

Manchester Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

7th February 2024

Manchester's Leaving Care Service

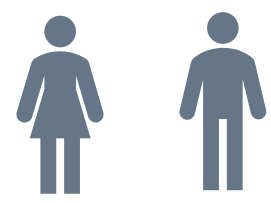
Capacity and responding to needs of care leavers.



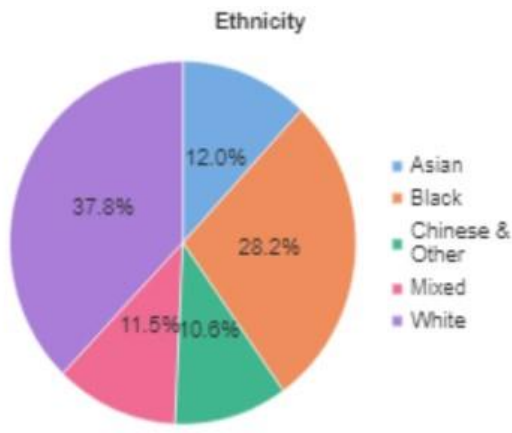
12th May 2023

Demographic

Gender



33 % 67%



- Manchester Care Leaver population is 1490 aged 16 +. Manchester has one of the largest cohort in the country.
- There are 976 young people allocated to a Personal Advisor aged between 16-25 years old. 158 are aged 21+.
- Currently we have 765 young people aged 21 to 25. 607 have a Virtual Personal Advisor Service & receive support via our drop-in services; approx. 40 young people per month use this service.
- There are 478 young people within the service with an immigration status making up 32% of the service, this is projected to be 37% within the year.
- There are 2 specialist Personal Advisors within the New Arrivals Team to support UASC at the point of transition to post 18 permanence.
- There are 5 teams in the Leaving Care service each with 8 FTE Personal Advisors and the Positive Housing Pathway team consisting of 3 CSW and 4 Personal Advisors.
- The Positive Housing Pathway team offers specialist housing advice to all young people age 16+ to prevent youth homelessness and is a specialist service for all care leavers age 18 – 25 years.

Performance

- In Touch with 94.4% of Care Leavers in Manchester.
- Manchester has experienced an increase of 16.7% of young people open to the Leaving Care service (128 young people) there has been a sharp rise in over 21's and former UASC young people.
- 86% of our young people have a health profile in place.
- Overall, 97.7% of all Care Leavers are in 'Suitable Accommodation'. Young People not in living in suitable accommodation are those currently in custody (13 young people)
- Overall, 64.7% of all Care Leavers in Manchester are engaged in Education, Employment or Training.
- Young People are considered for a Leaving Care service at the age of 16 in accordance with Manchester's Local Offer and Practice Standards.
- Young People from age 17 years are allocated a Personal Advisor in the Leaving Care service. Joint working takes place between the Personal Advisor and partners in order to complete the Pathway plan.

Accommodation

- Manchester Personal Advisors are fully committed to all Care Leavers residing in appropriately supported and suitable accommodation in line with Manchester's joint Housing Protocol and Housing Pledge.
- There is a strong accommodation framework that sits around young people to support a young person's transition to independence.
- Leaving Care work with the "Staying Close" programme to assist young people to develop strong community links and are supported to access adult based services.
- All care leavers have access to priority housing via the 'Band One' priority need process, this is the gateway to quality affordable 'forever' homes.
- The service is developing with young people an accredited Independence Programme that all care leavers will complete alongside their pathway planning from age 16 years.
- The Positive Housing Pathway Team supports all young people who are homeless Children In Need and have specialist accommodation Personal Advisor's based within the team who support young people up to 25 to access housing and maintain their tenancy.

Education, Training and Employment

- In Manchester 64.7% of all Care Leavers are engaged in Education, Employment or Training (EET); 8.8% are in Higher Education.
- We have strong partnerships with private and public providers to access work experience and apprenticeships.
- The Careers Connect service is co-located and are an integral partner in assessing and supporting young people.
- VEETO meetings take place whereby key Personal Advisors meet with the VST and Leaving Care to match and prioritise young people to opportunities.
- Manchester Leaving Care service is the host authority for the three year Catch 22 GM EET programme, 'Career Hive.'
- Manchester is host to 'Multiply'; with a focus on young people aged 21 - 30 years who are not in formal EET to develop their functional skills in English and Numeracy.
- Care experience is recognised as a protective characteristic on all Manchester application forms and if a young person meets the essential criteria they are offered automatic interview.

