways

Housing Solutions Team Manager

Team Managers 0-19 Service

Fostering Service Manager / representative

Strategic Housing Lead

Community Interventions Team Manager

6.1.3 **Business Support:**

Business Support for the Young Persons Supported Accommodation Panel will be provided by ACT Middlesbrough and will support the Chair by:

- Setting Agenda for meeting based on referrals
- Maintain an action log/ tracking of cases.
- Recall cases for review based on timescales set by the chair/vice chair
- Monitoring housing nominations
- Sending out action list following panel meeting

Business Support for the Care Leavers Accommodation Panel will be provided by Children's Services and will support the Chair by:

- Updating tracker of cases
- Maintain an action log/ tracking of cases.
- Recall cases for review based on timescales set by the chair/vice chair
- Monitoring housing nominations
- Sending out action list following panel meeting

Separate agenda's and attendance to ensure information sharing is done on a "need to know" basis. The use of emails for agenda's will be kept to a minimum and will be managed through the use of Share Point Connect with each service providing details of who should have access to the relevant information.

6.2 Provider representatives *must* be authorised by their organisation to accept nominations from the panel for further assessment. Provider representatives should be encouraged to attend panel meetings whether or not there are vacancies in their services, to ensure continuity and clarify queries arising from previous meetings.

6.3 Appendix 1 gives example of an agenda for the overall YP Panel.

- 6.4 Panels will be held weekly on a day mutually agreed by panel members and can be reviewed to support service needs.

7. Referral Routes

- 7.1 Referral's and enquiries related to the Young Persons Accommodation panel should all be sent to YPpanel@Middlesbrough.gov.uk
ACT Services can refer to the panel using the referral form built in to CDP and using referral 3.10 – Young Person's Supported Accommodation Panel and by completing in built referral form.

8 Responsibilities of Referral Agencies

- 8.1 Referral Agencies have a key role to play in ensuring the smooth administration of the panel. They are particularly responsible for:

- Ensuring that potential applicants meet the panel eligibility criteria.
- Using the panel referral form to make referrals to the panel.
- Ensuring that all sections on the referral form are completed and that any additional risk assessments and other relevant information such as a care plan, psychiatric/psychologist/OT/Care Coordinators reports are made available to the Service Providers within two weeks.
- Ensuring that potential applicants give their informed consent to sharing the information contained within the referral form and relevant needs and risks being discussed with statutory agencies and at the accommodation and support panel and having their information recorded on ACT Middlesbrough recording system CDP
- Consulting with other agencies involved in the applicants support network, particularly the relevant care manager if applicable, to gather relevant information on needs and risks prior to making a referral to the panel.
- Introducing the applicant to the service provider as appropriate
- Notifying the panel coordinator of any change in circumstances affecting an applicant's status on the panel waiting list

- 8.2 Representatives from referral agencies must attend panel meetings to provide information and clarification on specific referrals – ideally this will be the referrer themselves, who should arrange for a colleague or manager take their place if they are unable to attend

9. Responsibilities of Middlesbrough Housing Solutions Team

The Housing Solutions Team are responsible for:

- Carrying out homeless assessments and prevention work where necessary.
- Working with Children's Services/Care Leavers team for young people under the age of 18 adhering to the agreed protocols.

- Representing any applicant at Panel who they have assessed and who does not have a suitable referrer.
- Forwarding all completed supported housing referrals back to the Panel coordinator within 5 days.

10. Responsibilities of ACT Middlesbrough

10.1 The Front Door Team and the Panel chair are responsible for:

- Informing referral agencies of panel dates.
- Collating referral papers and summaries for panel representatives.
- Establishing whether referrals to the panel are existing or previous users of housing and support services.
- Maintaining a list of existing housing and support service users.
- Recording reasons for not accepting referrals and monitoring the ethnicity of these referrals.
- Providing feedback to referrers regarding the outcome of their referral to the Panel and waiting list status if applicable.
- Taking and distributing minutes of Supported Accommodation Panel meetings.

11. Responsibilities of Service Providers

11.1 The service providers are responsible for:

- Informing the ACT Middlesbrough of vacancies and allocations in services as and when they arise and at the panel meeting.
- Carrying out assessments of referrals made to their service against the eligibility criteria for that service.
- Promoting vacancies and panel dates to referral agencies
- Providing feedback to the original referrer and the Panel Coordinator regarding the assessment of referrals to schemes.
- Referring to the panel service users who require move-on from accommodation based services as early as possible, in consultation with other relevant stakeholders.
- Where a service provider is unable to meet the needs of an existing service user the Service Provider should refer back to Panel before notice is served/service ended.

12. Responsibilities of Children's Services

12.1 Children's Services are responsible for:

- Ensuring all the young people open to 0-19 services, Aspire or Pathways are referred into the relevant panel for discussion at the earliest opportunity
- Following the correct processes and protocols in place for 16/17 year olds
- Submitting duty to refer information to Housing Solutions for those 18+
- Identify independence work required to be tenancy ready.
- Ensure the young person has submitted a housing register application.

- Identifying young people for adult social care services.
- Identifying young people who will be 'staying put'.
- Identifying referral to YP Supported Accommodation Panel and ensuring referral forms are completed fully and with the most recent up to date information
- Identifying young people that are entering higher education.
- Reviewing the housing pathway plan and set date for next review.
- Agreeing on bidding for properties

13. Unresolvable issues, potential evictions, escalation and challenge

13.1 In cases where a positive outcome cannot be secured for a young person through the Supported Accommodation Panel or Care Leaver Panel, where there is professional disagreement or where the Young Person is at risk of eviction a referral should be made to the Escalations and Evictions Panel. The panel is chaired by the ACT Lead Officer and offers an opportunity for the case to be presented to a panel of colleagues with strategic authority to assist in the progression of cases outside of standard operating procedure and assisting to address gaps in provision where it is required. The panel also discusses potential evictions from all accommodation with a preventative focus.

14. Review

14.1 The terms of reference will be reviewed in annually.

Appendix 1 – Example Agenda

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Young Persons Accommodation Panel

DATE

TIME (2.5 hrs allocated to meetings)

Microsoft Teams link

A G E N D A

Item	Supporting Documentation	Time Slot	Presented by:
YP Supported Accommodation Panel			
Introductions		13:00	Chair
Actions from previous meeting & updates		13:05	Chair
YP 1		13:15	PA
YP 2		13:25	Social Worker
YP 3		13:35	Housing Officer
YP 4		13:45	Social Worker / PA
Close of Supported Accommodation Panel		14:00	Chair
Time to allow comfort break and change over of attendees			
Care Leavers Panel			
Actions from previous meeting & updates		14:15	Chair
YPs open to Aspire Team & Accommodated		14:25	Aspire Team SW
New cases allocated to Pathways		14:35	Pathways Managers
16 / 17 year olds		14:55	0-19 team
18+		15:20	Pathways
Close		15:30	

End of Document

Appendix 4

A one minute guide to the Joint Protocol - Working with 16 or 17 year olds who are threatened with homelessness

Whilst they are often referred to as 'young people', all 16 and 17 year olds are legally children until they reach the age of 18. Because of this, Children's Services and Local Housing Authorities have different statutory duties to 16 /17 year old children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Children's Services and the Housing Solutions Team will work together to prevent homelessness amongst young people aged 16 and 17. The protocol outlines how we will respond to young people aged 16/17 years old and aspires to achieve a set of co-ordinated services which set out a 'Positive Pathway' in Middlesbrough for this group of young people.

Understanding the legal duties to 16/17 year olds who are or may be homeless, as well as being alert to the breadth of safeguarding issues relating to teenagers, are critical aspects of our work in Middlesbrough with young people.

The Legal Framework

The legal framework for responding to 16/17 years old presenting as homeless is set out in:

- Section 17 and Section 20 of The Children Act 1989
- Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England Order) 2002

Process

Step 1 – Establish the context around the young person presenting as homeless.

- Is the young person aged 16 or 17?
- Do they usually live in Middlesbrough?
- Are they are child in need, as set out in Section 17 of the Children Act?
- Does the need arise because they are homeless and require accommodation?
- What are their wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation?

Step 2 – Arrange a joint assessment

Step 3 – Children's Services to consider accommodation under S20

Section 20 (1 (a-c)) Provision of accommodation for children: general.

