

Sunderland City Council

NEXT STEPS

STAYING PUT – LIVING TOGETHER AGREEMENT

Children's Services



Sunderland Children's Services

'Staying Put' – Living Together Agreement (Young People Aged 18 remaining in Staying Put)

This Living Together Agreement provides a framework that sets out the house rules and expectations of young people and their carers where young people remain living with their former foster carer/s after their 18th birthday and under a "Staying Put" arrangement.

The Living Together Agreement should be based on the information set out in the preceding Placement Plan and the agreements set out in any 'Delegated Authority' framework. Whilst the Living Together Agreement is a formal document setting out everyone's expectations, the majority of house rules and expectations will be the same as those in place prior to the young person's 18th birthday; so most of the requirements will remain broadly the same. However, reaching the age of 18 and adulthood is a good opportunity to revisit all of this and see what needs to change.

The Living Together Agreement is a flexible document and should be used to set out tasks, expectations and house rules which help the "Staying Put" arrangement run smoothly.

In order to ensure everyone knows what is expected of them this should be completed prior to a young person's 18th birthday (17^¾) and be signed and linked to the young person's Pathway Plan.

The Living Together Agreement contains three main areas:

- 1 responsibilities of everyone who signs the agreement;
- 2 house rules and expectations;
- 3 support to be provided to the young person.

The information in this document should cover all of the day to day arrangements that are needed to ensure that the positive aspects of fostering transfer to the "Staying Put" arrangement.

Please sign the Living Together Agreement after discussing and agreeing everyone's expectations.

Signed copies of this document should be given to each person to keep.

Name of Young Person:

Date:

Name of Staying Put Carer:

Address: *Postcode:*

Young Person's date of birth:.....

Next of Kin:.....

Primary Language:.....

Young person's mobile number:.....

Carers' mobile/telephone number(s):.....

Supervising Social Worker:.....

Contact details:.....

Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser:.....

Contact details:.....

Team Manager/Duty name and contact details:.....

Emergency Duty number (Out of Hours):.....

Missing Persons Police number:

GP details:.....

Any plans to change GP/Opticians/Dentist. If so, by when?.....

Who will assist young person?.....

1. Responsibilities of the Young Person:

- Engage in the support detailed in the 'House Rules and Support' Section (below) and the Pathway Plan in order to develop/improve independence skills.
- Behave in a reasonable way, showing respect for my carer(s), their property, neighbours other children/young people in the placement and the local community.
- Avoid behaving in a manner that is discriminatory, inflammatory (to others) or that would be deemed anti-social.
- Keep to any house rules set out in this Living Together Agreement.
- Ensure any house keys are kept safe and not duplicated.
- Be responsible for paying rent of £52.00 per week, either from earnings or by claiming housing benefit or a combination of earnings and housing benefit.
- Be responsible for paying a £17.00 per week food contribution.
- Let my social worker / leaving care personal adviser and carer(s) know in advance if I wish to end the Staying Put arrangement (giving at least 28 days notice).
- Maintain the room, furnishings and fittings in good order (and be responsible for replacing any items that are damaged and/or lost/stolen from my Setting up Home Allowance).
- Contact my social worker / leaving care personal adviser if I would like to change this Living Together Agreement or raise concerns.
- Inform my "Staying Put" carers and my social worker / leaving care personal adviser if I am arrested and/or cautioned/convicted of any offence.
- Add specific detail as required.

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2. Responsibilities of the Staying Put Carer(s):