Emotional, Mental, Physical and Sexual Health

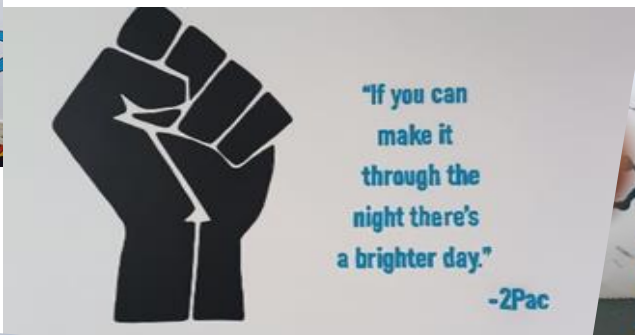
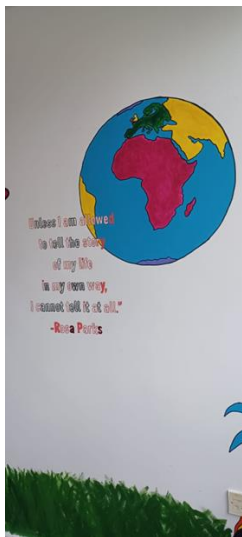
- All Personal Advisor's have completed a trauma informed approach to practice; Level 1 & 2, Adolescent development. PACE training due to completed by March 2024.
- The Leaving Care service has established relationships with counselling and support services such as 42nd Street and MIND. Both feed into the 21+ drop in and Staying Close offer.
- Development of the multi- agency 21+ 'drop in' services to be a 'befriending' service for our older young people.
- There are monthly wellbeing activities facilitated by the Leaving Care Service such as organised walks, football tournaments, socials such as clothing events, food stalls and craft afternoons to improve mental and physical wellbeing and reduce social isolation for our care leavers.
- The Northern Care Alliance provide community & clinic-based specialist sexual health services including contraception to Manchester's Care Leavers including home visits and healthy relationship supports. Wit fast access to GP's
- The service is co-producing an online training module on the impact of being care experienced to assist Partner agencies in the issues and barriers some young people.
- This training will assist in the further implementation of care experience being a 'protected' characteristic in Manchester to safeguard and level up against the disadvantage identified.

Strengths and Developments

- The Leaving Care Service is a strong service, our young people have relationships with their Personal Advisor's, there are supportive plans that are reviewed regularly; these plans are most effective where partner agency involvement is clear. There is a strong relational approach with the young people needs & identity being a central feature to decisions made and planning.
- We have an established Care Consultants network who regularly represent the voice of Care Leavers at corporate events and lead the Corporate Family agenda.
- The service is developing into having a consistent Trauma Informed approach to practice. This includes offering young people the opportunity to access this learning and support in order to understand their own difficulties and empower them to communicate their own needs.
- We are working alongside Transitions to develop a 'transitional safeguarding' model and there are agreed plans to embed a 'link' Personal Advisor between Leaving Care and the Adults Transitions.
- Additional Personal Advisor capacity has been provided for the service in response to increasing numbers of UASC eligible for a Leaving Care service.
- We have re-modelled our offer for young people over 21 in response to the increase in young people 21+ eligible for a service.
- The Service events have an increasing number of older young people attending. Young people tell us they are staying connected to the service and feel the service is a 'life line'.
- EET figures for Care Leavers in Manchester have remained largely consistent for the Personal Advisors 2 years; The service is having a targeted approach to strengthening the offer to older Care Leavers.

Next Steps

Permanence	Equality and Diversity	Education employment and training	Wellbeing
<p>Recruit additional staying close workers to strengthen the offer to young people to support the transition to adulthood and happy lives</p> <p>Ensuring UASC form is completed for each child to enable us to track them to legal permanence and identify issues earlier</p> <p>Young People have the skills and time to transition to independence confidently</p> <p>Further PA CE training and embedding trauma informed approach in practice for Personal Advisors to increase stability in relationships and increase resilience for young people.</p> <p>Development of PA pathway planning to increase connection between need, planning, action and outcomes evidence for YP/on case file.</p> <p>Continued promotion of Bee Connected APP and social medica platforms to ensure our care experienced young people are familiar with their entitlements, and ensuring all young people are connected within their homes to wifi and data.</p>	<p>All staff across the service are champions of equality and diversity we respect and value our colleges, PA, partners and children and young people.</p> <p>Continued PA partnership work with GMIAU to address the consequences of the illegal immigration act and achieve continued legal permanence for our UASC</p> <p>UASC and Former UASC network meeting to strengthen PA partnership working and links in the community</p> <p>Recruit more supported lodgings providers to reflect the heritage and meet the identity needs of our care experienced young people.</p> <p>All our Looked After Children have an All about me – especially those in transracial placements</p> <p>Further development and launch of the protected characteristics pledge in MCC to ensure this is meaningful and impactful for YP</p> <p>Improve diversity in age range and ethnicity for care consultation forum to ensure representation across the city and service.</p>	<p>Develop voluntary work experiences for UASC to support enhancement of CV's</p> <p>Recruit Care Consultants especially targeting our UASC and Former UASC young people.</p> <p>Accredited independence programme</p> <p>Launch and embedding of Multiply project to improve numeracy for NEET and track impact & access to EET opportunities.</p> <p>Working for the family business, developing programme and Pathway for work experience for all young people.</p>	<p>Staff teams to continue to be encouraged to develop resilience as a team and as individual workers, supported by the GM resilience hub. Staff encouraged to have socials together, walking meetings, sport and attend wellbeing workshops.</p> <p>Develop a Partnership meeting to wrap around the NAT and work together to improve the life chances of our UASC</p> <p>Recruit to and develop the role of MHP to offer services that get alongside young people offer the support they want an need</p> <p>Look at how to weave the theme of wellbeing through the Independence programme during the stakeholder sessions re: Pre tenancy work</p> <p>Work with health & adults colleagues to develop an early intervention Pathway for Emerging Mental Health needs of care experienced YP</p> <p>Embedding and implementation of health and wellbeing strategy re Eating, Sleeping, Moving and Connecting with others as a basis for being well.</p> <p>Ensure all care experienced children have a health passport, access to and understand their health needs and support.</p>



“We all want to live in the place we call home with the people and things that we love, in communities where we look out for one another, doing the things that matter to us”.