(1) Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who appears to them to require accommodation as a result of—

- (a) there being no person who has parental responsibility for him;
- (b) his being lost or having been abandoned; or
- (c) the person who has been caring for him being prevented (whether or not permanently, and for whatever reason) from providing him with suitable accommodation or care.

Section 20 (3) Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who has reached the age of sixteen and whose welfare the authority consider is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not provide him with accommodation.

Section 20 (4) A local authority may provide accommodation for any child within their area (even though a person who has parental responsibility for him is able to provide him with accommodation) if they consider that to do so would safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

Children's Social Care will need to consider whether the young person has mental capacity to consent to accommodation under S20.

20 (6) Before providing accommodation under this Section, a local authority shall, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child's welfare—

- a) ascertain the child's wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation; and
- b) give due consideration (having regard to his age and understanding) to such wishes and feelings of the child as they have been able to ascertain.

The young person must understand what S20 accommodation will mean in terms of them becoming Looked After by the Local Authority. Advocacy should be accessed to support the young person.

Step 3 – If not identified as S20, liaise with Housing Solutions Team regarding accommodation.

Where a young person is assessed as being homeless and is a child in need under Section 17 but decides they do not wish to become looked after under Section 20 (and has the capacity to make this decision with support from an advocate) they should have a Child in Need assessment and plan, which would set out the support from Children's Services and other agencies. Accommodation would, in these cases, be provided under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, unless there were specific circumstances that meant the Housing Solutions Service had no statutory duty to the young person.

The joint assessment will aim to determine the following:

For Children's Services:

- Are they are child in need, as set out in Section 17 of the Children Act?
- Does the need arise because they are homeless and require accommodation?
- Is that need the result of Section 20 (1 (a-c)) or Section 20 (3) or Section 20 (4)
- Do they usually live in Middlesbrough?
- What are their wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation
- What considerations (having regard to the young person's age and understanding) is to be given to their wishes and feelings?

For the Housing Solutions Team:

- Is the young person eligible in terms of immigration control or other reasons regarding their status in the UK?
- Is the young person homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days?
- Does the young person have a priority need for accommodation?
- What are the circumstances that have led to their current situation of homelessness?
- What are their accommodation needs?
- What are the relevant support needs to be addressed and who will assist them, in order that they can manage in their accommodation (whether this is to stay with family/friends or move into alternative accommodation)

Useful Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2>

[Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/24)

APPENDIX 5

The Legal Framework

The legal framework for responding to 16/17 years old presenting as homeless is set out in:

- Section 17 and Section 20 of [Children Act 1989](#)
- Housing Act 1996 - [Part 6 \(Allocations\)](#) and [Part 7 \(Homelessness\)](#), as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The key point for all officers to be aware of regarding the legal duties to homeless 16/17 year olds is that Local Authority's duty under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 **takes precedence** over its duties under the Housing Act 1996 in providing for children in need of accommodation aged 16/17.

Section 20 of the Children Act 1989

In almost all cases of homelessness of a 16/17 year old, if they are homeless they would be assessed as child in need of accommodation and entitled to assessment under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

There are only two circumstances in which a Local Authority might find that a homeless young person should not be accommodated under Section 20, and may instead be owed duties under Housing Act 1996. These are where the young person is:

- a. not a child in need (as defined under S17 of the Children Act 1989);*
- b. a 16 or 17 year old child in need who, having been properly and fully advised of the implications and having the capacity to reach a decision, has decided that they do not want to be accommodated under section 20.*

The decision to accommodate a child under Section 20 is one that must be based on legal duties and professional judgment, with the best interests of the child and their welfare driving decision making and with consent.

Middlesbrough Council has a responsibility under Section 20(1 a-c) of the Children Act 1989 to accommodate a child where

- a. There is no one with parental responsibility for them*
- b. The child is lost or abandoned*
- c. The person who did provide the child with accommodation is being prevented from doing so.*

Middlesbrough Council also has a responsibility under Section 20(3) and Section 20 (4) of the Children Act 1989 to accommodate a child, as set out below:

20 (3) Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who has reached the age of sixteen and whose welfare the authority consider is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not provide him/her with accommodation.

20 (4) A local authority may provide accommodation for any child within their area (even though a person who has parental responsibility for him/her is able to provide him/her with accommodation) if they consider that to do so would safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

Where a child is to become looked after under Section 20:

20 (6) Before providing accommodation under this Section, a local authority shall, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child's welfare—

- c) ascertain the child's wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation; and*
- d) give due consideration (having regard to his age and understanding) to such wishes and feelings of the child as they have been able to ascertain.*

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989

Section 17 assistance can be used in a preventative way, intended to support children and families to remain together. In this context it is therefore likely to be time limited and targeted support.

In the case of a homeless 16/17 year old, the powers of local authorities to provide accommodation under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 cannot be used as a substitute for their duty to provide accommodation under Section 20(1) of the Children Act 1989 if they are assessed as being a child in need. Young people in this position should become looked after.

Where a young person is assessed as being homeless and is a child in need under Section 17 but decides they do not wish to become looked after under Section 20 (and has the capacity to make this decision) they should have a Child in Need assessment to formulate a plan, which would set out the support from Children's Services and other agencies (as agreed). The accommodation would, in these cases, be provided under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, unless there were specific circumstances that meant the Housing Solutions Service had no statutory duty to the young person. These situations can be found in the joint statutory guidance, '*Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation*', in points 3.60 and 3.61 and points 4.28 and 4.29 here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/712467/Provision_of_accommodation_for_16_and_17_year_olds_who_may_be_homeless.pdf

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)

The homelessness legislation is set out in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. Some of the key duties and powers available to housing authorities which are most relevant to the situation of 16 17 year olds being homeless or threatened with homelessness are:

Section 183: A duty to take a homelessness application for anyone who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days

Section 184: A duty to make enquiries to satisfy themselves they are eligible for assistance (in terms of immigration control) and if so, what duties may be owed to them

Section 189A: A duty to assess: What are the circumstances that have caused their homelessness/the threat of homelessness; What are their housing needs?; What, if any, are their other support needs to be addressed to enable them to keep and/or obtain and sustain accommodation?

A duty to provide a Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) which sets out the 'reasonable steps' the authority will take to try and prevent or relieve homelessness. The PHP will also include steps the applicant will take, and can identify the support from other agencies

Section 195: The 'prevention' duty applies where an applicant is not homeless but is threatened with homelessness within 56 days. The authority must take reasonable steps to help the applicant to secure that accommodation does not cease to be available for the applicant's occupation

Section 189B: The 'relief' duty applies where an applicant is homeless. In these cases, the authority has 56 days the authority must take reasonable steps to help the applicant to secure that suitable accommodation becomes available for the applicant's occupation for at least 6 months.

Section 189: Sets out which groups have a 'priority need' for accommodation if homeless. This includes 16- and 17-year-old homeless applicants, who must be accepted as having a priority need except for an applicant who is a relevant child. A relevant child is a child who is aged 16 or 17, who has now left care but has spent at least 13 weeks in care while over the age of 14, at least one day of which must have been when s/he was over the age of 16 OR a child in need to whom a local authority owes a duty to provide accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

Section 188: The provision of temporary accommodation. Where a local housing authority have reason to believe that an applicant may be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need, they must secure that accommodation is available for the applicant's occupation.

Section 213B: The duty of a specified public body to refer cases to a housing authority if it is considered someone is homeless or threatened with homelessness. This is where a specified public body, which includes Children's Services and Youth Justice Services is required to refer cases where it is considered that a person is homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The referral does not diminish children's services responsibilities towards young people. It should be used to help strengthen communication between children's and housing services, it will not be an alternative to carrying out a child in need or early help assessment. (see point 3.36 in the joint statutory guidance, '*Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation*')

The Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Mental Capacity Act (2005) is the law which provides protection and support for people who, even on a temporary basis, cannot make decisions for themselves. It lays out how we

should assess whether someone can make their own decisions and, if not, how decisions should be made for them. Everyone who is caring for or supporting someone who may lack capacity to make their own decisions must comply with Mental Capacity Act and this should also be borne in mind when considering a young person or their parent's decisions about accommodation.