- Provide a single fully furnished room (for rent of £52.00 per week) to be paid for by the young person via earnings and/or housing benefit.
- Provide heating, hot water, lighting, food, a house key, support and WiFi connexion.
- Inform the young person’s social worker / leaving care personal adviser and your supervising social worker and the housing benefit department if the young person ceases to reside at the accommodation in order to prevent an overpayment of benefits (or if there is a change of circumstances).
- Inform the young person’s social worker / leaving care personal adviser and your supervising social worker if you wish to end the Staying Put arrangement (giving at least 28 days’ notice). [The 28 days’ notice can be waived in exceptional situations where it would be deemed inappropriate or unsafe for the young person to remain for the whole 28 day notice period].
- Inform the young person’s social worker / leaving care personal adviser and your supervising social worker as soon as possible of any significant incidents and if the arrangement is likely to be disrupted or end prematurely.
- Respect confidentiality (within agreed parameters) at all times regarding personal details of the young person.
- Ensure the accommodation is of a good standard and allow annual household health and safety checks to be carried out and ensure adequate insurance is in place.
- Ensure relevant staff /agencies are made aware if the young person is absent or missing.
- Identify a “Staying Put” respite carer (to be approved & DBS checked) to stay in the house with the young person if the y/p is not able to stay overnight on their own.
- Ensure (in conjunction with Sunderland Children’s Services staff) an appropriate ‘Safe Care’/‘Safeguarding Plan’ is in place to manage any impact on other / younger children in the household, including visitors of the “Staying Put” young person.
- Provide support (as detailed below in the ‘House Rules and Support’ Section) to
- Please detail any specific agreements (for example, how are younger children to be safeguarded, visitors supervised?)

3. Responsibilities of the Supervising Social Worker / Young Person’s Social Worker / Leaving Care Personal Adviser

- Inform the Staying Put carer(s) of any likely risks and advise on risk management and safe care.
- Carry out a DBS check for the young person and other household members prior to them reaching the age of 18.
- Advise and assist the young person with paying rent and/or making a housing benefit claim.
- Advise and assist the young person with any other benefit claims and financial matters in order to maximize income.
- Advise and assist the young person with any applications for moving on to other accommodation.
- Advise and suggest house rules (in addition or variance to below).
- Visit at regular intervals until the end of this Staying Put arrangement to provide support.
- Review this arrangement as part of the young person’s Pathway Plan review.
- Review this Living Together Agreement and the ‘House Rules and Support’ Section (below) at least every six months (in-conjunction with the Pathway Plan).
- Please detail any specific arrangements, for example, will the young person require a DBS check, if so, who will complete this?
- Clarify any changes in the “Staying Put” carers Council Tax liability?

4. House Rules and Support:

The points and headings set out below are not intended to be a definitive list; they provide a broad set of topics which should be discussed, clarified and expectations set out, it will be important to add other topics relevant to the individual Staying Put household.

Each household will have different rules and expectations, some of these will depend on who else lives in the household, for example, where younger foster children are living in the house, it may not be appropriate to have a boyfriend or girlfriend stay over.

Suggested Topics for discussion:

Issues regarding privacy, for example, when it is acceptable to enter the young person's bedroom, which parts of the house are private, shared etc.

What are the arrangements for the young person having their own key?

What time is the young person expected to return in the evening, what are the arrangements if the young person is going to be late, or wants to stay out overnight etc?

What are the arrangements for ascertaining the young person's whereabouts if they do not return on time?

What are the arrangements for reporting the young person missing if they cannot be located, how long would you continue to try to contact them before reporting them missing?

What are the arrangements for the young person having visitors and/or for friends staying overnight and/or boyfriends/girlfriends staying overnight, what is deemed acceptable?

What are the arrangements if the young person smokes, what are the rules on consuming alcohol?

What are the rules and arrangements regarding the young person having a mobile phone contract, credit arrangements, catalogue cards etc?

Arrangements for helping with the development of life skills:

Cooking and food preparation

Laundry, ironing household chores

Budgeting and money management

Arrangements for dealing with administrative tasks and officialdom:

Renewing housing benefit claims

Returning official forms

Arrangements for helping with any health needs:

Setting up and attending appointments

Any specific health needs

Arrangements for education, training or employment activities:

Support with homework/assignments

Attending school, college or university open days etc.

Arrangements for support with maintaining contact with family and friends:

Support with maintaining contact with family and extended family members

Support in maintaining appropriate friendships

Arrangements for hobbies, leisure interests and sports activities:

Support with maintaining activities

Support with identifying and trying new activities

What are the appropriate behaviour codes and the safer caring arrangements:

Is the young person registered on a local authority housing list?

What is the proposed move-on plan from Staying Put?

What are the arrangements for ending Staying Put?

Arrangements for holidays and when the "Staying Put" carer will be away:

Other issues to be added:

6. Living Together Agreement Signatures:

Signed:(Young Person) Date:

Signed:(Staying Put Carer) Date:

Signed:(Social Worker/Personal Adviser) Date:

Signed:(Supervising Social Worker) Date: