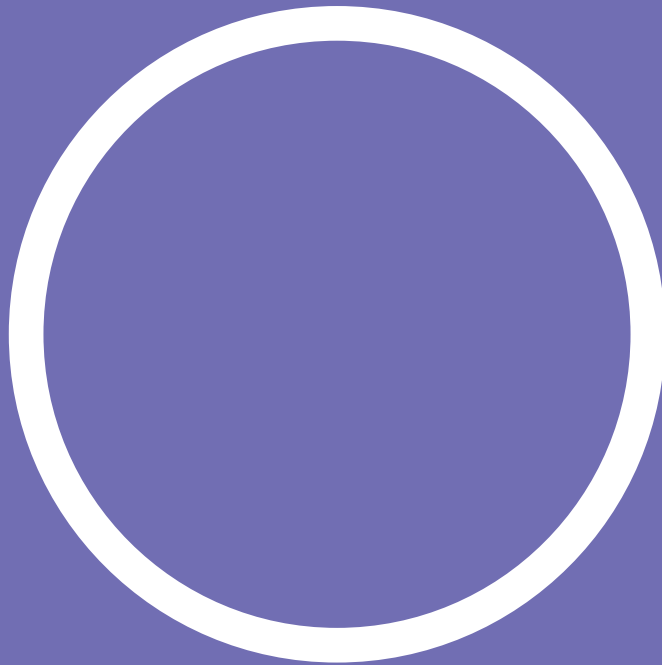


Yorkshire and Humber Regional Leaving Care ETE Workgroup

Good Practice Guide

Education, Training and Employment

Opportunities for Young People Leaving Care



Y&H•RLCF

Yorkshire & Humber
Regional Leaving Care Forum

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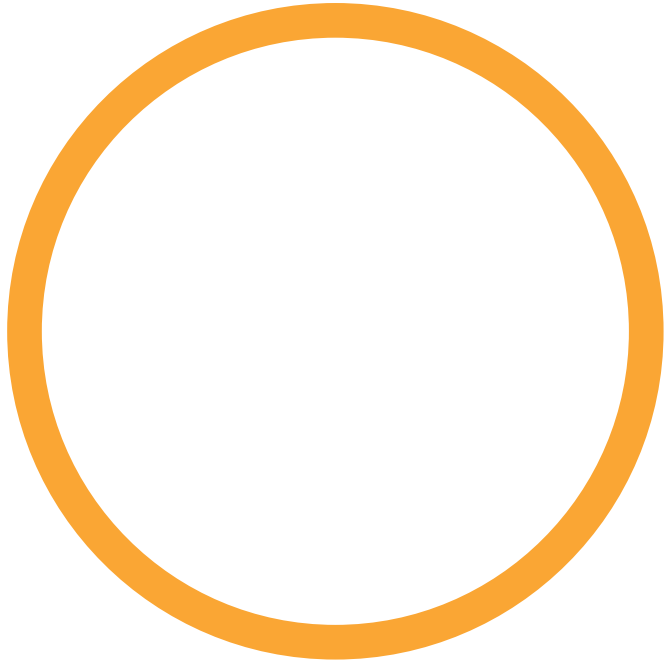
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Introduction

This practice guide has been developed by the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Leaving Care Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Workgroup and compiled by Belinda Cashman, Regional Development Coordinator, Yorkshire & Humber, National Care Advisory Service.

The Yorkshire and Humber Regional Leaving Care ETE Workgroup has been meeting for the past five years. Membership of the group includes personal advisors, Connexions/Careers staff, and other partners such as Aim Higher representatives, Learning and Skills Council regional development workers and named workers within Colleges of Higher Education from the 15 local authorities which make up Yorkshire & Humber.

Over the past few years the group has looked at a range of ETE provisions for young people leaving care and shared good practice examples. While we have aspirations that all young people leaving care have access to a good standard of education, we acknowledge that not all of them have had access to education which meets their needs. Some young people may have experienced gaps in education, changed schools frequently, or had difficulties coping with the structures within the education system or the work force. A number of young people leaving care also have low self esteem, which in turn has an impact on their abilities to engage well with traditional education pathways or in the work force.

This guide focuses on a spectrum of innovative practice with young people leaving care which is having a positive effect on the young people involved across the Yorkshire & Humber region. Further information about the schemes mentioned in this guide can be found at www.leavingcare.org, or by contacting the agency directly. Contact details can be found at the back of the guide.

Background to the Guide

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 was implemented to improve outcomes for young people leaving care. Educational outcomes for young people leaving care are regularly quoted in the media, particularly low levels of GCSE attainment. The Act put in place an holistic framework to promote positive outcomes for young people through the Pathway Planning process.

There are a number of factors which have influenced the production of this guide, such as the Every Child Matters agenda, which highlights the outcomes of children and young people in care and leaving care.

