

**Welcome** to the *Keynotes* email update. It is designed to bring you news of consultation documents, conferences, publications, and other developments in between the full editions of *Keynotes*, which appear every four months.

This issue features updates on workforce reform and development, funding and benefit changes and an article on the Social mobility white paper, which announced a series of new initiatives to support care leavers into employment.

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## News

### Children's views on new care regulations

*Future rules* reports what children and young people in care want the government to include in the regulations and guidance that will accompany the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

[www.rights4me.org/reportView.cfm?id=313](http://www.rights4me.org/reportView.cfm?id=313)



### Workforce reform and development

#### Social work practice pilots

Six local authorities – Blackburn with Darwen, Hillingdon, Kent, Liverpool, Sandwell and Staffordshire – will run the new social work practice pilots. The pilots will test models of small groups of social workers undertaking work with children in care commissioned by, but independent of, local authorities.

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/childrenincare/swppilots/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/childrenincare/swppilots/)



#### Social work taskforce

The membership of the Social Work Taskforce, set up to review frontline social work practice, has been announced. They will consider reforms to social work training, recruitment and management and will look at the effectiveness of the Integrated Children's System.

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2009\\_0017](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0017)



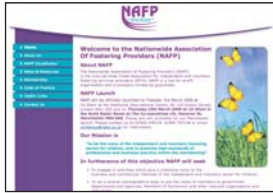
department for  
**children, schools and families**



## New national body representing independent reviewing officers (IRO)

The National Association of Independent Reviewing Officers will be open to all IROs in England who review the cases of looked-after children. The role of the IRO has been strengthened in new legislation, giving them responsibility for monitoring the performance of the local authority.

[www.cypnow.co.uk/news/ByDiscipline/Social-Care/886096/First-meeting-independent-reviewing-officers-body/](http://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/ByDiscipline/Social-Care/886096/First-meeting-independent-reviewing-officers-body/)



## National Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) launch

A trade association representing independent and voluntary fostering providers will be launched in March. NAFP aims to support independent fostering providers to share best practice and keep abreast of policy developments.

[www.nafp.co.uk](http://www.nafp.co.uk)



## Standards and inspections

### New system for children's services inspections

Ofsted has published the framework for inspecting children's services, as part of the new framework for assessing local authority performance, Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), which starts in April 2009. 'Preparation for leaving care and adult life' is one of the areas that any inspections will consider.



[www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Comprehensive-Area-Assessment-assessing-children-s-services-and-adult-learning](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Comprehensive-Area-Assessment-assessing-children-s-services-and-adult-learning)

### Young runaways indicator

An indicator relating to young runaways will be included in the National Indicator Set from April 2009. It will measure local areas performance in responding to the needs of young runaways, and was introduced to raise awareness of the needs of runaways and encourage service provision for them.

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/youngerunaways/indicator/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/youngerunaways/indicator/)



## Funding and benefit changes

### Money for mums to be

From April 2009 expecting mothers, who are at least 25 weeks pregnant, will be able to claim a £190 health in pregnancy grant.

[www.campaigns.direct.gov.uk/money4mum2be/](http://www.campaigns.direct.gov.uk/money4mum2be/)



### Second chance learning support extended

From April 2009 care leavers in full time, non-advanced, education (A level/NVQ Level 3 standard or below) will be able to claim income support and housing benefit until their 21st birthday, so long as they meet the normal rules for getting those benefits (savings, residence in UK etc). This route to income support currently only applies until their 20th birthday. To qualify they must have started the course before turning 19. NCAS will circulate further information once further details are published.



### Care to learn grant eligibility criteria

Care to learn is open to young parents under 20 who want to study. Care to Learn could pay up to £160 per child per week (£175 in London) towards childcare and travel costs while they are learning. The residency criteria excludes asylum seekers from getting this grant, but the LSC has announced that asylum seeking care leavers will remain eligible in the 2009/10 academic year.

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/MoneyToLearn/Caretolearn](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/MoneyToLearn/Caretolearn)



## More money for placing children in boarding schools

More funding will be made available for local authorities to place young people at risk in boarding schools. An evaluation of the *Boarding Pathfinder for Vulnerable Children*, launched in November 2006, found that this option can be a very effective for some children.

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2009\\_0022](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0022)



## Supporting People update

The Supporting People (SP) grant, which funds housing related support, will be unringfenced from April 2009. From 2010/11 the grant will be paid to local authorities as part of the Area Based Grant.

