

Care Leavers strategy Action Plan 2025 -2026

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support our Care Leavers to access Housing Support and maintain their tenancies – including launch of the Walsall House Project. 	<p>The House Project launch is taking place on the 8th April 2025. First cohort of young people have been identified, and the housing project staff are all now in situ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Cohort to be in their new homes by Christmas 2nd Cohort to have been identified and interviews undertaken by Jan 2026. Evaluation and impact of the first cohort to be completed and reported to DMT in January 2026. <p>The allocation policy for Walsall Housing has been reviewed and acknowledges the need to prioritise Care Leavers as part of their Corporate Parenting responsibility. Further information in respect of Housing is identified in priority 4 of this action plan.</p> <p>We continue to ensure support and promote benefit eligibility through the DWP drop in sessions offered weekly at the Transition and Leaving Care Hub.</p>	<p>Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care House Project Lead TLC Team Manager</p>	<p>First cohort sessions will commence in May 2025 with 2nd Cohort being identified by December 2025</p>	<p>In Progress/ Ongoing</p>
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Priority 2: to ensure our Care Leavers have support with their mental health and emotional wellbeing

Aim	How this can be achieved	Responsible Person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust mental health and well-being offer. 	<p>We need to continue to work in collaboration with health partners to ensure the offer and support for our care experienced young people delivers on its commitment to Walsall Children. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with public health colleagues in launching the first 50 'Ask Jan' licences. This has been agreed and the plan for roll out commences in June 2025. Provide Personal Advisors with therapeutic life story training. This training has now been booked and the first staff to undertake the training have been identified. CBT training for TLC staff is also now in place. First round of training has concluded with 4 PA's having received the training to date. Ongoing review and effectiveness of services such as Kooth and talking Therapies. These remain part of our Local Offer to Care Leavers. Take up and impact of the support these services offer need to be identified through Care Leavers surveys. 	<p>Head of Service for Children in Care TLC Team Manager Lead Nurse for Children in Care and Care Leavers</p>	<p>Training and development in this area to be completed by October 2025.</p> <p>Next round of Care Leavers Surveys to be completed as part of the Summer BBQ event and annual evaluation of the Local Offer.</p>	<p>In progress/ Ongoing</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation activities with partners in support of strengthening our Local Offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen practice on the use and effectiveness of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). • Health Passports for Care Leavers to be offered digitally • Promoted the needs of care Leavers with Housing as part of the reviewed housing allocation policy. • Young People continue to present and challenge partners through Corporate Parenting Board. This ensures that young people can actively challenge and question board members on their offer to children in care and care leavers. • Our goal is to build trust and confidence with care leaver parents, helping them feel prepared to access the broader Family Hub support and activities. This will enhance their social capacity and resilience and extend support into the community which can inform and enhance the Local Offer. 	<p>Head of Service for Children in Care TLC Team Manager Lead Nurse for Children in Care and Care Leavers</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board members</p>	<p>Joint review of the SDQ questionnaire to be completed between Health and Childrens Social Care by October 2025.</p> <p>Clarity required from the ICB in regards to the development of the digital support system.</p>	<p>In progress/ Ongoing</p>
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Priority 3: To reduce loneliness and isolation				
Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support care leavers in building positive relationships and community links. 	<p>We will ensure that our care leavers feel that they belong, have a sense of purpose and are part of their community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to enhance the drop in sessions with external agencies at the TLC hub. These remain in place for DWP, Health, Walsall works, Virtual School and Family Help Locality Workers. We are building better links with community projects in the locality hubs to ensure that the Local Offer for Care Leavers is better understood and promoted amongst the Family Help teams/Locality based workers. Continue to work with the NLCBF in regard to strengthening partnership work across communities for the benefit of Care Leavers in Walsall i.e. regional offers. 	<p>TLC Team Manager Family Help Teams Links with the NLCBF</p>	<p>Summer annual BBQ will again be used to review the current offer along with our young people</p> <p>Walsall Managers continue to be represented at NLCBF events</p>	<p>In progress/ Ongoing</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a life-long links programme 	<p>A Life long links programme works by connecting and engaging supportive adults connected to a child/young person with care experience whom can offer a commitment to support them in the future. Following actions need to be undertaken to map out what this service will need to look like for Walsall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping and understanding of what the demand for this service will be Resources already in place that could be utilised in the development of this offer What additional resources are required We will utilise the framework of the FFC programme and embed the support of the Family Team to help strengthen family support networks for our young people. 	<p>Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager</p>	<p>Mapping exercise and report to be presented to DMT by September 2025</p>	<p>To commence summer 2025</p>

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Priority 3: To reduce loneliness and isolation

Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Care Leavers are confident and have the skills to be able to deal with life's challenges. 	<p>To effectively support care leavers in dealing with life challenges, a multi-faceted approach focusing on practical, emotional, and social support is crucial. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to resources like financial assistance, housing, and educational/employment opportunities, alongside mental health support and opportunities for building healthy relationships. These continue to be offered through drop in sessions available within the TLC Hub. Fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging Care Leavers to share their experiences can greatly aid their transition into independent living. This has been apparent in the work that we continue to do with our young people whereby their experiences inform our practice. All PAs were trained in low level CBT approaches to provide them a good baseline knowledge of strategies to support young people in crisis and to help 'hold' the young people whilst referrals to specialist services take place. They have also all undertaken training in Trauma Informed Practice and Motivational Interviewing. Peer mentoring and support arrangements to be strengthened across the service in collaboration with our young people and Care Leavers Forum. <p>The above will be routinely evaluated and reviewed as part of the annual refresh of the Care Leaver Offer.</p>	<p>Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager</p>	<p>Summer annual BBQ will again be used to review the current offer along with our young people</p> <p>EET events will also continue to be held in Spring and Autumn.</p>	<p>In progress/ Ongoing</p>

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Priority 4: To ensure we support our care leavers to be well connected within their community and stable within their home.				
Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Care Leavers are provided with safe and stable homes in order to thrive in adulthood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> House Project now launched and working with 1st Cohort We have enhanced our preparation for independence planning through our Transition and Monitoring Group and have enhanced our practice through training and development within the children in care teams. We have increased our numbers of young people in staying put arrangements. A qualitative audit of how this can be improved further will be undertaken to inform future development opportunities We aim to explore a staying close project as part of the development of the Walsall House project 	Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager Group Manager Residential Services	Audit of staying put arrangements will be undertaken by October 2025 Exploration of staying close options and how the House Project Model can inform this will be completed by December 2025	In progress/ Ongoing

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Priority 4: To ensure we support our care leavers to be well connected within their community and stable within their home.

Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop access to social and recreational opportunities that help our care experienced young people to create and maintain supportive and positive relationships and to help them feel part of their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are building better links with community projects in the locality hubs to ensure that the Local Offer for Care Leavers is better understood and promoted amongst the Family Help teams/Locality based workers. • We are strengthening our Corporate Grandparent Offer by developing a network of support, specific for care experienced parents. TLC Manager and Senior Practitioner from Family Hubs have developed a programme of support that is provided as part of the TLC drop in session offer. This includes the TLC and tots group. • Family Hub wellbeing champions are working with Care Leavers offering wellbeing support for new parents. • Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC) programme is in place. This program, delivered by WR4C volunteers has now been offered to those open to the TLC service. • A programme of work for care Experienced Fathers is now also being developed. • Care Leavers in Walsall also benefit from unlimited access to swim and gym facilities at all our leisure centres as well as the 'plus 1' scheme to enable them to take along a friend, encouraging them to engage in healthy physical activities. 	<p>TLC Team Manager</p> <p>Walsall Locality Hubs</p>	<p>This is an ongoing offer and will be reviewed in line with the Local offer reviews that take place every 6 months.</p>	<p>In Progress /Ongoing</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that our young people understand the Local Offer and play a part on its continual review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to hold annual events that help us shape and review our Local Offer for Care Leavers. This includes the events during Care Leavers week, Summer BBQ and the Easter NEET event. These events allow us to review and refresh our offer in line with the needs of our young people. Our offer is outlined digitally but we have Local Offer Booklets available, including separate offers bespoke to Separated Migrant young people and those in custody. • Continue to be an active contributor to the regional offer for care leavers across the West Midlands. 	<p>Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager</p>	<p>Local Offer will continue to be reviewed every 4 months and is regularly benchmarked against other areas as part of the regional forum.</p>	

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Priority 4: To ensure we support our care leavers to be well connected within their community and stable within their home.

Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our children in our care and Care Leavers are provided with support to ensure that their transition to adulthood is a positive one, including their active participation and engagement in planning the transition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to monitor all transition plans for young people transitioning to adulthood. Training and development plans continue to reflect the individual needs of the young people practice development has been undertaken within monthly workshops. The 'It takes a Village' Project has been intrinsic in ensuring that the participation of young people in developing our work in these areas informs future service delivery. Transition toolkit to be updates in consultation with adults social care. 	Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager Head of Service, Adult social care	Review of the impact of TMAG and Transition panel to be undertaken by December 2025.	To be completed by December 2025

Priority 5: To strengthen our support to Separated Migrant Young People.

Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our separated migrant young people have access to the right level of support. 	We have enhanced our support by employing specialist workers within the service to ensure that their needs are met. We have developed good working relationships with providers that support our separated migrant young people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to strengthen community links and opportunities within Walsall for separated migrant young people. We will secure educational provision that can be accessed from arrival in Walsall and will include advice and community links building. 	Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager	Ongoing as part of review of Local Offer arrangements for this cohort of young people.	In Progress/ Ongoing

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Priority 5: To strengthen our support to Separated Migrant Young People.

Aim	How can this be achieved	Responsible person/Group	When	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our separated migrant young people are provided with information that is relevant to them, which takes into account their cultural and linguistic needs as someone living in a country that is not familiar to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have produced a 'Welcome to Walsall' booklet specifically for separated migrant young people. We have produced a separate Local Offer for our Separated Migrant Young People. 	Head of Service and Group Manager for Children in Care TLC Team Manager	Ongoing action as part of the review of Local Offer arrangements for this cohort of young people.	In Progress/ Ongoing