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 received royal assent in November 2008 and will be introduced during 2009. The Act will provide a new framework for working with children and young people who are looked after and leaving care and will incorporate the revision of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 regulations and guidance. The Act will also see service provision extend to young people up to 25 years of age where they request assistance with education and training.

The Yorkshire & Humber Leaving Care Forum has also been involved in the work currently being undertaken by the Cabinet Office on the PSA 16, particularly the work on the roles of personal advisors and issues around ETE and accommodation outcomes.

Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Pledges also have a role to play to support and facilitate care leavers into appropriate Education, Training and Employment opportunities which are meaningful and lead to employment.

In addition, the Government launched the Social Mobility White Paper in January 2009 which looks at education and skills for the most vulnerable in the community, children and young people.

Overall, the provision of a range of ETE activities for young people leaving care helps to promote self esteem and resilience and therefore should be encouraged.

Team Approaches

A mapping exercise to determine the number of personal advisors across the region was undertaken by Yorkshire and Humber Leaving Care Personal Advisor Forum in December 2008. The exercise also determined whether there were any specialist posts within Leaving Care Teams. The findings are contained in a report which was distributed to managers and leaving care practitioners across Yorkshire and Humber.

All Leaving Care Teams have at least one ETE personal advisor or a connexions personal advisor attached to the team, to engage care leavers in Education, Training or Employment. In some areas, this remit has grown and lead to the establishment of specific teams within the leaving care service focusing on ETE provision and outcomes.

This section outlines those services where ETE specific teams or provisions have had good outcomes for care leavers.

Bradford LEAP Team

The LEAP Team within the Leaving Care Service in Bradford is focused on improving Education, Training and Employment provision and outcomes for young people leaving care. The team has five staff and the support of a Team Manager. There is an employability link worker, a Connexions personal advisor, two personal advisors who deliver training programmes and a personal advisor who has links with the local universities and provides support to care leavers in Higher Education. The LEAP team coordinates and runs its own E2E provision and a number of initiatives being undertaken by the team can be found throughout the guide.

Wakefield Employability Project

Barnardo's Signpost in Wakefield has an Employability Development worker, a Employability Support Worker and a Connexions Personal Advisor. They run a weekly job club for young people leaving care, work experience opportunities across the Wakefield district and provide advice and assistance about employment, training and education.

Involvement of Connexions Staff

Leeds, Kirklees, Calderdale, Bradford and a number of other local authorities within the region have Connexions staff based within the Leaving Care Team offices or spend a portion of their time within the service each week. This has been advantageous for these areas.

Connexions staff have been able to access training and employment opportunities for care leavers and pass these to colleagues within Leaving Care very quickly, meaning that the reaction times to vacancies and opportunities is much quicker.

Training Initiatives and Accredited Programmes

All areas across Yorkshire and Humber have access to E2E programmes, and young people leaving care are referred to this scheme. However provision ends when young people reach 19 years of age and there have been some concerns that the course is linked with progression. Some young people find it difficult to meet the targets set by the programme.

As a result, a number of local authorities are developing their own education, training and employment services. These programmes were established to address a number of issues including:

- Low self esteem
- Lack of motivation
- Significant gaps in education in the past
- Unable to sustain E2E
- May be over 19 years of age and unable to attend E2E
- Other issues which impact upon learning

This section of the guide focuses on good practice models from Calderdale, Kirklees, Bradford and Barnsley. ETE programs within these local authority areas have been well received by young people.

Calderdale Good Practice Example

Calderdale have started a NEET 2 Eat scheme which is a weekly morning workshop where young people not engaged in Education, Training and Employment get careers information, advice and guidance, undertake job searches, get assistance with job applications and CV preparation and assistance with interview skills. Young people's travel expenses are reimbursed and a hot meal is also provided.

Wakefield Barnardo's Signpost Project

Wakefield's Signpost Leaving Care Service offer a weekly employability drop service for young care leavers to assist them with their search for employment, education and training. The young people have access to local vacancies, newspapers and receive support to write CV's and apply for jobs, college courses and training opportunities. The Employability Team at Signpost consists of an Employability Support Worker, Employability Development Worker and a Connexions Personal Adviser.

Kirklees Good Practice Example

Kirklees have a number of groups focused on the needs of young people leaving care.

An example of good practice is the Employability Course. This is a ten week course, including four weeks work experience, which is accredited through the Open College Network.

The aim of the course is to prepare young people for employment by developing their self confidence and team skills. The course work component focuses on how to apply for jobs, how to perform in interviews and employee responsibility. This is followed by a four week work experience placement.

The young people involved receive a certificate of completion, a qualification from the Open College Network and a Health and Safety at Work Certificate. Incentives are given to young people for attending the course, which are paid based on targets:

- £25 for full attendance
- £25 for attending the full work experience placement
- £25 for receiving a positive work experience report
- £25 for receiving the Open College Network qualification.

