

Preparing for Adulthood: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

July 2024

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Preparing for Adulthood in Bury | 3 |
| 2. Our Values and Principles | 4 |
| 3. Preparing for Adulthood Assurance Meeting | 7 |
| 4. The Process | 9 |
| 5. Joint Commissioning and Personal Budgets | 11 |
| 6. Learning from Experience..... | 12 |
| 7. Membership..... | 12 |
| 8. Appendices: | |
| • Legislative Drivers | |
| • Referral Form | |

1. Preparing for Adulthood in Bury

1.1 Introduction

For this SOP, Preparing for Adulthood is the term used to describe the period of change in a young person's life as they move from childhood to adulthood. Preparing for Adulthood is not only about the major physical and emotional changes that a young person goes through, but also about changes in their legal status and responsibilities as they become an adult.

"We make many Preparing For Adulthood in our lives, but perhaps the one with the most farreaching consequences is the transition into adulthood" Heslop, 2002.

Within the Wider Context, the Bury 2030 Strategy 'Let's Do It' sets a Call for Action for everyone to get together to make Bury a place in which people are helped to make the best of themselves and where everyone can explore their dreams. One of the ambitions of Let's Do It is "A better future for the children of the Borough". A seamless well planned Preparing for Adulthood process is part of this wider ambition for all children.

This multi-agency SOP has been produced for practitioners and managers to describe the way services in Bury support young people between the ages of 14 and 25, as they move from children's to adults' services.

There are 4 national Preparing for Adulthood outcomes, namely:

- Employment and Higher Education
- Independent Living
- Participation in Society
- Being as health as possible in adult life.

In Bury we gather and build upon the young person's ideas and ambitions in line with these national outcomes.

1.2 Why Is This Needed?

The experience of Preparing for Adulthood has often been described as a 'cliff edge' with some young people reaching the age of 18 only to find themselves without the care and support they need as an adult. This can be due to the different types of services available to children and adults or poor advanced planning. However, more often it is due to different eligibility thresholds between children's and adults' services, which means that some young people are no longer eligible for statutory support when they turn 18.

The issue of eligibility is critical. Young people with a learning difficulty or those with complex needs who do not reach the threshold for some statutory adult services can face the prospect of poorer adult life chances, as well as the increased risk of experiencing a crisis later in life. Added to this, professionals supporting the Preparing for Adulthood of young people between children's and adults' services are often juggling conflicting legislation, competing service pressures and different financial priorities. This can make the Preparing for Adulthood process a confusing and anxious time for the young person and their family.

As a result, Bury's Preparing For Adulthood SOP sets out how services will work together to support young people with care and support needs who are eligible for adult services under the Care Act (2014), as well as young adults who are not eligible under the Care Act

but who are at high risk of experiencing harm or abuse and likely to need support as an adult. This multi- agency SOP has been jointly produced to ensure consistent standards of practice are applied across all services.

1.3 Aims

Children and Young People have told us what is important to them in terms of their care and support into independence by a number of “I statements”. These have been summarized into the key themes as shown in the graphic below:



Bury 's Preparing for Adulthood Policy aims to:

- Clarify the eligibility criteria for transitional support.
- Set out multi-agency responsibilities and expectations as part of the processes before, during and after transitions.
- Ensure that young people experience a smooth, positive, and timely Preparing for Adulthood process.
- Ensure the views and wishes of young people are central to their Preparing for Adulthood process.
- Provide a baseline to measure quality and consistency of Preparing for Adulthood practice in Bury.

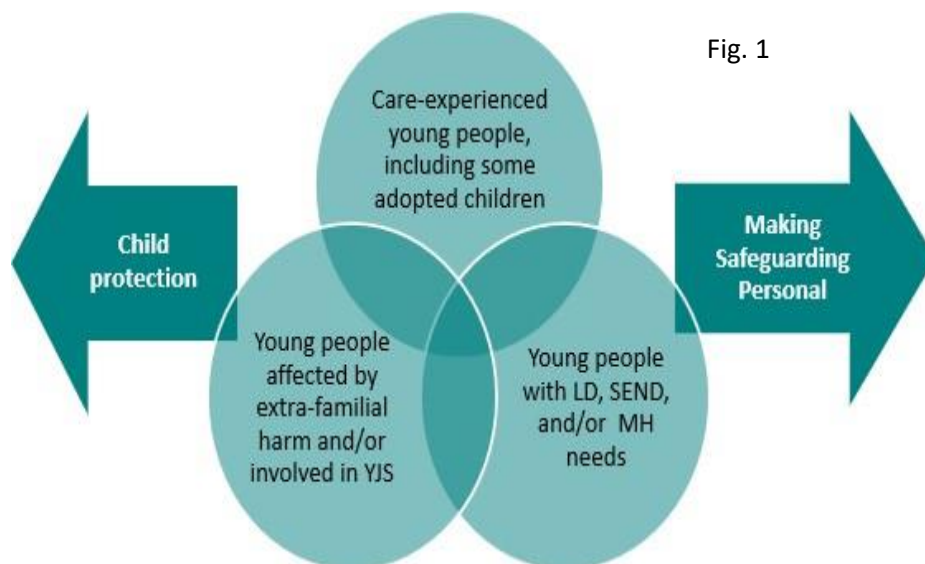
2.Our Values and Principles

2.1Multi-Agency Commitments

The principles underpinning Bury's Preparing For Adulthood pathway have been shaped by relevant national legislation, such as the SEND Preparing for Adulthood and preparation for

adulthood guidance, as well as local learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR), Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Care Act.

The RIPFA diagram (Fig.1), summarizes the different groups of young people who will be supported by Bury 's Preparing For Adulthood pathway.



Our Principles - agencies in Bury will:

- Ensure that the Preparing For Adulthood Process is clear and transparent to all those involved including young people, families, carers, and professionals.
- Work on the basis of telling story once
- Work in a proactive way to identify individuals at the earliest opportunity, ensuring timely Preparing for Adulthood planning arrangements that prevent a 'cliff edge' experience for the young person and their family.
- Ensure that the voice, wishes and best interests of the young person are central to their decision-making process and future planning.
- Ensure that person-centred planning focuses on the young person's strengths, aspirations, and skills for independence to achieve the best possible outcome.
- Never let go of case responsibility until of the new officer has been secured.
- Consider safeguarding risks throughout the Preparing for Adulthood process, supporting young people to keep safe, identify and manage risk and to remain healthy.
- Support multi-agency commissioning and planning of services through the early identification of potential future adult needs.
- Offer carers assessments to family carers or the young carer, as appropriate, as part of the Preparing for Adulthood process. Provide each young person with a named Lead professional to effectively co-ordinate their Preparing for Adulthood process across agencies and prevent drift.
- Ensure that required statutory assessments are completed in line with relevant legislative frameworks designed to prepare young people for adulthood.

2.2 Our Values

Social Model of Disability



Social model: Disability seen as socially constructed meaning that society creates an environment favoring the able-bodied majority. This model views disability as not the fault of the individual but the product of barriers in society.

Continuum of need



Fig. 2

We are committed to supporting individuals through a Continuum of Need Model. This ranges from support for individuals with low level needs, through early intervention and prevention services, to support for those whose needs are more acute, through specialist high level interventions.

Support to achieve a successful journey to adulthood is available from a range of agencies, professionals, and services in Bury. The young people covered by this SOP are those identified as needing either intensive or specialist support as an adult:

- **Intensive:** Children and young people who have multiple needs that require a multiagency response with a lead professional. This includes a range of situations including cases known to Children's Social Care, Health, Mental Health, Early Help, homelessness, or Criminal Justice Services.

- Specialist: Children and young people with more complex health and care needs requiring statutory, intensive interventions or a multi- agency safeguarding response.