[www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1075788](http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1075788)



## Consultations

*Official consultations are an opportunity for the public to feed back to government around proposed changes in policy and legislation. Here is a list of currently open consultations.*



### Consultation on the Draft Regulations and Statutory Guidance on Designated Teachers for Looked After Children

Closing date: 20 May

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1608&external=no&menu=1](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1608&external=no&menu=1)



### Consultation on the Revised Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Children Missing from Home or Care

Closing date: 8 April

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1597&external=no&menu=1](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1597&external=no&menu=1)



### Questionnaire: New backdating rules for housing benefit and council tax benefit

Closing date: 31 July

[www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2009/hb-ctb-backdating-questionnaire.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2009/hb-ctb-backdating-questionnaire.asp)



### Consultation on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England

Closing date: 29 May

[www.dius.gov.uk/consultations.aspx](http://www.dius.gov.uk/consultations.aspx)

Department for  
Innovation,  
Universities &  
Skills



### Consultation on the Young People and Alcohol Guidance

Closing date: 23 April

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1579&external=no&menu=1](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1579&external=no&menu=1)



## Featured article

# New opportunities: Fair chances for the future

**The government launched the social mobility white paper in January this year. Here we summarise some of the main proposals and the article concludes by focusing on a specific initiative targeted at care leavers.**

Evidence has suggested that social mobility did not increase in the 1980's or early 1990's, but there are signs that this is beginning to change and the white paper sets out proposals to address this issue. The government states, that if the right foundations are laid now, the country will be richer as well as having a fairer society.

### Early years

There is evidence to suggest that countries with the highest rates of social mobility provide comprehensive high quality pre-school care and education. Free early learning and childcare places are already available for all three and four year olds. The long term ambition is to make a free early learning and childcare place available to all two year olds and to continue to raise the quality of early learning and childcare through improved training and qualifications for people who work with children, thus ensuring children arrive at primary school ready to learn.

### Schools

The government aims to raise standards in schools and teaching by putting more emphasis on ensuring the profession appeals to high-flying graduates.

### Young adults

The goal is that every young person will have a clear path to their future. The government will build on recent reforms to ensure every 16 and 17 year old will be guaranteed a place at sixth form, college or in training. The government is also preparing to legislate so that every suitably qualified young person will have the right to an apprenticeship. There will be additional support for some students; such as mentoring to those from lower income families and targeting of young people from poorer background with high potential.



**Jason and Kemar, who have worked with NCAS along with Sue Baxter, accommodation manager attend the launch of the social mobility white paper**

*“I think apprenticeships are great for young people as it empowers them to go on and gain great knowledge and skills that will lead to prosperity”. Jason*

*“I think apprenticeships are a good chance for young people in care because it gives them a chance to do something they love or enjoy, and it trains them in the working environment understanding how hard it is to become what you want to be in life”. Kemar*



## Work

The government wants to ensure that everyone, including those on moderate and middle incomes as well as the wealthiest, has a fair chance to access careers in high-status professions. To aid people throughout the economic downturn, the government is installing New Professional and Career Development Loans, offering the chance of interest free loans.



## Families and communities

The government is determined to eradicate child poverty by 2020 by formally backing this target with legislation. For children whose life chances are seriously undermined by the chaotic and unstable families into which they are born, the government plans to make greater use of targeted action through the expansion of Family Intervention Projects, expanding the number of families benefiting from 2,600 to 20,000 by 2011.



A new Inspiring Communities campaign is to be established, bringing together local businesses, schools, agencies, parents and the wider neighbourhood to find innovative ways to raise the aspirations of young people. Support is being provided to the independent charity V with £117 million of funding to help provide thousands of new volunteering opportunities across the country.



## Care leavers

Specific government proposals will help care leavers overcome barriers to work through extended periods of work experience, training and mentoring. These include:

- The National Care Advisory Service, supported by the young people's charity Catch22, will be funded for the next two years to work with nine local authorities next year, and half of all local authorities in 2010–11, to develop and test models of support into employment with a view to a phased national roll out.
- The National Apprenticeship Service will work with NCAS to ensure that from September 2009 all suitably qualified care leavers will be offered an Apprenticeship place and the government intends to make this a legal entitlement from 2013.
- This new programme will involve the creation of a national network of employers from the private, public and third sectors who will sign up to a commitment to develop employment support initiatives in their organisations for young people leaving care. Employers will offer opportunities for work experience and mentoring support, matched to the specific needs of the young person and including a package of training.
- Having a stable place to live is also vital to enabling care leavers' successful transition to adulthood such as finding work or training. Over the next two years NCAS, government offices and specialist youth homelessness advisors will work with local authorities as part of government's drive to improve access to suitable accommodation for care leavers.