The majority of young people involved in the project have moved on to find work or are engaged in some form of ETE. Helen Hodgkins, a Connexions Worker attached to the Leaving Care Team at Dryfield House, Kirklees, is responsible for coordinating and recruiting young people to the programme. Young people wanting to participate put together a short application and have an interview with Helen.

Kirklees also run a ten week independent living skills programme with Edgerton Lodge over one half day per week. This course aims to equip young people with skills for living independently. The course is accredited through the Open College Network. The Leaving Care Team pay an incentive to young people attending, and a bonus for completing the programme and gaining the qualification.

Kirklees: The Hub Training Package

The Hub Toolkit – Preparing Care Leavers For Employment was written in 2007 by Kirklees Council to assist young people leaving care to improve their career prospects. The project was funded through the European Social Fund, the Learning Skills Council and Yorkshire Forward.

The Hub was developed to provide a range of work experience opportunities that reflect young people's individual interests, abilities and aspirations. Young people develop their skills, increase their confidence and motivation, which can assist them in realising their full potential.

The Hub is an eight week programme which focuses on communication skills, learning styles, team work, the strengths of participants, identifying career choices, key skills assessment, compiling CVs and personal profiles, and interview preparation. During the eight week programme, young people work towards achieving a recognised OCR qualification at Level 2, which is equivalent to a GCSE grade C.

In addition to face to face sessions, participants also undertake work placements with local employers. Placements are available in the following areas:

- Environmental Waste Management
- Youth Offending Team
- Day centres for Disability
- Hairdressing
- Building trades
- Young People's Services.

The placements can vary from unpaid work experience for a two week work block, one or two days a week for a number of weeks or two, two-week blocks of work experience. If the work placement is successful it can lead to paid traineeships with support to achieve a relevant NVQ qualification.

The Hub can run for a six-month period with individual young people, and regular support is provided by their personal advisor, the careers advisor linked to the Leaving Care Team and the employability programme coordinator.

A copy of The Hub Toolkit can be found at www.leavingcare.org under the Practice Database.

Bradford LEAP Team Groups

Waterboys

Waterboys is an innovative 12-week programme which is available for any young person involved with the Bradford Leaving Care Team. Young people get involved in conservation on the canal and develop social skills and knowledge of crewmanship. Waterboys focuses on raising self esteem and motivation through team building and the development of practical skills.

At the time of writing, the last 12-week programme had nine young people referred, with seven completing the course. These young people have all moved onto some further form of education, training or employment, including voluntary work, E2E programmes, employment or college.

The Leaving Care Team is looking to extend Waterboys to include an allotment project which will involve landscaping, conservation and gardening.

Smooth It Out

Smooth It Out assists young people leaving care make the transition to work. The group focuses on getting to know workers within the teams, development of self esteem, social skills and team building.

The programme runs for 12 weeks, with a residential stay at Ullswater in the Lakes District at the end of the course. Three young people who completed the programme are now Leaders, and assist with the residential stay component.

The group is accredited with the Open College Network and young people receive a qualification upon completion.

Introduction to E2E

In a joint initiative with the local Youth Service, the LEAP service runs an Introduction to E2E course for hard to reach young people.

The course is run over 20 weeks and focuses on engaging with young people and working on motivation, self esteem and resilience.

Young people receive an incentive of up to £30 per week for attending the programme.

Pre-Tenancy Scheme

The Pre-Tenancy Scheme is a joint venture between the Leaving Care Team and Foundation Housing in Bradford.

The course runs for 12 weeks and young people spend three days per week in a 'taster flat' provided by Foundation Housing. They also have basic skills classes in Maths and English.

The group focuses on the practicalities and the emotional impact involved in the transition from leaving care.

All young people enrolled on the course have the opportunity to stay for a few days in the taster flat (with support) to experience what it would be like to live independently.

At the end of the course young people receive a qualification through the Open College Network.

An outline of the Pre-Tenancy Scheme can be found at www.leavingcare.org (in the Practice Database).

Young People's Support Service Hull: Warehouse Project

During the past year, the Young People's Support Service in Hull has been developing a Warehouse Project for young people. The project will establish a training centre to provide a range of courses including GCSEs and qualifications from Level 1 through to Level 3. Opportunities to develop skills in business, warehousing and enterprise will be offered.

At the time of writing the project has located a premise for the centre and established strong links within the local authority and a range of national companies.

Barnsley Group Work Model

Action For Children, Barnsley Leaving Care Team devised a range of groups for care leavers linked with the Pathway Planning process. Two personal advisors facilitate the groups and training providers deliver education components.