Case law

The most significant of piece of case law is the judgment in the House of Lords, (R (G) v Southwark LBC in May 2009, which did not change the law, but clarified the legal position, in terms of where responsibilities lay between Children's Services and Housing Authorities in the case of a homeless 16/17 year old. It also clarified the inter-play between Section 20 and Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldjudgmt/jd090520/appg-1.htm>

This case law is reflected in the MHCLG and Department for Education joint statutory guidance

Statutory guidance

This joint protocol reflects national legislation and guidance with respect to local authorities' duties:

- **The Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation**, published in 2018 jointly by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Education. The updated National Guidance for Care Leavers 2024 has also been taken into consideration. This reflects all changes to legislation and case law in relation to 16/17 year olds and how Children's Services and Housing Authorities will work together. It starts with the premise that most young people are best living with their families or kin and requires local authorities to help them to achieve this wherever possible.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/712467/Provision_of_accommodation_for_16_and_17_year_olds_who_may_be_homeless.pdf

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**, published in 2018 by the Department for Education. This sets out how agencies will work together to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare . This guidance promotes a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding, expecting compliance by local authorities. This is informed by two key principles:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2>

- **The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations, Volume 2: care planning, placement and case review** most recently updated in 2015 by the Department for Education. This sets out the legal duties, considerations and guidance for looked after children, including types of and suitability of placements
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441643/Children Act Guidance 2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441643/Children_Act_Guidance_2015.pdf)
- **The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations, The Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers** most recently updated in 2015 by the Department for Education. This sets out the legal duties, considerations and guidance for young people who are care leavers.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-transition-to-adulthood-for-care-leavers>
- **The Homelessness Code of Guidance** most recently published by the Ministry for Housing, Communications and Local Government (MHCLG) in 2018. This sets out the detailed guidance on how housing authorities should exercise their functions in respect of part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Chapter 8 of the Code of Guidance concerns Priority Need for accommodation and this includes 16/17 year olds
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>



Joint Protocol for working with with care experienced young people in Middlesbrough

Version 2 November 2025

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Foreword

As Corporate Directors of Children’s Services and Adult Social Care we are delighted to present our Joint Housing Protocol for working with care experienced young people in Middlesbrough.

We are committed to promoting and continuing the essential joint working between Children’s Social Care and the Housing Solutions Team in Middlesbrough. When things get tough, we work to ensure the effective management of housing crises for Care Leavers wherever and whenever they occur and to prevent homelessness.

As Corporate Parents, we are ambitious for our Care Leavers, and we want the best for them. We know how important suitable accommodation is to delivering that vision and we understand that good housing underpins success in all other areas of life. As leaders we are committed to working together in partnership, and also in engaging and partnering with all other corporate and community partners who can help us to support Care Leavers to succeed and prosper.

Annabel Bates, Corporate Director of Children's Services



.....

Louise Grabham, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health



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Introduction

This protocol outlines how Middlesbrough Council and partners work together to support care leavers as they transition from placements funded by Middlesbrough Council to independent living.

It is recognised that the journey from care can often be difficult for young people, and the degree of success can have an impact on outcomes well beyond early adulthood.

As corporate parents, the partners want to ensure young people are well equipped and understand their own level of skill and aspirations for their future. Having access to safe and appropriate accommodation is key to young people achieving positive outcomes, however this is much more than just finding them a place to stay.

We want to ensure care leavers are aware of the full range of options available to them, by doing so the hope is young people will be more likely to gain stability in other areas of their lives, such as relationships, education or work and improved physical, mental health and well-being

We will ensure that every effort is made to avoid using the homeless route to access accommodation that is inappropriate when assessing and meeting the overall needs of care leavers.

Aims and objectives

The overarching aim of this protocol is to support positive outcomes for care experienced young people threatened with homelessness.

- To ensure all care experienced young people achieve a successful transition into independent living through support, preparation, and the provision of suitable accommodation.
- To jointly assess and meet the diverse housing and support needs of young people leaving care, through the application of a clear and consistent process.
- To ensure young people are not subjected to numerous assessment processes, and that they do not have to negotiate their way through the range of agencies.
- To jointly ensure that all staff are aware of the housing needs of young people leaving care and the obligations of each partner agency to address these needs. This will include ongoing joint training, a robust induction process and opportunities for shadowing.
- To provide clear guidelines on the management of difficult tenancies which will include contingency arrangements.
- To ensure that the accommodation needs of young people leaving custody are appropriately planned.
- To identify gaps in service provision for young people and to work together with other partner agencies to address these gaps feeding information into the relevant strategies.

Partner Agencies

This protocol involves the following key organisations, but it is recognised that other organisations will also play a part in addressing the overall needs of care experienced young people.

- Middlesbrough Council
- Changing Lives
- Home Group
- Thirteen Group

- North Star Housing
- Nacro

Corporate Parenting principles

When exercising their functions in relation to children in care and care leavers, Middlesbrough Council recognise and have regard to the seven Corporate Parenting principles identified In the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

These are:

- a) To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people.*
- b) To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.*
- c) To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.*
- d) To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.*
- e) To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.*
- f) For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.*
- g) To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.*

Role of the Corporate Parenting Board

It is the role of Corporate Parenting Board to advise, guide and provide leadership to the council on issues relating to looked after children, care leavers and its corporate parenting responsibility. The Corporate Parenting Board is required to work to ensure that the council and our housing partners have relevant key plans, strategies and associated resources identified and that they make explicit the contributions that they make to targets agreed for improvement.

The Corporate Parenting Board is there to ensure that our looked after children receive appropriate opportunities. The board need to ensure that there is correct membership to ensure that there is leadership in place to make budgetary decisions and create opportunities for better joint and better offers to children in care and care experienced young people.

Scope of the Protocol

This protocol covers:

- **Eligible children**
A young person aged 16 or 17 and who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who is still being looked after.
- **Relevant children**
A young person aged 16 and 17 who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who has left care. This also includes young people who were detained (e.g. in a youth offending institution or hospital) when they turned 16 and who were look after immediately before being detained.
- **Former relevant children**
A young person aged between 18 to 25 who was previously 'eligible' or 'relevant'.
- **Qualifying children**
A young person under the age of 25 who ceased to be looked after or accommodated in any setting or was privately fostered. This also includes those young people who are under a special guardianship order.
- **Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking young people**
A young person who qualifies for a leaving care service from Middlesbrough Council and has been granted refugee status. In addition, those who qualify and are given leave to remain up to the age of 21 years or who have an extension beyond the age of 18 for a minimum of one year.
- **Care leavers supported by another Local Authority**
Care leavers who are the responsibility of another local authority but who reside in the Middlesbrough area, and can show a local connection with a local housing authority district will fall within the remit of this protocol. Whilst the parent local authority will retain responsibility Middlesbrough has a commitment to working in partnership with the parent authority and subject to consent, contacting them to involve the relevant Personal Advisor in joint planning, pathway plan reviews and , where homeless personalised housing plans.

For the purposes of this protocol, care experienced young people will be referred to as young people throughout this document.

Early Planning and Preparation

This protocol will cover the journey for care experienced young people aged 16 years and over. However, preparation and support during the transition to adulthood should not only start on their 16th birthday. Planning for beyond their time in care should be integral to the care planning process throughout a young person's time in the care of the local authority.

Children's Social Care must ensure all 'eligible' and 'relevant' young people in Middlesbrough Council's care are provided with suitable accommodation until their 18th birthday. The Pathways Team will continue to support young people themselves to access suitable accommodation until their 25th birthday.

Young people who are well prepared and supported through the transition will have greater resilience and be less likely to become homeless after they leave care. Our commitment is to ensure:

- All eligible young people aged 16 or above will have a Needs Assessment in place detailing the advice, assistance and support they will need when leaving care. This should consider a young person's independent living skills, ability to manage own finances and their views and wishes to ensure they leave care at a time that is right for them.
- By the age of 16 years 3 months, the allocated social worker will prepare an initial Pathway Plan. Each young person will be central to drawing up their own Pathway Plan and will be supported to set goals and how to achieve them.
- The Pathway Plan will be kept under regular review with a contingency plan in place in case the proposed plan breaks down
- Up until the age of 18, while they remain in care all young people will have an Independent Reviewing Officer whose role is to ensure goals set are being met in a timely way and that the care plan reflects the young person's needs.
- All care leavers will be eligible for support from a Personal Advisor from the age of 16 years until their 25th birthday; this includes care leavers who return for support from the Pathways Team after the age of 21 years with consent of the young person. The role of the personal advisor is to support young people to prepare to live independently and offer advice and support. Sometimes for those young people under the age of 18 the role of the PA is undertaken by a social worker.
- From the age of 12 years all young people in care will start working on their '[Passport to Independence](#)' to develop their independent living skills. This toolkit will be used as evidence when applying to local housing authorities for social housing. Where providers of semi-independent accommodation have their own life skills toolkits, it will be important to ensure they cross reference with the Passport to independence. To ensure a joined-up approach the progress of the Passport to Independence will be reviewed and monitored at each statutory Looked After Child (LAC) review by the allocated Independent Reviewing Officer.

The Transition Process

Below outlines the process and details of the support and services available to young people who are working with the leaving care service in Middlesbrough.

- All Pathway Plans will outline the young person's accommodation pathway, taking into account their individual aspirations and support needs. The independent Reviewing

Officer will ensure any goals set are achievable and happening within a set time scale, along with a robust contingency plan.

- Where it is recognised that a young person is not ready to move to independent living, their Social Worker will complete the referral form and risk assessment form to enable the young person's panel to seek suitable semi-independent accommodation a minimum of six months before a young person's 18th birthday.
- All accommodation options (outlined in section 8) will be discussed with the young person and where appropriate their foster carer/key worker. Young people will also be encouraged and supported to visit the different semi-independent provision available to them.
- If alternate suitable accommodation is not secured by the young person's 18th birthday, then consideration will be made by an Assistant Director in Children's Social Care for an extension in placement, this will be for a time limited period and reviewed regularly.
- It is recognised that not all young people will be able to gain social housing at the age of 18 years or be ready for complete independence. It is important this is discussed by the Social Worker as part of their move on plan to ensure the young person has realistic expectations.
- The Personal Advisor (PA) will ensure the young person has an up-to-date Pathway Plan in place. The PA will obtain an information sharing consent form from the care leaver to share relevant sections of the Pathway Plan with local housing providers where requested.
- It is recognised that young people need time to develop the skills for independence. Semi-independent accommodation offers that gradual stepping stone towards sustainable tenancies. Where this is identified as a suitable option the Personal Advisor will refer the young person into the Young Person's Supported Accommodation Panel.
- At the earliest opportunity the young person will be registered with Tees Valley Home Finder.
- It is important that young people have a degree of choice in where they want to live. Young people will be supported to make an informed choice in where they apply for housing, taking into account local connection. This is especially important for those young people residing outside of the borough, ensuring they are supported in their decision to either stay in the area they are currently residing or return to Middlesbrough
- Young people requiring a transition into Adult Social Care will be heard at the Transitions Forum to ensure that their needs under the Care Act 2014 are considered alongside this protocol.
- The young persons allocated social worker or personal advisor will ensure, where appropriate all claims for benefits are submitted when the young person turns 18. To avoid unnecessary delays the young person will need to have appropriate ID, bank account and National Insurance Number in place.
- Young people, who are of EEA nationality, will be supported to apply for settled status as early as possible to ensure no delay in their eligibility for public funds.

Accommodation and support options

Young people will be encouraged and supported to remain in positive, supportive care settings until they are ready to move on. We want to ensure young people are given the time to build up the skills and knowledge needed to live independently.

We will ensure that accommodation provided for care leavers is suitable for their needs. All accommodation placements will be based on a thorough assessment of the young persons need which includes ascertaining his/her wishes, feelings and aspirations.

Types of Accommodation

- **Staying Close**

This is provided in the Local Authority in house services and offers residential care until the age of 18 with an extensive independent living programme. This provides the reassurance of moving to independent living with floating support.

- **Semi Independent accommodation**

There are a variety of supported accommodation types in Middlesbrough. This can include a hostel, shared house or self-contained flat with in house or outreach support. Young people can stay up to 2 years before moving on to independent living and will receive Key Worker support throughout their stay.

All referrals for young people under the age of 18 must go via the Young Persons Panel.

For young people over the age of 18, the allocated Social Worker or personal advisor will need to complete the Housing referral form for commissioned providers and send direct to providers. Referrals for those aged 18 to 24 can also be considered at the young Person's Panel, particularly for those with complex needs.

- **Living with family, friends, or relatives**

For some young people it might be the right option to return to living with family. When a young person identifies that they want to return home conversations will take place around the suitability, safety and longevity of this option. Family members will be fully involved in the planning process and will understand how to access support where the placement may not be successful. When a return home takes place practitioners will closely monitor and have a contingency plan in place should this break down. This will include presenting the young person's case to the Young Person's Panel alongside making preparation for the return to the family home. Family placements will also be supported using initiatives such as Middlesbrough Family Group Conferencing.

- **Social Housing**

All young people who are assessed as ready for independent living through the passport to independence, the Care V support tool and based on feedback from staff in accommodation settings, will be eligible to apply for social housing. The waiting time will vary in each area and so the pathway plan will need to reflect this, along with what will happen if the young person needs to move on from their current placement before a property is secured.

Before applying for social housing, the allocated social worker or personal advisor will need to take into account:

- Does the young person understand the responsibility of managing their own tenancy.
- Have they completed their Passport to Independence
- Do they have a local connection to the area they want to apply.

- **Private Rented**

Another option to live independently is to rent privately from a landlord, this allows more flexibility in location and timescale. Accommodation can be found either through a letting agent, directly with a landlord or with support from the Housing Solutions Team. Middlesbrough Council offers support with rent in advance.

To ensure the property is affordable, the allocated social worker or personal advisor will check the local housing allowance for the area <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/Search.aspx>

Care leavers are eligible for the Local Housing Allowance single room rate until their 25th birthday, where it will reduce to the shared room rate. The Pathway Plan needs to reflect this and outline what support will be available to the young person during this time.

- **Home ownership**

In Middlesbrough we encourage the aspiration for young people to own their own properties. We will have conversations about future planning and the steps involved in owning your first home, which may include moving into employment.

For those currently in employment, home ownership will be discussed and support will be provided to access mortgage advice.

Care leavers and prison release

A coordinated approach will need to be taken for those care leavers who are due to be released from custody in order to prevent homelessness. The allocated Social Worker or Personal Advisor will ensure they work closely with the prison, probation and youth offending services and housing solutions team, where possible at least 6 months prior to release.

Early notification will be supported by the development of working relationships with local prisons.

Upon sentencing we will discuss accommodation upon release and will continue to do so upon direct prison visits. A contingency plan will be created by Children's Social Care should early release or late notification of release arise.

Good practice guidance in relation to this practice area can be found at [HMPPS Care Experience Matters](#)

Care leavers living outside of Middlesbrough

Early planning will take place to determine the young person's intentions to remain in the host area or return to Middlesbrough. This will be led by the Independent reviewing Officer (IRO) to enable targeted advice to be given, mirroring the processes followed for those currently in area.

Reciprocal arrangements are in place with most neighbouring authorities to ensure that young people living outside of Middlesbrough are exempt from Council Tax charges until the age of 25. Such arrangements will also be pursued if young people are living outside of the Tees Valley area.

Working together to enable successful tenancies

Young people often need support when they take on a tenancy, and this is even more important for a care leaver. Every partner's aim is to ensure tenancies are sustained; however, it is important to recognise that young people may find the transition to independence overwhelming. Where a young person is struggling to sustain a tenancy, we will commit to working together and with partner agencies to implement an enhanced package of support to address any difficulties identified.

- Prior to a young person taking on any tenancy, the Social Worker/Personal Advisor will take into account each young person's individual support needs. Ensuring appropriate support is available where needed. A financial assessment carried out by the Social Worker or Personal Advisor will help to ensure accommodation is affordable. The Personal Advisor can also offer budgeting plan support.
- We will ensure young people are aware of their tenancy rights and responsibilities.
- Where requested, the young person's Personal Advisor, carer or other responsible adult will accompany young people to all viewings and tenancy signups. Young people will be encouraged and feel supported to not have to go alone.
- For any young person moving into unregulated accommodation (including their own tenancy), a Pathway Plan review will be completed within 28 days of the young person

moving into their property. Any concerns (such as support needs/property condition) will be raised with the landlord.

- With consent, the Personal Advisor will contact the new landlord within a month of the young person taking on the tenancy, to ensure joined up working and any problems with the tenancy can be addressed early.
- As part of the Pathway Plan review, the Personal Advisor will ensure young people are supported to register for all utilities, to ensure they get the best rates and tariffs and to avoid any unexpected bills (no later than 28 days of moving into the property).
- Young people will be offered the option of setting up an alternative payment arrangement with the DWP or if appropriate direct payments to the landlord for rent payments.
- All care leavers, who are solely liable for council tax will be exempt of payment until their 25th birthday. The PA will support the young person to follow procedures to ensure exemption is applied for.
- Where it is recognised that a young person is struggling to manage their tenancy, their Personal Advisor can look to request extra support from either the landlord (if social housing) or refer to Middlesbrough ACT Community Interventions Team.
- In the event that a tenancy begins to break down, contingency plans will be followed which includes early referral back to the Young Person's Panel, consideration of a return to supported accommodation and use of the Housing Solution's Team's homeless prevention resources.

Homelessness

Young people leaving care are some of the most vulnerable in society. Without support from parents, many will struggle to adapt to independent life. One of the most common features of a poor transition to adulthood is housing instability, risk of homelessness and actual homelessness.

We want to ensure we are working together, and much earlier to prevent this outcome

Response to homelessness

Care leavers under 18:

- Care leaver's under 18s will be managed outside of the homeless pathway, utilising the young person's panel to plan for onward accommodation.

Care leavers over 18:

- Where a care leaver is aged between 18 and 25, at the time a Personal Advisor is made aware of a care leaver who is homeless or at risk of homelessness within 56 days, with the consent of the young person a referral will be made to the housing solutions team of their choice as early as possible through the [Duty to Refer](#) process

- Following the referral, a joint assessment will take place within 5 working days*. The meeting is to include the Personal Advisor, Housing Solutions Officer and young person to look at how homelessness can be prevented or relieved (see appendix 3 overview of Homeless Reduction Act 2017).
*a same day approach will be taken to assessment where the s.188 duty to provide interim accommodation is triggered.
- No care leaver will be asked to make a homeless application without support from their Social Worker or Personal Advisor.

The Housing Act 1996 & Homeless Reduction Act 2017

- All care leavers under 25 an automatic priority need to signify the LA's investment in those we are the corporate parents for.
- A Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) will be completed with all young people who make a homeless application, and (with consent) shared with the Personal Advisor. The PHP should outline the reasonable steps that the local authority and young person will take to prevent or relieve homelessness. Subject to consent the PHP should be informed by the young person's Pathway Plan.
- Where homelessness cannot be prevented and interim accommodation is required, the Housing Solutions Team will work with the Personal Advisor to secure suitable temporary accommodation inside of Middlesbrough before anything is considered outside of the border. For clarity, any young person under the age of 18 will be accommodated by Children's Social Care.
- Bed and Breakfast/hotel accommodation for care leavers aged 18 to 25 years, should only be used in emergencies where there are no alternative options available. When used this should be for as short a period as possible and oversight from senior managers. Bed and Breakfast/hotel accommodation will not be used for any homeless 16 or 17-year-old.
- Where homelessness cannot be prevented or relieved, young people will be supported by the Personal Advisor to ensure the Housing Solutions Team has all relevant information required to consider whether the young person is owed a full homelessness duty under the 1996 Act.
- With regard to intentionally homeless decisions [strategic guidance](#) states that all attempts should be made by housing authorities to avoid the impact of intentionally homeless decisions in relation to care leavers. We fully support this principle and have a clear commitment to continued joint working as corporate parents to ensure a plan for the young person's future housing is in place. As a result any intentionally homeless decision requires joint senior level sign off across Children's Social Care and ACT Middlesbrough. Decisions will be recorded using the [template](#) developed to support the decision making process.

Care Leavers who are Rough sleeping

When the Rough Sleeper Team identifies that a young person, rough sleeping is a Care Leaver, they should immediately conduct further enquiries with the individual to establish who their parent LA is in order to (with consent) make urgent contact with them to advise of the situation. We would then apply all of the established process around assessment and off-street accommodation in order to further these enquiries and work with our Pathways Team (if from Middlesbrough) or their Parent Local Authority to establish what support they will offer in order to assist the Rough Sleeper Team to progress their accommodation options in Middlesbrough or return them to their parent Local Authority area, if appropriate.

Escalation process

If any point in the practical working of this joint protocol, or associated procedure, there is disagreement between Children's Social Care and the Housing Solutions Team, then either or both parties should escalate this to their direct line manager, or where this is not possible, to the next management tier as appropriate.

Disagreements could arise in a number of areas but are most likely to arise around:

- Thresholds for services
- Roles and responsibilities
- The need for action and completion of assessments
- The proposed offer of accommodation
- Communication

Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. While often a positive sign of developing thinking within a dynamic process this can be reflected in the immediate term as a lack of clarity in procedures or approaches. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion.

Attempts at problem resolution may leave one worker or agency believing that the child remains at risk of significant harm. This person or agency has responsibility for communicating such concerns through agreed channels.

It is the responsibility of every professional to "problem solve". The aim must be to resolve professional disagreement at the earliest opportunity and as swiftly as possible always keeping in mind that the child and young person's safety and welfare is the paramount consideration.

If a professional disagreement arises and the issue cannot be resolved between practitioners, the matter must be referred to the Line Manager who will discuss with their opposite number in the other agency in the hope that the issue can be resolved.

Failure to resolve disagreements between line managers must be further escalated to the Head of Service within the respective organisations. If there continues to be no resolution,

then the matter should be escalated to the Director of Children's Social Care for consideration.

A clear record of decision making should be recorded against the child's file and the appropriate case management system in other agencies.

Implementation of the joint protocol

Briefings in relation to the protocol will take place across the council and will be provided to key Stakeholders throughout 2025/2026. The protocol will be accessible on the Middlesbrough Council website.

Training

The Housing Solutions Team Manager will attend quarterly Children's Services team meetings to discuss the protocol and the Housing Solutions Team meet with new/agency staff as part of their induction to make sure they are familiar with the protocol in addition to offering shadowing opportunities.

Reviewing this joint protocol

This protocol will be reviewed quarterly from November 2026 to November 2027.

Thereafter it will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation and/or government guidance.

Operational reviews will be held between managers of Children's Social Care and the Housing Solutions Team.

Monitoring

Monthly operational meetings will be held which consider:

- The number of Duty to Refer referrals received
- The number of young people placed in temporary accommodation/B&B/in unsuitable accommodation
- The number of young people heard at the Young Person's Panel
- The overall number of homeless applicants who are care experienced up to the age of 30
- Number of young people who are prison leavers
- Number of young people who are rough sleeping

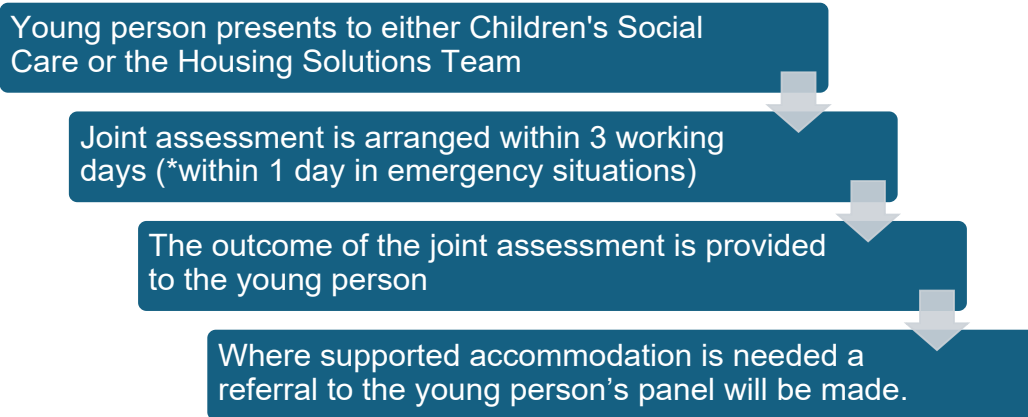
Data will be used to a to identify trends and develop service improvements.

Feedback will also be provided to the Corporate Parenting Board and to the Director of Children's Social Care.