The NCAS employability project will start in April 2009 and we will keep you up to date with what is happening through Keynotes and our website [www.leavingcare.org](http://www.leavingcare.org)

More information on the white paper can be found here:

[www.hmg.gov.uk/media/9102/NewOpportunities.pdf](http://www.hmg.gov.uk/media/9102/NewOpportunities.pdf)

<http://www.hmg.gov.uk/newopportunities.aspx>



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# Upcoming events

## Children on the edge of care seminar – Government Office South West

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Tuesday 2 April

This seminar focuses on understanding the issues that lead to children being taken into care and how best to support children and families.

<http://www.conferencesearch.co.uk/book/index.asp?id=GOSW2>

## Home from home: developments in supported lodgings

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Tuesday 28 April

This is an opportunity for providers and hosts/carers who are involved with supported lodgings to come together and discuss developments in the area.

[http://www.fostering.net/activities/england/documents/supported\\_lodgings\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.fostering.net/activities/england/documents/supported_lodgings_flyer.pdf)



## Building on Best Practice: Partnership Working through the Quality Mark for Care Leavers

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Tuesday 12 May

This is a seminar for Higher Education Providers and Local Authority Leaving and After Care Teams.

[www.leavingcare.org/news/117/](http://www.leavingcare.org/news/117/)

## Transition to adulthood seminar – Government Office South West

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Friday 15 May

This seminar focuses on the role of partner agencies in preparing young people to become achieving adults when they leave care.

[www.conferencesearch.co.uk/book/index.asp?id=GOSW2](http://www.conferencesearch.co.uk/book/index.asp?id=GOSW2)

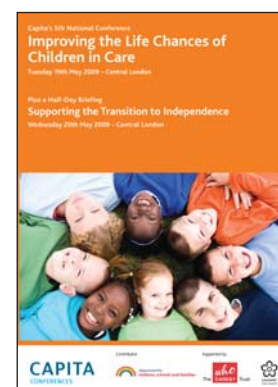
## Improving the Life Chances of Children in Care Conference – Capita

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Tuesday 19 May

This conference brings together practitioners and experts to discuss new initiatives and share best practice on improving the outcomes of children and young people in care.

[www.capitaconferences.co.uk/OurConferences/LocalGovernment/Children+in+Care.htm](http://www.capitaconferences.co.uk/OurConferences/LocalGovernment/Children+in+Care.htm)



## Supporting the transition to Independence – Capita

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Wednesday 20 May

This half-day briefing examines how to deliver effective support services to pre-care leavers.

[www.capitaconferences.co.uk/OurConferences/LocalGovernment/Supporting+the+Transition+to+Independence.htm](http://www.capitaconferences.co.uk/OurConferences/LocalGovernment/Supporting+the+Transition+to+Independence.htm)

# Recent publications

## People with passion ... getting the right people around the table

A draft report by the National Children's Bureau for Arts Council England on how to embed creativity in the lives of looked after children and young people.

[www.artscouncil.org.uk/downloads/people\\_with\\_passion.doc](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/downloads/people_with_passion.doc)



## 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy

The strategy sets out the government's vision for everyone working with children and young people. The strategy includes investment to improve social work training, induction, practice and recruitment; a new leadership/management programme for Directors of Children's Services; and the establishment of a Social Work Taskforce to support reforms.

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/childrenandyoungpeoplesworkforce](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/childrenandyoungpeoplesworkforce)

## The welfare reform white paper

*Raising expectations and increasing support* outlines how the government intends to change the welfare system to provide more support to get people into employment, coupled with higher expectations of them to seek employment. The Welfare Reform Bill is currently going through parliament to create the legal framework to implement this.

[www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/raisingexpectations](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/raisingexpectations)



## Updated guidance on Children and young people's plans

The DCSF has published an updated version of its non-statutory guidance on children and young people's plans.

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/planningandcommissioning/cypp](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/planningandcommissioning/cypp)

## Promoting Resilience: A resource guide on working with children in the care system

This new edition of *Promoting Resilience* includes ideas and suggestions for promoting resilience in day-to-day work.

[www.baaf.org.uk/res/pubs/books/book\\_promres.shtml](http://www.baaf.org.uk/res/pubs/books/book_promres.shtml)



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# Contact us

All past issues of Keynotes are available on our website. For further news, information and resources go to our website or get in touch.

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*NCAS is supported by Catch22, Registered charity number 1124127.*

Catch22, the charity that helps young people out.  
Before we were Catch22 we were Rainer and Crime Concern,  
two national charities which merged in 2008.