These groups provide support and opportunities for care leavers. The groups assist in the development of life skills, resilience, self esteem, confidence, establishment of routines, taking responsibility and team

building skills. There are no financial incentives for young people attending the groups, as the rewards are the skills developed within each young person.

The programmes are run in collaboration with other services, ensuring that links are established for the young person when they are no longer involved with the service. Although the model was only implemented in September 2008, the feedback from young people so far has been very positive. The model will be evaluated in 2009 and the team will look at exploring accreditation for the group work modules.

The groups are:

Financial Futures Group:

This group focuses on the value of budgeting, the pros and cons of borrowing from different lenders, the meaning of financial jargon, cutting fuel costs and eating healthily on a budget. There is a practical element, with young people opening bank accounts and actively budgeting. The group is based upon the Financial Futures programme, which is a joint initiative between Barclays Bank and Action for Children.

DIY and Tenancy Support Group

This group is piloting the Key to the Door two-day course, a joint initiative between Action for Children and Halifax. The course focuses on the development of practical skills and informs young people about the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords. The course has been very successful and local authority impact officers are now also involved in the facilitation of the groups.

Path Finder Group

Pathfinder is a web based assessment tool which covers three elements:

- Young people undertake a self assessment, which then provides information on a range of issues, solutions and services available to them
- It assists young people to make decisions on key issues in their life
- It assists young people to decide on the main priorities for them over the coming months.

The Pathfinder tool is used individually but is linked with all the Barnsley Groups and enables young people to discuss their needs and issues with their personal advisor or within the group work settings.

Ideally all young people who are looking at moving into independence will have completed Financial Futures, Key to the Door and the Path Finder Tool.

As a consequence of the Groups, the Barnsley Leaving Care Team are now able to demonstrate to Local Authority Housing that young people have the necessary skills to move into independence successfully.

Action For Children, Backup Barnsley Leaving Care Team have also devised a number of other groups for young people including:

Ministry of Food/ Pass it On Cookery

Based on the popular Jamie Oliver series "Pass it On", this group assists young people to make healthy food choices and to budget, prepare, cook and enjoy a range of meals.

Due to the success of the initial group, there is now a Pass it On Asian Style, which meets once a week and involves Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). The group looks at sourcing culturally appropriate food and cooking meals from a variety of cultures. The group has encouraged integration of UASC within the community as the programme is run in conjunction with the local Connexions Service.

Celebrating Success

This group is for young people to meet and talk about their successes in a supportive environment which bolsters self esteem and promotes resilience.

Treasure Seekers

This project runs throughout the summer months and involves group work with hard to reach young people who may not be willing to engage with other programmes offered.

Young people attending this group crew on a boat. They learn about being a responsible crew member, health and safety, and packing up after a trip. They also get the opportunity to go fishing. The trip encourages social skills and team work, and aims to promote self esteem and confidence. Young people thoroughly enjoy the experience.

The Pledge for Children in Care

This group were heavily involved in the development of the Children in Care Pledge for Barnsley. The group outlined concerns for young people

including the right to accommodation, the right to move when young people are ready (beyond 18 if necessary) and provision of leisure activities.

The project also involved young people participating in an arts project which resulted in a graffiti wall being designed within the Leaving Care building.

Young Women's Health Programme

This programme was devised locally and is facilitated by the designated looked after children nurse and the Youth Service. The programme focuses on physical, sexual and emotional wellbeing for young women and involves information sharing on sexual health, promoting self esteem and self care. At the end of the course, the young women are treated to a pamper session to bolster self esteem and confidence.

Disability Inclusion

This group was established specifically to meet the needs of disabled care leavers after young people identified a need. The group meets twice a year and go on organised activities. Last year the group attended Bendrigg Lodge in Cumbria.

Friday Food Club

This group meets on a weekly basis and encompasses a drop in facility to encourage participation, the development of social skills and engagement. Young people are able to use the facilities to cook a two course meal which can then be enjoyed by other young people who drop in or staff at the centre. Any one can attend; however the group is targeted at young people interested in cooking or catering.

Motor Mouth

This group is run jointly with community partners and focuses on young people with an interest in cars and mechanics. Initially two groups were run, one for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and one for other young people. The success of the program means it is now fully integrated. Young people attend the course twice a week and work towards an accredited qualification through the Open College Network.

Sports Group

Action for Children, Backup, Barnsley Leaving Care Team previously facilitated sporting activities specifically for young people involved with the project. During the last year, this group has become fully integrated with local youth and leisure services. The group aims to develop self esteem and

ensure that young people are fully integrated into the community when their involvement with the leaving care team ends.

The other positive of the group is that young people have a range of sporting activities available to them through the integrated approach, rather than just a particular focus on a sport such as football.