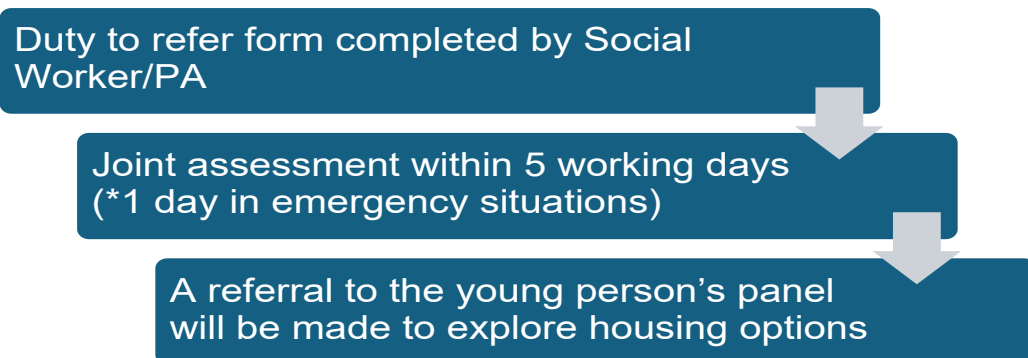
APPENDIX 1

Process Pathways

Under 18



Aged 18-25



APPENDIX 2

Young person's Panel Referral Form

YOUNG PERSONS PANEL REFERRAL FORM

Accommodation and Support for Young People

This form is for Supported Housing and Floating Support Services in Middlesbrough
For young people aged 16 to 24 years.

Date of Referral:

Office use only:

Panel Date:

.....

Time:

.....

WHICH SERVICE DOES THE APPLICANT REQUIRE?

Supported Housing Floating Support Services not sure

Has a homeless assessment has already been carried out?

If yes, please state the date:

If no please contact, the housing solutions team on 01642 726800 to

arrange an appointment.

REFERRAL AGENCY DETAILS

Referral Agency:

Contact Name:

Tel No:

Email:

APPLICANTS DETAILS:

Full Name: D.O.B: Age:

Address:

Post code:

Contact No: NI NO:

Gender: Male Female Transgender

AGENCIES INVOLVED WITH THE YOUNG PERSON

Social Worker

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

Probation/YOS Worker

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

CPN /Psychiatrist

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

Health Visitor

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

Other

Contact Name: Tel No:

Email:

HOUSING HISTORY (Please give previous addresses up to 6 years)

Address (most recent first)	Tenure/Landlord	Dates to & from	Reasons for leaving

CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION (Please indicate with an x in any boxes required)

Is the applicant pregnant? Yes/No. If yes what is the expected date of delivery?

Please give details of any children who will be included in the application:

Name(s)	D.O.B.	Does the applicant have parental responsibility?
		Y/N
		Y/N
		Y/N

Are any of the children on the Child Protection Register or are there any Child Protection concerns?

If yes please give details

Has a Child in Need assessment been undertaken? Is the young person a Care Leaver or under S17?

If yes please give details

Does the applicant consider himself or herself to have a disability?

If yes please give details

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Is the applicant eligible for Housing Benefit? Yes/No

Does the applicant receive any other benefits? If yes which?

Does the applicant receive any other income? If yes, what income is received?

Does the applicant have a bank account?

SUPPORT NEEDS (Please indicate the areas where support may be needed)

<p><u>Achieve Economic well Being</u></p> <p>Claiming benefits <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reducing debt <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sorting out utilities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Budgeting <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Obtaining paid work <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Be Healthy</u></p> <p>To develop daily living skills <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Advice on healthy eating <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>To manage your physical health <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>To manage your mental health <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Help with substance misuse <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Make a Positive Contribution</u></p> <p>Develop confidence <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Contribute in services and wider community <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><u>Enjoy and Achieve</u></p> <p>Participate in training/education <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Participate in informal learning activities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Participate in leisure/cultural/faith <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Participate in work-like activities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Gain contact with services/family/friends <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Stay Safe</u></p> <p>Support to maintain a tenancy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Minimise offending behaviour <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Prevent causing harm to self <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Prevent causing harm to others <input type="checkbox"/></p>
--	---

ANY OTHER INFORMATION

(Use this space to provide any other areas of support required, priorities or any further information on the areas highlighted above).

RISK ASSESSMENT (This section must be completed or the referral will NOT be considered)

Please use the categorisation below to assess the likelihood of the risk occurring:

LOW Isolated or occasional instances of non-significant incidents and/or a low potential of incidents reoccurring.

MEDIUM More frequent/regular incidents and/or a more significant nature

HIGH Likely, severe or significant

Does the applicant have a history/is there a risk of any of the following?

(Risk to self and others)

	L, M or H		L, M or H
Violence & Aggression – this includes physical/sexual assault.		Damage to property/Arson	
Verbal Aggression		Drug misuse	
Anger Management		Alcohol misuse	

Describe below potential triggers and who is at risk:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Is there a history of or risk of any of the following?

	L, M or H		L, M or H
Suicide		Self-harm	
Accidental overdose		Misuse of/non compliance with medication	
Abuse from others		Vulnerability	
Mental health issues			

If any identified, please give further information including triggers, details of incidents below:

Is there a history of difficulties regarding previous tenancies?

	L, M or H		L, M or H
Rent arrears/debts		Behaviour of friends	
Neighbour disputes		ASB	
Evictions		Harassment	
Other			

If any identified, please give further details below:

Any Police Involvement

Offence	Date	Caution	Conviction	Spent	No further action

As a professional how long have you know the applicant? Years Months

Is it safe to visit the applicant at home?

If not, is there another safe place?

Is the applicant suitable to share accommodation with other young vulnerable people?
Yes/ No

Has the Applicant ever been refused support? If yes, please state why.

Please provide any other relevant information:

CONSENT

I confirm the information contained in this application is true and includes all relevant information required to assess my referral.

I am aware that if I am applying for supported housing that this referral form will be forwarded to the young person’s panel for consideration.

I give my consent for agencies to obtain further information from all relevant agencies which may include, for example, landlords, police, probation, benefits agencies etc.

I understand that this information will only be made available to providers/organisations that are able to assist me to obtain the correct level of support and enable me to sustain a tenancy.

Signed: (Applicant)..... Date:.....

Signed: (Referral Agency)..... Date:.....

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

The Panel Co-ordinator aims to make sure all applicants are treated equally. In order to ensure the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy it would be appreciated if you would complete your details below.

The information given is entirely confidential and forms no part of any assessment process.

Gender

- Male
- Female

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No

Age range

- Up to 25
- 26 -35
- 36 - 45
- 46 -45
- 56 and over

Marital Status

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Living with partner
- Separated

If you have a disability please give details:

Sexual Orientation

- Heterosexual (sexually attracted to member of the opposite sex)
- Bisexual (sexually attracted to both men and women)
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Undecided

Economic Status

- Job Seeker
- Govt. training scheme/New Deal
- Not seeking work
- Long term sick/disabled
- Full-time work (24 hours or more per week)
- Part-time work (less than 24 hours per week)
- Full-time student

My Nationality is

My Ethnic Origin is:

White	<input type="checkbox"/> British <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish
Mixed	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Asian or Asian British	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Black or Black British	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> African

Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese
English Gypsy/Romany	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irish Traveller or other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Prefer not to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please return with your application.

Thank You

Appendix 3 – Young Persons Panel Terms of Reference

Young Person's Accommodation Panel

Terms of Reference

Version 3 July 2025

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Young Person Accommodation Panel is a forum to discuss the housing and support options for all Young People aged between 16 and 24.
- 1.2 The Young Person Accommodation Panel will act as gateway for Young People into supported accommodation

- 1.3 To provide a joint approach between Housing Solutions and Children's Services to review in detail and follow the progression of the following groups of young people's with the ultimate aim of them having secure long term accommodation.

2. Aims

- 2.1 In a multi-disciplinary forum, consider the accommodation and support needs of Young People in a person-centred way with an overall aim to prevent future homelessness.
- 2.2 To ensure that referrals for Young People are coordinated in a timely and efficient way and are allocated the most suitable accommodation.
- 2.3 To promote communication and partnership working between service providers, referral agencies, and statutory services.

3. Scope of the Panel

- 3.1 The Panel will be split into two sessions limited to considering:

Part 1 - Supported Accommodation Panel

- Referrals that meet the panel eligibility criteria (below)
- Vacancies in Accommodation and Support Services for Young People (below)
- Move-on from Accommodation and Support Services for Young People.

Part 2 – Care Leavers Accommodation Panel

- 16/17-year-olds still in care (regardless of whether they are in the borough or not) to identify and plot the progress of their path to independence.
- 18–24-year-olds in crisis who are former care leavers (such as homeless, in totally inappropriate accommodation or at risk of losing their home)
- Those in staying put arrangements to identify and help progress their path to independence.
- Those in university/educational tied accommodation to identify and help progress path to independence when their course finishes.
- Those in supported accommodation to identify and help progress their path to independence.
- Young People in Young Offenders Institutions to identify and help progress their path to independence.