3. Preparing for Adulthood: Preparing For Adulthood Assurance Meeting

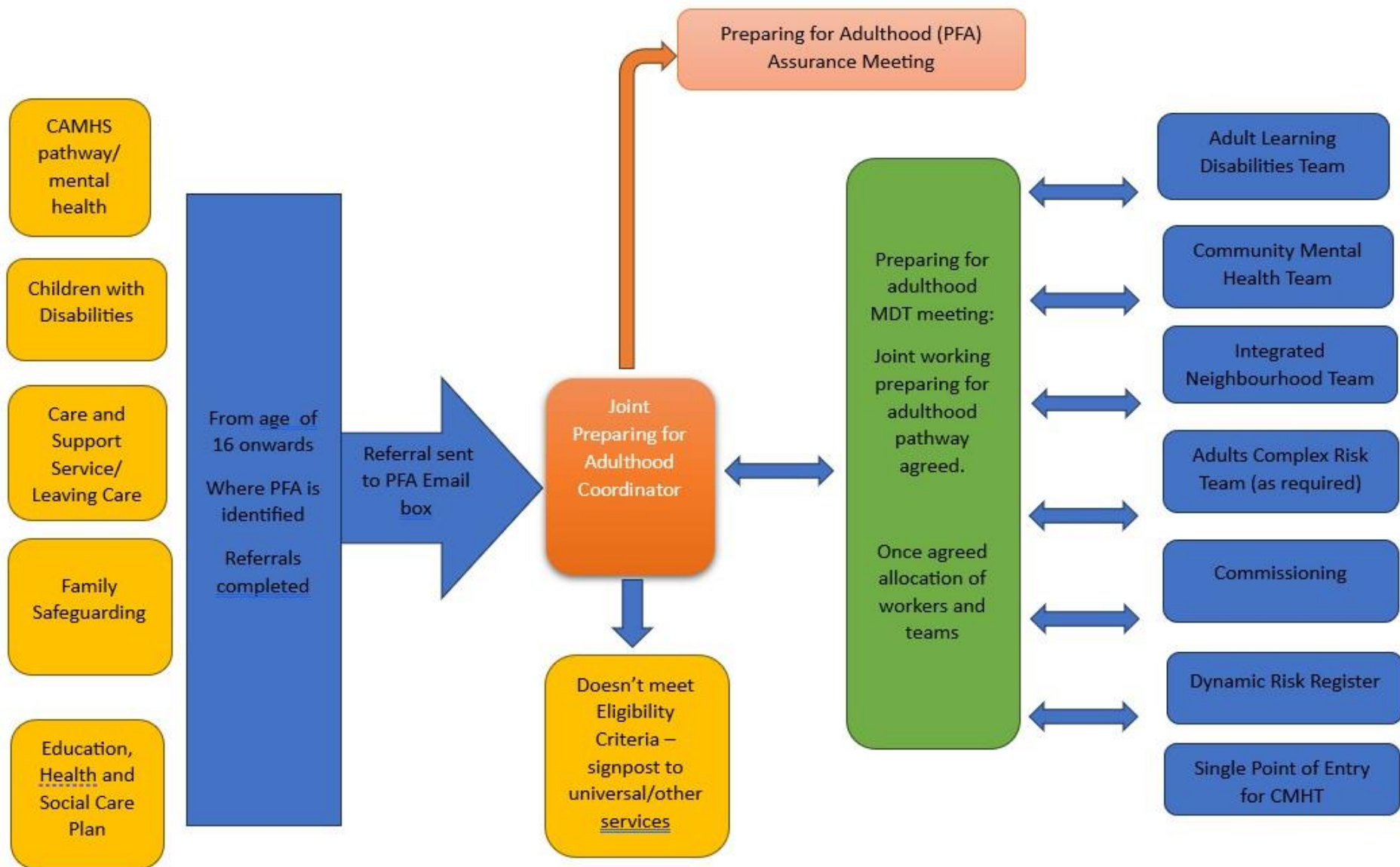
3.1 How It Works

Preparing For Adulthood Assurance Meeting is a monthly operational meeting designed to identify young people eligible for transitional support and coordinate a smooth transition to Adult Social Care Services.

The overall aim of the Preparing For Adulthood Assurance Meeting is to focus on each young person to ensure they receive a smooth transition to adulthood thereby reducing inequalities and improving outcomes. The Assurance Meeting accepts referrals for young people from the age of 14 who meet one or more of the eligibility criteria and where it is expected that post18 support will be required. Referrals will usually be made by a lead social worker or health professional.

The multi-disciplinary team (MDT) is responsible for working with each young person to develop their support plan. As well as setting out the young person's aspirations and any practical or life skills support, the Plan will detail the actions required for a well-planned and timely crossover from children's to adults' services. To achieve this, members of the Assurance Meeting will regularly review progress to ensure agencies carry out actions within the agreed timescales and ensure that the desired outcomes for the young person have been achieved.

Another key function of the MDT is to act as a problem-solving forum. Partners can address challenges and barriers such as different legislation, criteria or capacity issues across services and think creatively about the range of specialist and mainstream options available to the young person. The aim is to ensure that the most effective, tailored package of support is in place for the individual which meets their outcomes from the age of 18.



4. The Process

This section provides a summary of the 5 key stages in the Preparing For Adulthood process.

| Stage | Process |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Identification of children leading up to transition (Age 14) |
| 2 | Lead professional identified. |
| 3 | Preparing For Adulthood plan begins |
| 4 | Preparing For Adulthood Review by Preparing For Adulthood Assurance Meeting |
| 5 | Transition to Adult Services |

Stage 1: Identification

Agencies use the monthly Preparing for Adulthood Assurance Meeting to screen referrals for young people who may be eligible for transitional support from the age of 14 (Year 9).