Welcome to Back Up

During 2010, Action for Children, Back Up will be devising and running a programme for young people between 15½ and 16 years of age who will be referred or have recently been referred to the project. This will allow staff, young people and their carers to meet informally to talk about the team, how they fit within the looked after children system and what services they provide.

Work Experience Initiatives

As Corporate Parents, local authorities should provide opportunities for young people leaving care within the Authority and wider community.

A number of local authorities across the region run work experience programmes. While some schemes have placements within Social Care streams, others take a wider approach, looking at other departments within the organisation or further afield with local businesses.

It is hoped these schemes will continue to grow as both employers and the young people report favourably on them.

The following schemes have been successful:

Calderdale

Calderdale's work experience project has been running for about three years. The programme is aimed at care leavers at university or college who are unemployed and not working during the summer holiday period.

The programme is advertised in Calderdale's Young Person's Newsletter, and young people are approached by their personal advisor or the Connexions worker. Once young people voice an interest in participating they go through an interview process.

Young people are provided with a number of opportunities including working at music festivals, within play schemes, voluntary work and participation activities.

Young People are required to complete time sheets which also outline the work undertaken and provide feedback on the young person's performance.

The following incentives are available on the scheme:

- Up to 4 hours per week: £10
- 4-12 hours per week: £20 (plus £10 tenancy money)
- 12 + hours a week: £30 (plus £10 tenancy money)

A pack outlining the programme, time sheets and entitlements can be found at www.leavingcare.org.

North East Lincolnshire

Louise Doughty at the North East Lincolnshire Leaving Care Team has devised the Prospects scheme, which runs over a 12 week period. The first week looks at induction and preparation for employment, focusing on work place expectations, how to behave in the work environment and team working.

Young people are then given a work experience placement over four days a week for 11 weeks. All the work placements are within the local authority and participants are expected to complete a work book about their learning while on placement.

The young person and their work placement provider is supported by Louise through visits, meetings and telephone calls. Young people participating in the Prospects scheme receive £50 per week and a bus pass to travel to and from their placement.

Louise also coordinates an Employability Scheme for Looked After Children in Year 11. The scheme is delivered during half term breaks and involves young people undertaking one week's work experience. Young people are paid £50 and also complete a work book about their learning.

Wakefield Scheme

Signpost is also working closely with Wakefield Council and Wakefield District Housing to offer young care leavers work experience opportunities

across a range of occupation areas including administration and construction. Also through the from Care 2 Work initiative Signpost is in the process of developing work placements with ASDA. Royal Mail has also signed up to offer a variety of placements at their Normanton Bulk Handling Centre. Signpost hopes to further develop these placements and encourage other local and national employers to sign up.

The Service also has close links with statutory and voluntary organizations in the local area such as Ground Work, Chrysalis and Activity Agreement.

East Riding

As a part of a range of initiatives to increase education, training and employment opportunities within the local authority, a work experience scheme is run across the East Riding of Yorkshire Council for looked after young people and care leavers.

Opportunities are provided across a wide range of Directorates for young people to undertake a one or two week work placement – and these arrangements are supported via the Pathway team and Organisational Development team who have worked closely to develop and support the scheme.

Placements are linked in to apprenticeship opportunities within the Council, to provide young people with increased confidence and employability skills to apply for posts as they arise. Incentive payments at EMA rates are made for these placements.

Apprenticeships/Traineeships

Nationally

In January 2009, the Government announced that the National Care Advisory Service would receive funding to launch a pilot Employability Scheme across England and Northern Ireland.

Three employability managers will be appointed with the aim of establishing an Employability Scheme. The scheme will include work experience, mentoring, apprenticeships and traineeships across a range of fields.

Due to the interest shown in the project, the employability managers will undertake mapping exercises and devise work plans with all local authorities in the region to increase opportunities for young people to engage in education, training and employment. A good practice model

will be developed and shared throughout the region and on the website www.leavingcare.org.

Regionally

Yorkshire & Humberside Young Person's Participation Group

In September 2008, GOYH provided three year funding for the employment of a Regional Young Person's Participation Coordinator. The primary role of the coordinator is to facilitate the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Young Person's Participation Group. The scheme is based on a similar model currently running in the West Midlands. The participation group will receive initial support from the National Care Advisory Service. After the three year period it is hoped that the group will be fully functioning, with two regional young person's participation coordinators in post.

It's also envisaged that young people from the 15 local authorities in Yorkshire and Humberside who attend the Forum will be employed by their local authorities as trainees or apprentices. It's hoped this will formalise young people's involvement locally with the Participation Agenda, with local participation groups feeding into the local Children in Care Councils and then feeding back into the Agenda.

NCAS will be looking at recognition for the work of young people through the introduction of Asdan qualifications.

Within Local Authorities

A number of local authorities have set up traineeship or apprenticeship schemes for care leavers.

York

In 2008, City of York Council established the Starting Blocks Programme with York Cares, which is an employability scheme for care leavers who are not in education, employment or training. The programme was devised to create meaningful opportunities for young people and local businesses by providing a range of traineeships and apprenticeships for young people.

One traineeship post is attached to the Chief Executive at City of York. Other opportunities include positions at Norwich Union and the Marriott Hotel.

East Riding

In 2007 East Riding undertook a project to identify work being done to support young people in care and care leavers into training and employment.

Potential initiatives were identified included work experience, apprenticeships, E2E, mentoring and the development of promotional literature to actively market education, training and employment opportunities within the East Riding Council.

Care leavers have been appointed to a range of different apprenticeships within the local authority, including opportunities with the Maintenance Department, Children and Families Services, Education Business Partnership and other areas across the Council. Opportunities are being explored with other local authority directorates to expand the job placements available to young people.

The success of the project has been due to close working relationships with the Pathways Team and the Organisational Development Officer within East Ridings Council, who together identify young people with a particular interest and match them to opportunities available with the local authority.

Since the introduction of the scheme there has been a steady reduction in the number of care leavers not in education, training or employment.

Training sessions are provided to those managers who have a care leaver in an apprentice post, to give information and advice about being looked after and a care leaver, and the support available to young people. These sessions are run jointly between the Pathway team and the Organisational Development team.

Further information about the scheme can be found at www.leavingcare.org in the Good Practice Database.

North Yorkshire County Council

In 2008, North Yorkshire County Council agreed to fund young people's participation worker posts across the four localities within the County. Care leavers are encouraged to apply for these posts and if they apply are guaranteed an interview.

The young people's participation workers coordinate and facilitate the local Participation Group, liaise with staff in Connexions and the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Teams. They are also involved with the Children In Care Councils. The workers have the opportunity to complete an NVQ qualification and remuneration increases the longer the young person has been in post.

These posts form a part of the Real Start Service. Further information can be found at www.realstart.co.uk.

Bradford Good Practice Model

While some local authorities are providing opportunities for young people within their Social Care departments, Bradford is looking to expand into other areas. During 2009 opportunities will be available in administration and horticulture. Young people leaving care will have the first opportunity to apply for these posts. Young people will be able to complete their NVQ qualifications on the job through Bradford Council's Skills to Work programme.

Young People's Support Service: Corporate Social Responsibility Pilot

In 2008 a Corporate Social Responsibility Pilot was launched in Hull with the aim of creating 100 jobs for 100 young people. One care leaver has now been employed as a trainee warehouse assistant with a multi-national company who have a contract with Hull City Council.

This has been a success story as the local authority and the company are looking at ways they can work with partners on a variety of different projects to create more opportunities for young people.

Leeds Pathway Team

An apprentice scheme is currently being established within Leeds City Council, called Work for Leeds. Care Leavers will be given preference for apprenticeships.

Other Innovative Schemes in the Region

Corporate Parenting – Educational Champions for looked after children and young people leaving care

In 2008, Calderdale Council launched a scheme to recruit a number of Educational Champions for looked after children and care leavers. The scheme is based upon a similar model developed by Barnet Council.

This scheme is coordinated within the Council and Council employees volunteer their time by committing to be an Education Champion for a looked after child. The Champion takes an active interest in a child or

young person's education by ensuring they are given opportunities and their aspirations are met.

At the time of writing, the scheme is being established and there has been a lot of interest by elected members and employees of the local authority.

More information about the scheme can be found on the Good Practice Database at www.leavingcare.org.

North Lincolnshire Leaving Care Team

North Lincolnshire have developed an Emotional Wellbeing Model for young people in care and leaving care as part of the Leonardo Project. The aims of the project are to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of young people. The project has the involvement of young people and focuses on a peer mentoring scheme for care leavers and an e-mentoring scheme.

The e-mentoring scheme is currently being developed, with the aim to have an e-mentor for every 14-21 year old in care or leaving care.

The e-mentor will assist, encourage and support young people to raise their aspirations. As of February 2009, a small pilot had been devised to look at the effectiveness of the scheme. At the time of writing, 14 young people are registered with the pilot.

Learning Skills Council Contacts

During 2008, the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Leaving Care Forum's ETE Forum has benefitted from the input of the Learning Skills Council (LSC). This has been beneficial for both Leaving Care Teams and the LSC as it has raised the awareness of the role of the LSC and how Leaving Care Teams work with young people.

Of great benefit has been information sharing about the funding streams within the LSC, the apprentice matching scheme which went on line in March 2009, and other initiatives across the region. Awareness of issues facing care leavers has been raised substantially within the LSC and it is hoped during the forthcoming year there will be an information exchange with practitioners across the region.

East Ridings Care Matters: Are You Up For The Challenge?