4. Panel Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1 For consideration at the Young Persons Supported Accommodation Panel, applicants should meet the following criteria:

For Supported Accommodation:

- Aged 16 to 24 years on application

- Be leaving care, homeless, threatened with homelessness, or otherwise at risk for example due to experience of domestic violence.
- Currently live in Middlesbrough, want to live in Middlesbrough and can demonstrate a local connection or are looked after by Middlesbrough Council.
- Have a demonstrable need for a level of housing related support. This will be included on the referral form and discussed at panel by the referring agency representative.
- Have recourse to relevant benefits, grants or private funds to ensure payment for the support service and accommodation in accommodation-based services. Is the young person already claiming Universal Credit?
 - If not, referring agency to make sure I.D. is available prior to placement. If the young person is under 18 and has been referred from children's services/pathways please confirm at panel that Middlesbrough Council will pay the personal allowance for four weeks until the Universal Credit is in pay, this will help towards service charge, Food and personal care items (This will not exceed £250). This will mean the young person does not start with debt they cannot get out of.

For Dispersed Accommodation with Floating Support:

- Aged 18 to 24 years on application.
- Require support sustain the tenancy.
- Be a resident of Middlesbrough.

N.B. Where an application has been discussed at Panel and Members are unable to allocate an appropriate supported housing placement, floating support maybe then allocated where it is felt that the young person still requires support due to their situation in order to broaden housing options.

For Care Leavers Accommodation Panel:

- Any Young Person aged 16-25 who is or has been Looked after by Middlesbrough Council.
- Any Young Person currently resident in Middlesbrough or who has demonstrable local connection but open to another LA as a Looked After Child or a Care Leave with another Local Authority and their Social Worker wants to explore their accommodation options within the borough.

4.2 Referrals that do not meet the panel eligibility criteria will not be accepted.

4.3 Where an applicant is accepted by the panel and is referred to a particular Service for further consideration, the eligibility criteria specific to that Service will also need to be met. Providers have the right not to accept a referral to a Service even though the person referred may meet the criteria. In this event the Young Person will be referred back to the panel for further discussion.

4.4 Applicants accepted to the panel for consideration may not be guaranteed access to a service, due to service waiting lists. In this event applicants will be placed on a waiting list held by the Service Provider of the service they have been allocated.

4.5 The panel offers a range of housing and support options for Young People and it is the panel's intention to match their housing-related support needs with the type of housing and

support available from a service. In the event that two (or more) people are eligible for a service and have similar housing-related support needs, priority will be given according to length of time on the waiting list. The following priorities also apply:

For accommodation-based services priority will be given in this order:

1. 16 / 17 year old applicants who are homeless or leaving care with a demonstrable need for supported housing (for example due to lacking independent living skills, experience of domestic violence or exploitation).
2. 18 – 24-year-olds who are homeless or leaving care and have a demonstrable need for supported housing (for example due to lacking independent living skills or experience of domestic violence).

For floating support services priority will be given in this order:

1. 18 – 21 year old applicants ready to move on from other accommodation based services.
2. 18 – 24 year old applicants who are leaving care.
3. 18 – 25 year old applicants with support needs (for example due to lacking independent living skills or experience of domestic violence).

Services offering accommodation to under 18's must be Ofstead registered.

5.0 Accommodation and Support Services

5.1 The Accommodation and Support Panel for Young People acts as a gateway to the services listed below. Referrals to Panel will be given priority into these services:

Commissioned Provider	Service Name	Physical Description	Service Description	Length of service
Changing Lives	Erimus House	30 Self Contained units within Erimus House (including 2x Crashpads) 25 Dispersed Accommodation units with Floating Support	24 Hour staffing within Erimus House. Housing related Support	Up to 2 years
Home Group	Single Key	10 self-contained flats with shared communal areas	24 hour housing related support	Up to 2 years
North Star Housing	Rainham House & Hestia	Female Only Service (18+) Rainham -10 Self-contained 2-bedroom units & 1 Crash Pad Hestia – Units of dispersed accommodation with floating support.	24 Hour staffing in Rainham House. Housing related Support	Up to 2 years – Hestia properties converted to tenancies upon being ready for independence.

Commissioned Provider	Service Name	Physical Description	Service Description	Length of service
Riverside	Stages Academy	42 Units of accommodation for single people age 18-65	24 Hours staffing. Housing related Support	Up to 2 years
Middlesbrough Council	Service Name	Physical Description	Service Description	Length of service
	Community Interventions Team	Officers from within ACT Service to carry out homeless prevention and tenancy sustainment work.	Housing related support, floating support for resettlement, ensuring tenancy sustainability moving forward	Flexible depending on level of need.

5.2 Should it be agreed that more than one service can meet the needs of an applicant then the applicant will have the choice to choose which service they would like.

6. Membership of the Panel

6.1.1 **The Supported Accommodation Panel** will consist of representatives from the Service Providers listed at 5.1 and appropriate representatives and referrers from Children’s Social Care, Housing Solutions Team, Community Interventions Team, Pathways, and Registered Social Landlords.

The panel will be chaired consistently as below:

Chair: Housing Service Strategic Lead

Vice Chair: Housing Solutions Team Manager

Alternative: ACT Lead Officer

6.1.2 **The Care Leavers Accommodation Panel** will consist of representatives from Children’s Services and Housing and will be chaired and attended consistently as below:

Chair - Service Manager of Corporate Parenting

Vice Chair - ACT Lead Officer

Team Managers – Pathways

Housing Solutions Team Manager

Team Managers 0-19 Service

Fostering Service Manager / representative

Strategic Housing Lead

Community Interventions Team Manager

6.1.3 **Business Support:**

Business Support for the Young Persons Supported Accommodation Panel will be provided by ACT Middlesbrough and will support the Chair by:

- Setting Agenda for meeting based on referrals
- Maintain an action log/ tracking of cases.
- Recall cases for review based on timescales set by the chair/vice chair

- Monitoring housing nominations
- Sending out action list following panel meeting

Business Support for the Care Leavers Accommodation Panel will be provided by Children's Services and will support the Chair by:

- Updating tracker of cases
- Maintain an action log/ tracking of cases.
- Recall cases for review based on timescales set by the chair/vice chair
- Monitoring housing nominations
- Sending out action list following panel meeting

Separate agenda's and attendance to ensure information sharing is done on a "need to know" basis. The use of emails for agenda's will be kept to a minimum and will be managed through the use of Share Point Connect with each service providing details of who should have access to the relevant information.

- 6.2 Provider representatives *must* be authorised by their organisation to accept nominations from the panel for further assessment. Provider representatives should be encouraged to attend panel meetings whether or not there are vacancies in their services, to ensure continuity and clarify queries arising from previous meetings.
- 6.3 Appendix 1 gives example of an agenda for the overall YP Panel.
- 6.4 Panels will be held weekly on a day mutually agreed by panel members and can be reviewed to support service needs.

7. Referral Routes

- 7.1 Referral's and enquiries related to the Young Persons Accommodation panel should all be sent to YPpanel@Middlesborough.gov.uk
ACT Services can refer to the panel using the referral form built in to CDP and using referral 3.10 – Young Person's Supported Accommodation Panel and by completing in built referral form.

8 Responsibilities of Referral Agencies

- 8.1 Referral Agencies have a key role to play in ensuring the smooth administration of the panel. They are particularly responsible for:
- Ensuring that potential applicants meet the panel eligibility criteria.
 - Using the panel referral form to make referrals to the panel.
 - Ensuring that all sections on the referral form are completed and that any additional risk assessments and other relevant information such as a care plan, psychiatric/psychologist/OT/Care Coordinators reports are made available to the Service Providers within two weeks.
 - Ensuring that potential applicants give their informed consent to sharing the information contained within the referral form and relevant needs and risks being discussed with

statutory agencies and at the accommodation and support panel and having their information recorded on ACT Middlesbrough recording system CDP

- Consulting with other agencies involved in the applicants support network, particularly the relevant care manager if applicable, to gather relevant information on needs and risks prior to making a referral to the panel.
- Introducing the applicant to the service provider as appropriate
- Notifying the panel coordinator of any change in circumstances affecting an applicant's status on the panel waiting list

8.2 Representatives from referral agencies must attend panel meetings to provide information and clarification on specific referrals – ideally this will be the referrer themselves, who should arrange for a colleague or manager take their place if they are unable to attend

9. Responsibilities of Middlesbrough Housing Solutions Team

The Housing Solutions Team are responsible for:

- Carrying out homeless assessments and prevention work where necessary.
- Working with Children's Services/Care Leavers team for young people under the age of 18 adhering to the agreed protocols.
- Representing any applicant at Panel who they have assessed and who does not have a suitable referrer.
- Forwarding all completed supported housing referrals back to the Panel coordinator within 5 days.