Children who are subject to an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan are identified through discussions and assessments as part of their Year 9 review.

Cases are triaged by members of the Assurance meeting and young people eligible for support are added to the Preparing For Adulthood Tracker and a named Lead Professional responsible for managing their journey is allocated by Children's services. Feedback will be given to the referring professional for cases that are not eligible for support from the Assurance Meeting. Unsuccessful referrals can be resubmitted where there is a change in circumstances or an escalation in risk.

Stage 2: Lead Professional

For the transitional processes, the Lead Professional can be the existing named lead from children's social care or, if the young person is new to services, a nominated professional from any relevant agency. The Lead Professional should be identified on a case-by-case basis and jointly agreed with the young person.

The named professional will be responsible for building a positive relationship with the young person, helping them to produce a pen picture of their situation and aspirations. The Lead Professional will act in their best interests throughout the Preparing for Adulthood process. It is expected that an identified lead from adults' services will collaborate with the nominated Children's Lead Professional when the young person turns 16.

Stage 3: Support Plan

The Support Plan should build upon and collate information relating to the young person's ideas and ambitions and also review the 4 national Preparing for Adulthood outcomes, namely:

1. Employment and Higher Education
2. Independent living

3. Participation in society
4. Being as healthy as possible in adult life.

Once it is in place, the Support Plan could be reviewed alongside the young person's EHC Plan, i.e. at each annual review of the EHC Plan. The main outcomes and associated provision will be updated in the EHC plan as part of the annual review paperwork. The annual review provides an opportunity to focus the ambitions and aspirations of the young person to achieve their desired 4 outcomes.

Starting with a one-page profile the Lead Professional works with the young person to understand their unique situation, drawing out their strengths and existing support networks, to produce a profile of what the young person wants to achieve as they approach adulthood.

This one-page profile forms the basis for the "My Life My Way" assessment which sets out the support the young person will need to live as independently as possible, and the timescales for putting this in place. The Plan is produced in collaboration with other relevant agencies to address every aspect of the young person's life including housing, education, employment, health care, relationships, mobility, and leisure and sets realistic and achievable goals to support the trajectory set by the young person in their Plan.

Whilst any agency can lead the planning process it is expected that in most cases, including young people with SEND, developing the Plan will be led by children's social care or a health care professional.

Implementing the Support Plan will be progressed through Case Review meetings held with the young person and their family or carer. Case Review meetings will be coordinated by the Lead Professional and include all relevant statutory and voluntary sector agencies.

The aim is to start the Preparing For Adulthood process as early as possible. However, there may be occasions where the young person is not known to children's services before they turn 18. In these cases, the Preparing for Adulthood Assurance Meeting will consider urgent referrals on a case-by-case basis to ensure a safe process that reflects the unique situation of each young person.

Stage 4: Review at Preparing for Adulthood Assurance Meeting

As well as screening referrals the 14-25 Assurance Meeting will monitor the progress of cases on the Preparing For Adulthood Tracker. Cases will be prioritised for review as follows:

| Age | Frequency of Preparing For Adulthood Progress Review |
|------------|---|
| 14+ | Complex risk and high-cost cases considered high risk will be reviewed every 6 months |
| 16+ | Complex cases considered high risk will be reviewed bi-monthly |
| 17+ | All cases will be reviewed monthly |
| 18+ | All EHCP cases will be reviewed at key points. Where eligibility for Adult social care provision is identified, reviews will take place in line with ASC procedures |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 19+ | Complex leaving care cases will be reviewed as per Adult Care or MARM processes. |
|-----|--|

Preparing For Adulthood Progress reviews will focus on ensuring the young person remains at the centre of the decision-making process. The Support Plan remains in place until the young person reaches the age of 18. The Plan is coproduced with the young person and ensures there are “no surprises” once they reach the age of 18. At this point the responsibility for reviewing and implementing the plan will be transferred to relevant adult and/or Aftercare Teams.

Stage 5: Transition to Adult Services

For young people known to the Preparing For Adulthood Assurance Meeting their 16th birthday will trigger the formal involvement of adult services. For Care Leavers this will happen slightly earlier at the age of 15.5 so relevant adult services can be involved in the Pathway Plan Assessment completed before the young person turns 16.

This coordination of support between the ages of 16 and 18 ensures the Care Act Assessment and any consideration of mental capacity happens before the young person is 17.5 years old; allowing time for relevant health, social care, Aftercare, early intervention, safeguarding or other support to be in place from the age of 18.

In the case of young carers, a Carers Assessment will be undertaken before they are 17.5 years old that considers their own care and support needs as well as the care and support needs of the person they care for.

5. Joint Commissioning and Personal Budgets

5.1 The Legislation

The Children and Families Act creates a duty on local authorities and health bodies to jointly commission services across education, health, and care. In addition, the Care Act includes general duties on local authorities to promote integration of adult services through joint commissioning arrangements. The Mental Health Act 1983 and Mental Capacity Act states the safeguarding responsibilities. The Children Leaving Care Act 2000 makes provision about children and young persons who are being, or have been, looked after by a local authority. Local drivers also include the Greater Manchester Leaving Care Policy and GM Leaving Care Finance Policy.

Drawing on these common principles the Preparing for Adulthood Assurance Meeting will oversee the smooth transition of support through Bury 's joint commissioning arrangements, using the pathway as an opportunity to involve a wider range of partners, such as housing and employment services.

The Assurance Meeting will oversee the timely assessment of young people eligible for a personal budget as part of an EHC plan and ensure relevant Care Act personal budgets or Continuing Health Care funding are in place from the age of 18. It will also share learning and insight with strategic commissioning across health and social care to inform future service demand and capacity in Bury and to flag up areas of unmet need as soon as possible.

Just as the legal status of a young person changes at 16 and 18 to recognize them as an adult, the Preparing For Adulthood process also changes the rights and the roles of parents working with services. This means that parents no longer have the legal right to make

decisions on behalf of their adult child and involving the parent or wider family members in discussions about needs and services requires consent from the young person. This change in role is also reflected in the different language used in the Children's Act and Care Act. The MDT will work with parents and carers to navigate these changes in a collaborative and supportive way.

6. Learning from Experience

6.1 Listening to the transitional experiences of Young People

The Preparing For Adulthood process in Bury is an evolving one and feedback will be gathered to understand the experiences of young people and families supported through the transition from children's to adults' services.

Routine feedback will be gathered from individuals as part of the Preparing for Adulthood Planning process and wider lived experience about preparing for adulthood will be captured.

7. Membership

Membership of the Preparing for Adulthood Assurance Meeting includes representatives from the following:

- Chair: Joint Chair – Adults and Childrens
- CWD Team Manager
- Looked After Children Team Manager
- Adult Principal Social Worker
- Children's commissioning Lead
- CAMHS
- Complex Safeguarding Team Manager - Childrens
- Relevant ASC Managers
- Strategic Commissioning Lead – Adults

Other members will be co-opted or requested to attend as needed. Core members must have an agreed deputy representative.

Appendix 1

Legislative Drivers: Transitional Safeguarding is supported by a comprehensive legislative framework and this SOP aims to adhere to the following:

| Relevant Legislation and Guidance | Links |
|---|--|
| The Children's Act 1989 | Children Act 1989 |
| Children and Families Act 2014 - Part 3 (SEND reforms) | Children and Families Act 2014 |
| SEND code of practice Jan 2015 | SEND code of practice |
| Care Planning Regulations 2021 to Appendix 1ii | The Children Act 1989 |
| Preparing for adulthood | Preparing for Adulthood NDTi |
| Building Independence through planning for transition: (SCIE & NICE guidance) | Building independence |
| The Leaving Care Act 2000 | Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 |
| Putting children first 2016 | Putting children first |
| Children and social work act 2017 | Children and Social Work Act 2017 |
| Transition from Children's to Adult Services for young people using health or social care services (NICE) | Transition from children's to adults' services |
| The Mental Health Act 1983 | Mental Health Act 1983 |
| The Mental Capacity Act 2005 | Mental Capacity Act 2005 |
| The Care Act 2014 – Part 1 | Care Act 2014 |
| The Health and Social Care Act 2012 | Health and Social Care Act 2012 |
| NHS 10-year plan | NHS Long Term Plan |
| Strengths based social work: Practice Framework | Strengths-based social work |
| The Human Rights Act | Human Rights Act 1998 |
| Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 | Legal Aid and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 |
| Keep on caring 2016: Supporting Young People from Care to Independence | Keep on caring |

| | |
|---|--|
| Children Leaving Care Act 2000 | Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (legislation.gov.uk) |
| Greater Manchester Leaving Care Policy and GM Leaving Care Finance Policy | https://www.proceduresonline.com/manchester/cs/chapters/p_leaving_care.html - https://www.proceduresonline.com/manchester/cs/pdfs/leaving_care_finance.pdf - |

Appendix 2

[Transition Referral Form](#)