The event, Are You Up For The Challenge? was initially held in October 2007, and following its success was held again in October 2008.

The event is aimed at looked after young people, care leavers and their families and promoted opportunities offered with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Connexions. The event was also supported by the local Fostering team, the Participation Team, Hull City Council and Humberside Fire & Rescue.

The event was free and those attending had the chance to find out about employment opportunities within the local authority, training and education opportunities in East Yorkshire, to see what local libraries had to offer, receive guidance and advice from the Children's Rights Service and take part in exercise classes including boxercise and street beats.

Further and Higher Education Opportunities

The number of care leavers attending university is low. The latest figures for England indicate that 6% of young people leaving care go on to study in higher education. With the implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the launch of the Aim Higher Project, work has been undertaken to increase the numbers of young people leaving care in higher education. There are a number of initiatives which practitioners can access to assist them in raising aspirations for young people leaving care.

Nationally

The Frank Buttle Trust

In 2005, the Frank Buttle Trust completed the report, 'By degree: Going to University from Care', which focused on the difficulties young people in care have going onto higher education, and the difficulties they face when they get there. The report has 43 recommendations to increase participation and raise aspirations. A copy can be found at: www.buttletrust.org/docs/gtu.pdf.

The Buttle Trust has also introduced a Quality Mark system for universities and institutions who provide good quality, specific support services for young people leaving care.

The Yorkshire and Humber Regional ETE group have in the past approached the Frank Buttle Trust for financial assistance for care leavers entering higher education. There had been some concern with the

implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the associated regulations and guidance that the Frank Buttle Trust had changed its eligibility for assistance, by giving a local authority's corporate parenting responsibilities to care leavers progressing onto higher education.

The Frank Buttle Trust advise that they will continue to consider individual applications from young people in and leaving care for financial assistance.

For further details regarding grant information and the role of the Frank Buttle Trust, see the Useful Contacts section at the end of the guide.

Regionally

Aim Higher

Aim Higher is a national programme which aims to widen participation in Higher Education (HE) and increase the number of young people who have the ability and aspirations to benefit from it.

The programme aims to encourage people from groups currently under represented in HE, and it supports the Government's key target to increase participation in HE towards 50% of 18-30 year olds by the end of this decade.

In 2009, the Yorkshire and Humber Regional ETE group will look at attending a meeting with local Aim Higher representatives and universities to increase opportunities for young people leaving care to enter higher education.

Across Yorkshire and Humber, there are Aim Higher offices within each of the regions. To contact your local Aim Higher representative use the following links:

Humber Area: www.aimhigherhumber.org

Leeds Area: www.leedsaimhigher.org

North Yorkshire: www.aimhigherny.org.uk

South Yorkshire: www.aimhigher.ac.uk

West Yorkshire: www.aimhigher.ac.uk/westyorkshire/home

Lincolnshire: www.aimhigher-lr.co.uk

Stepping Stones – West Yorkshire

Stepping Stones is a specific project within Aim Higher Leeds which focuses on looked after children and young people leaving care. The aims of the

project are to raise aspirations and improve the educational attainment of looked after children and care leavers.

Critical to the success of the programme is the effective partnerships which have been formed between local universities, schools, social care staff and carers.

Stepping Stones runs a variety of programmes to encourage and support looked after children and young people to raise their aspirations. These include:

- Family Days for looked after children, young people and their carers at Leeds University and Leeds Metropolitan University
- Homework study groups which are held at several locations around Leeds
- Higher Education Summer Schools at participating universities
- Tutorials for young people in a range of subjects; for example support is available for young people undertaking Media Studies
- A peer mentoring scheme, which is supported by university undergraduates and the business sector.
- Holiday programmes, facilitated in conjunction with the White Rose Learning Centre, Royal Armouries, Harewood House and CLC
- Transition programmes for young people moving from Year 6 to Year 7.
- Involvement in the North of England Regional Network, which links university access managers, Aim Higher, Education Protects and Children's Services. The network was established by Stepping Stones in partnership with HEARWY (Higher Education Aspiration Raising West Yorkshire)

The Stepping Stones team have developed strong links with local universities who are fully supportive of the scheme. There is a newsletter which is distributed to young people and practitioners, and a website which outlines the project and developments.

Further information can be found at : www.leedsaimhigher.org/programs.

Doncaster College

In November 2008 Doncaster College developed the role of Educational Champion for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The champion sits within the counselling and welfare department of the college.

Natalie Marshall is the current champion. She provides individual support to looked after children and care leavers on transitioning to higher education, provides career and course advice, and liaises with other colleagues both within the college and external partners.

Natalie is working with the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Teams in Doncaster to identify young people who may be interested in attending the college or offering support to those already at college. Natalie provides an holistic approach which takes into account wider issues such as accommodation, health and corporate parenting responsibilities.

