



Settings where children and young people access support

Introduction

This unit requires you to show a good understanding of the different settings children and young people can receive support from health, social and youth justice.

You will also need to show you understand different professional roles who support children and young people.

This information booklet will cover both of these topics

Introduction

Government publish Information on the numbers of children looked after in England, including numbers of looked after children adopted, care leavers and looked after children who are missing. As of March 2020:

- This number of children looked after increased to 80,080, from 78,140 in 2019 - up 2%. This is a rate of 67 per 10,000 children, up from 65 last year
- Children starting to be looked after decreased to 30,970, from 31,770 in 2019 - down 3%.
- Children ceasing to be looked after were 29,590, very similar to 29,570 in 2019.
- Children looked after who were adopted were 3,440, from 3,590 in 2019 - down 4%. This continues the fall seen since a peak of 5,360 adoptions in 2015.

For more information see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-looked-after-children>

Where do children looked after live?

Placements of children looked after

The majority of the 80,080 CLA are placed in a foster placement, where an approved carer looks after the child - 72%.

Foster placements can be with a relative or friend, or another carer . The proportion of CLA in foster placements with a relative or friend have increased very slightly up to 14%, from 13% in each of the last two years. The proportion of CLA in foster placements with another carer (not a relative or friend) has decreased to 57%, down from 58% last year and 60% in 2018.

Where do children looked after live?

The remaining Children Looked After were placed:

- in secure units, children's homes or semi-independent living accommodation (for example hostels, lodgings or flats where staff are employed to provide support and advice) - 13%
- with parents - 7%
- in the community, living independently, or in residential employment -3%
- for adoption - 3% -
- in other residential settings (including care homes, schools or custody) - 2% - same as last year

Placement stability is important - most CLA (68%) had one placement in the year but 11% had three or more.

Where can children live?

Residential children's homes can provide a good experience for some children, especially those who are unable to live in a family setting. They are financed and managed by local authorities, or voluntary sector organisations and, increasingly, by the private sector. However, places in residential accommodation remain limited.

There is no single 'type' of residential children's home: some are small and look after just one young person whereas others are large and offer group care. Some are rural whilst others are in city centres!

There are a number of group homes that might offer specialist care and support for young people with specific needs.

Where can children live?

Each year 500,000 children attend **residential schools**, ranging from large public schools such as Eton College to small privately run residential schools which have boarders.

Some children, however, attend particular types of residential school because mainstream schools are unable to provide for their education. Residential schools, together with support from care workers and teachers, can provide a valuable service for many children.

Many residential schools are specialist providers and focus on supporting young people with specific needs: this could be a specialist school which supports autistic children or young people with a learning disability, or a provision that has expertise in supporting young people who have behaviour that challenges.

Some of the schools have 52 weeks provision.

Where can children live?

Within foster care there are different types of care arrangements:

- **Short-term placements** may be chosen for example, when there are relationship difficulties between parents and children or when the principal carers or parents have serious health problems. Placements can vary from an overnight stay to one of several weeks, in some authorities up to 2 years.
- **Support foster care** offers short breaks to parents and children when relationships are under significant strain or when parents or other carers need a chance to relax and have some space, in order to maintain safe and effective parenting.
- **Respite care** is offered to parents of children who have disabilities
- **Emergency foster care** is usually offered when placements are needed at short notice, while professionals assess the situation.
- **Remand fostering** applies to children over the age of 10 who might be placed with remand foster carers for a few months, in order to prevent them being in residential care if, for example, they have been involved in criminal activity or child prostitution.

Where can children live?

- **Medium-term or bridging placement** might be selected when a child cannot return to their family and needs to move to a longer term foster placement or adoptive family.
- **Permanent foster care.** There may be good reason not to place a child with adopters, for example when there is frequent contact with the family of origin who cannot care for the child. In this situation children might remain with the same permanent carers for several years or for the remainder of their childhood.
- **Semi-independent supported lodgings/hostel accommodation** is offered to young people leaving foster or other forms of care.

Secure accommodation

When a child or young person under 18 is remanded or sentenced to custody, the Youth Custody Service (YCS) decides where they should be placed. This will be either at a secure training centre, secure children's home or under-18 young offender institution (for young males only).

The placement decision is based on the information provided by youth offending teams (YOTs). The YCS's Placement Team will contact YOTs to make sure the needs, risks and circumstances of each young person has been taken into account.

There are different types of accommodation that a young person can be accommodated in, which we will now look at.

Secure accommodation

Children aged 10– 17 can be sent to Secure Children’s Home(SCH), Secure Training Centre (STC) or a Young Offender Institution (YOI) if they are refused bail and are remanded to local authority accommodation and a separate court order gives permission to place the child into secure accommodation.

Children aged 10-11 can be sentenced to custodial sentences (but this will happen rarely).

Secure accommodation

Secure Children's Home

A **Secure Children's Home** is a type of Youth Detention Accommodation and/or Secure Welfare Accommodation that accommodates children and young people between the ages of 10-17.

A Secure Children's Home is a Children's Home which provides a locked environment and restricts a young person's liberty. Children accommodated in the secure children's homes were up by 7% (up by 12 children) to 184. (As of 29.2.20).

Secure accommodation

Secure training centre

A Secure Training Centre is a type of secure accommodation that children may be placed in if they are in custody. Secure training centres are for children up to the age of 17.

The Youth Custody Placement Service team decides where children who are remanded or sentenced to custody are placed. Usually girls aged 12 and over, boys aged 12-14 and older boys who are considered vulnerable are sent to a secure training centre (STC).

A child, their parent or guardian, their legal representative or the youth offending team can challenge a placement decision

Secure accommodation

Youth Offender Institution

Young Offender Institutions were introduced under the Criminal Justice Act 1988. They are a type of secure accommodation that children may be placed in if they are in custody. Young offender institutions are for boys aged 15 – 17 and young adult men aged 18 – 21

Young Offender Institutions have received criticism from children's rights organisations and both the public and Government due to their serious failings. Concerns continue to persist around

- the use of solitary confinement
- high levels of self-harm
- high numbers of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI)
- high levels of violence

Secure accommodation

Youth Offender Institution

The HM Chief Inspector of Prisons said:

"There was not a single establishment that we inspected in England and Wales in which it was safe to hold children and young people."

For more information about youth Justice please read:

https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/UnicefUKYouthJusticeExecSummaryInfographic_2020_2.pdf

Professional roles

The following are people and services an independent advocate is likely to come into contact with when working with children and young people:

Appropriate Adult

An appropriate adult must be called by police whenever they detain or interview a child (Under the age of 18) or vulnerable adult. They must be present for a range of police processes, including interviews, intimate searches and identification procedures. It can be a parent, guardian or social worker; or if no person matching this is available, any responsible person over 18.

Approved Social Worker (ASW)

ASWs are qualified social workers in England and Wales trained to carry out a range of statutory duties in relation to the Mental Health Act 1983.

Professional roles

CAFCASS

The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) looks after the interests of children involved in family proceedings. It works with children and their families, and then advises the courts on what it considers to be in the children's best interests.

CAFCASS only works in the family courts. Examples of matters that may be taken to family courts are: when parents who are separating or divorcing can't agree on arrangements for their children; an adoption application; when children are subject to an application for care or supervision proceedings by Children's Services.

Social workers employed by CAFCASS are appointed as Family Court Advisors (FCAs)

Professional roles

Child Protection Police Officer

Child Protection Team Officers are specially trained officers who undertake full investigations of allegations of child abuse. The police have a duty and responsibility to investigate criminal offences committed against children.

Community Family Worker

Employed by Social Services, works with families & children at the request of a Social Worker. Supervises contact sessions between parents and their children in the community. Provide practical assistance and support to families.

Professional roles

Children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) is used as a term for all services that work with children and young people who have difficulties with their mental health or wellbeing.

You may also see the term children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) used. This is an older term for the main specialist NHS community service within the wider CYPMHS that may be available locally. Local areas have a number of different support services available.

These NHS-funded services, together with some local authority services, might be from the statutory, voluntary or school-based sector. For example, an NHS trust, local authority, school or charitable organisation.

Children and young people may need help with a wide range of issues at different points in their lives. Parents, carers and young people can receive direct support through CYPMHS.

Professional roles

Community Mental Health Team (CMHT)

Multi-disciplinary teams made up of a mix of psychiatrists, social workers, community psychiatric nurses, psychologists and therapists. Provide assessment, treatment and care outside hospitals for adults with severe and enduring mental health problems.

Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN)

A nurse with specialised mental health training sometimes also known as Community Mental Health Nurse (CMHN).

Designated Doctor for Child Protection

The role is to provide a strategic lead in all aspects of the health service contribution to safeguarding children. They work with all named and designated health professionals and child protection advisors from other agencies to give advise, improve working together, and develop policies and practise in protecting children.

Professional roles

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

This is the named teacher who has responsibility for Looked After children within a school.

Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)

Local multi-agency partnership that operates the government's drugs strategy at a local level. Usually includes Police, Social and Caring Services, Health Authority and voluntary sector groups.

Duty Officer

A social worker or occupational therapist that can be contacted by the public during normal office hours.

Professional roles

Educational psychologist

A professionally qualified psychologist with expertise in how children and young people develop and learn. The Educational Psychology Service provides a visiting service to all maintained schools and early years settings. The psychologist works with staff and parents helping them to identify barriers to learning and develop strategies to promote progress and inclusion. The service also advises the Local Authority as part of its statutory assessment procedures.

Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

A social work team who provide an out of hours service for urgent matters including child protection.

Professional roles

Family Group Conference Coordinator

Employed by Social Services, to offer advice and help and chairs family group conferences to resolve issues involving children and their families.

Fostering Service – Supervising Social Worker

Supervising Social Worker's recruit, prepare, assess, support and supervise foster carers. They also have a Training Officer who provides training for approved foster carers.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Employed by Social Services as an independent chair of looked after children's reviews, with duties to safeguard the rights of children in public care and quality assure their Care Plans. They make decision, recommendations and provide advice about children who are looked after.

Professional roles

Key worker

The identified social worker who takes the responsibility for children in need of protection, where a child's name is placed on the child protection register (i.e. Pan London Child Protection Guidance for role of Key Worker).

Occupational Therapist (paediatric)

Advises and assists children with disabilities in adapting to their situation and helps promote a healthy balance of activities in their life.

Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS)

PALS provide “on the spot” help and guidance about NHS services to patients. This could be how to access services, complain, or how to contact local medical conditions support groups. PALS are based in each Acute Trust and Primary Care Trust.

Professional roles

Personal Adviser

Provides general advice and support - at those key episodes in each young person's life when information, advice and support on educational and vocational issues will be necessary to help them make decisions that affect their future. Some also carry a small caseload of people requiring *integrated and specialist support*. Particular attention is given to young people with this work is the monitoring of progress so that further interventions can be made.

Psychiatrist

A trained doctor who specialises in the treatment of people with mental health problems. They can prescribe medicines and have the power to detain people in hospital for their safety if they are mentally ill under the Mental Health Act 1983. It is rare for young people to be detained under the Mental Health act 1983 and child and adolescent psychiatrists work largely through talking with families, and providing consultation and advice to other professionals.

Professional roles

Social Worker

Social workers help people overcome problems and make their lives better. They work to promote the well being and safety of children, they also help parents learn how to care for children better. Some of these workers support children with learning difficulties find foster homes or adoptive families for abused or neglected children. Duty Assessment Teams undertake short assessments, child protection investigations and intervention. Family Support Teams work with children and families on a medium term basis and Looked After Children Teams work with children who are looked after by the Local Authority.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

Teacher who has responsibility for day-to-day management of special educational needs in a school. This is a statutory position – all schools must have a named person to co-ordinate special educational needs by whatever name they are called. A SENCO often has practical and professional experience of teaching children with special educational needs.

Professional roles

Speech & Language Therapist

Speech and language therapists (SLTs) work in the health service, though may offer sessions within a school or elsewhere. Provides services to children and adults with difficulties in speech, language and communication and teachers work in schools funded by local educational authorities.

Youth Worker

Works with young people in a range of settings aged 13-19 to encourage them to understand and act on personal, political and social issues.

Thank you for reading.
Please return to the
e-learning for the next
section of learning