10. Responsibilities of ACT Middlesbrough

10.1 The Front Door Team and the Panel chair are responsible for:

- Informing referral agencies of panel dates.
- Collating referral papers and summaries for panel representatives.
- Establishing whether referrals to the panel are existing or previous users of housing and support services.
- Maintaining a list of existing housing and support service users.
- Recording reasons for not accepting referrals and monitoring the ethnicity of these referrals.
- Providing feedback to referrers regarding the outcome of their referral to the Panel and waiting list status if applicable.
- Taking and distributing minutes of Supported Accommodation Panel meetings.

11. Responsibilities of Service Providers

11.1 The service providers are responsible for:

- Informing the ACT Middlesbrough of vacancies and allocations in services as and when they arise and at the panel meeting.
- Carrying out assessments of referrals made to their service against the eligibility criteria for that service.
- Promoting vacancies and panel dates to referral agencies

- Providing feedback to the original referrer and the Panel Coordinator regarding the assessment of referrals to schemes.
- Referring to the panel service users who require move-on from accommodation based services as early as possible, in consultation with other relevant stakeholders.
- Where a service provider is unable to meet the needs of an existing service user the Service Provider should refer back to Panel before notice is served/service ended.

12. Responsibilities of Children's Services

12.1 Children's Services are responsible for:

- Ensuring all the young people open to 0-19 services, Aspire or Pathways are referred into the relevant panel for discussion at the earliest opportunity
- Following the correct processes and protocols in place for 16/17 year olds
- Submitting duty to refer information to Housing Solutions for those 18+
- Identify independence work required to be tenancy ready.
- Ensure the young person has submitted a housing register application.
- Identifying young people for adult social care services.
- Identifying young people who will be 'staying put'.
- Identifying referral to YP Supported Accommodation Panel and ensuring referral forms are completed fully and with the most recent up to date information
- Identifying young people that are entering higher education.
- Reviewing the housing pathway plan and set date for next review.
- Agreeing on bidding for properties

13. Unresolvable issues, potential evictions, escalation and challenge

13.1 In cases where a positive outcome cannot be secured for a young person through the Supported Accommodation Panel or Care Leaver Panel, where there is professional disagreement or where the Young Person is at risk of eviction a referral should be made to the Escalations and Evictions Panel. The panel is chaired by the ACT Lead Officer and offers an opportunity for the case to be presented to a panel of colleagues with strategic authority to assist in the progression of cases outside of standard operating procedure and assisting to address gaps in provision where it is required. The panel also discusses potential evictions from all accommodation with a preventative focus.

14. Review

14.1 The terms of reference will be reviewed in annually.

Appendix 1 – Example Agenda

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Young Persons Accommodation Panel

DATE

TIME (2.5 hrs allocated to meetings)

Microsoft Teams link

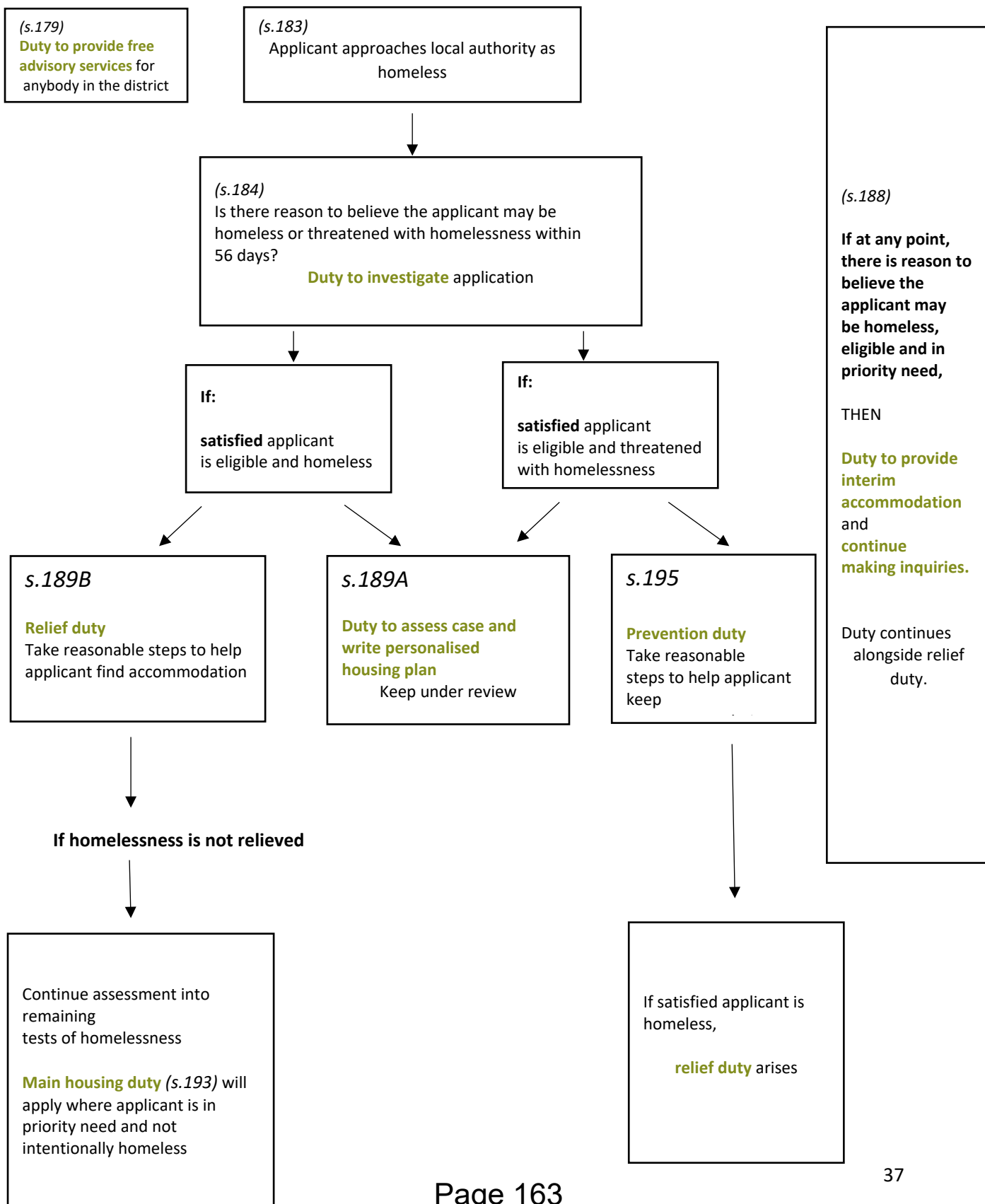
A G E N D A

Item	Supporting Documentation	Time Slot	Presented by:
YP Supported Accommodation Panel			
Introductions		13:00	Chair
Actions from previous meeting & updates		13:05	Chair
YP 1		13:15	PA
YP 2		13:25	Social Worker
YP 3		13:35	Housing Officer
YP 4		13:45	Social Worker / PA
Close of Supported Accommodation Panel		14:00	Chair
Time to allow comfort break and change over of attendees			
Care Leavers Panel			
Actions from previous meeting & updates		14:15	Chair
YPs open to Aspire Team & Accommodated		14:25	Aspire Team SW
New cases allocated to Pathways		14:35	Pathways Managers
16 / 17 year olds		14:55	0-19 team
18+		15:20	Pathways
Close		15:30	

End of Document

APPENDIX 4

Homelessness Reduction Act flowchart



APPENDIX 5

Legislative Framework

This protocol refers to the following legislation.

- Housing Act 1996 - [Part 6 \(Allocations\)](#) and [Part 7 \(Homelessness\)](#), as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- [Homelessness \(Priority Need for Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2002](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) - sections 1, 2 and 3
- [Equality Act 2010](#)

The following is a list of statutory guidance that this document refers to:

- [Homelessness code of guidance](#)
- [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers](#)
- [Children Act 1989: transition to adulthood for care leavers](#)
- [Extending Personal Adviser support for all care leavers to age 25](#)[Local offer guidance](#)