Doncaster College offers the Fresh Start Programme, which runs in January, Easter and September. Fresh Start allows young people to attend the college for a twelve week period and focuses on literacy and numeracy, while allowing participants to get a taster of other courses on offer at the College.

After completing Fresh Start young people can move onto other courses such as Sports Qualifications or Performing Arts. Young People leaving care are a priority group for the Fresh Start programme.

Over the forthcoming year there will be extended service provision to include:

- Open days to include sessions for LAC/CL to access the designated support to replace "Family Fun Days", which will give children, young people and their carers a chance to look at the college environment, the support available and the courses on offer
- Involving the Additional Learning Needs Department within the college to assist and support looked after children and care leavers attending the college
- The establishment of a transition programme from Feb half term to October half term for looked after children and care leavers to experience the college and develop skills to become college ready.

Useful Contact Details

Nationally

The National Care Advisory Service

Catch 22 Office
3rd Floor
142–146 Old Street
London
EC1V 9BW

www.leavincare.org
Regional Contacts:
Julie Mephram & Belinda Cashman
Telephone: 07734022431

Regionally

Aim Higher Yorkshire & Humber

Stepping Stones West Yorkshire

Education Leeds
Elmete Centre
Elmete Lane
Leeds
LS8 2LJ

Contact: ken.campbell@education.leeds.co.uk; Phone: 0113 214 4493

Humber Area:
www.aimhigherhumber.org
Leeds Area: www.leedsaimhigher.org
North Yorkshire:
www.aimhigherny.org.uk
South Yorkshire:
www.aimhigher.ac.uk
West Yorkshire: www.aimhigher.ac.uk/westyorkshire/home
Lincolnshire: www.aimhigher-lr.co.uk

Frank Buttle Trust

Audley House
13 Palace Street
London
SW1E 5BX

www.buttletrust.org
Telephone: 020 7828 7311

Learning Skills Council

Mercury House
4 Manchester Road
Bradford
BD5 0QL

Telephone: 0845 019 4169

Within Local Authorities/Local Colleges

Action For Children – Barnsley

Action For Children Back Up
Temperance House,
Pitt Street
Barnsley

Telephone: 01226 770902
Contacts: Kathryn Williams,
Service Manager; Peter Verity &
Peter Jones, Group Work Facilitators

Calderdale Leaving Care Team

Action for Children
Calderdale Pathway Team for Care
Leavers
2/3 Saville Row
Saville Park Row
Halifax
HX1 2EJ

Telephone: 01422 359907
Contacts: Yvonne McGibbon,
Connexions PA; Sheila Barton,
Principal Officer organising
Educational Champions Scheme

East Riding County Council

36 Flemingate
Beverley
HU17 ONU

Telephone: 01482 396 666
Contact: Sue Smyth, Pathways
Team Manager

Bradford Leaving Care Team

Odsal Resource Centre
6 Odsal Road
Bradford
BD6 1AT

Telephone: 0174 436 7360
Contact: Jason Egan,
LEAP Team Manager

Doncaster College

The Hub
Chapell Drive
Doncaster
DN1 2RF

Telephone: 01302 553 553
Contact: Natalie Marshall, Educational
Champion for Looked After Children

Young People's Support Service – Hull

Stonefield House
16-20 King Edward Street
Hull
HU1 3SS

Telephone: 01482 300 300
Contact: Chris Duffill, Educational
Manager

Kirklees Leaving Care Team

Dryfield House
207 Healey Lane
Batley
WF17 7HN

Telephone: 01924 326 969
Contact: Helen Hodgkins,
Connexions PA

North East Lincolnshire Leaving Care Team

46 Heneage Road
DN32 9ES

Telephone: 01472 325 232
Contact: Louise Doughty,
Connexions PA

North Yorkshire County Council

County Hall
Racecourse Lane
Northallerton
DL7 8AD

Telephone: 01609 536 021
Contact: Kate Race, Real Start
Apprenticeship Scheme

City of York Council

Hollycroft
Wenlock Terrace
York
YO10 4DU

Telephone: 01904 555 535
Contact: Jenny Bullock, Pathways
Manager; Amy Tolliday, ETE
Personal Advisor

Leeds Pathway Planning Team

Hunslet Hall Annexe
2 Disraeli Terrace
Leeds
LS11 6UA

Telephone: 0113 2700 217
Contact: Paul Skidmore, Pathways
Manager

North Lincolnshire

Hewson House
Station Road
Brigg
DN20 8XJ

Telephone: 01724 297348
Contact: Sue Whitfield,
Children in Care Coordinator

Signpost Wakefield

Signpost
Constance Green Centre
24 Cheapside
Wakefield
WF1 2TF

Telephone: 01924 304 100
Contact: Kevin Harley,
Service Manager

