**Safeguarding young people in Supported Accommodation Protocol**

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# Context

## Aim

This protocol has been developed by Islington Children’s Services[[1]](#footnote-1) in partnership with supported[[2]](#footnote-2) accommodation providers; Islington’s Prevention Commissioning Team based within Housing and Adult Social Services (who commission the housing pathway); Supporting People (SP) Referrals Team (in Housing and Adult Social Services) and Camden and Islington Metropolitan Police Service.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Working together, our goals are

* Toensure we **safeguard** all young people in Supported Accommodation. When risks are identified, they are addressed without delay.
* To build young people’s **resilience** – their ability to cope and bounce back from problems they experience and better manage their physical and mental health needs
* To improve young people’s **independent living skills** enabling successful progression through the housing pathway, towards independent living

## Principles

In working towards these goals we will:

* Work together in the best interests of young people (YP), putting their **safety and welfare** first
* Commit to developing an ethos that is **psychologically informed,** being trauma aware and taking into account the psychological makeup – the thinking, the emotions, personalities and past experience – of young people living in Supported Accommodation
* Clarify **roles and responsibilities** to ensure an effective multi-agency team around the YP
* Work in ways that **reduce unnecessary bureaucracy**
* **Share information** promptly in line with good practice
* Be more consistent in how we **address safeguarding issues**
* Make **placement and move on decisions** together that are well informed and evidence based
* **Hold each other to account,** creating opportunities toconstructively challenge and improve ways of working
* Establish a **Housing Provider Forum**, jointly coordinated by HASS Commissioning Team and Children’s Placements Team
* Ensure this protocol forms part of any **service specifications** for new housing providers

This protocol outlines the shared ways of working across all local Supported Accommodation housing providers, children’s social care and relevant partners.

Young people referred to in this protocol include:

* 16-17 year olds children in need
* 16-17 year olds children looked after
* 16-17 year olds care leavers (relevant young people)
* 18+ year old care leavers

Any reference to housing provider in this document refers to semi-independent and supported accommodation providers.

## Legislative Framework

This protocol is underpinned by legislation and statutory guidance driving the way organisations and services should work together.

* **Children Act 2004[[4]](#footnote-4)**, section 10, states the requirement for agencies to cooperate with local authorities, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to safeguarding to promote the well-being of children…this cooperation should exist and be effective at all levels of the organisation, from strategic through to operational delivery.
* The Statutory Guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)[[5]](#footnote-5)** emphasises the necessity for interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
* **Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010**

# The protocol

## Process from referral to placement

This should be read in conjunction with the *London Borough of Islington Supported Housing Referral Pathway: A guide for clients and referral agencies.*

The quality of information shared during referral and placement planning will ensure the young person is placed within an appropriate setting and the provider (alongside partners) can properly support and safeguard the young person and other young people in their setting.

The SW/YPA should start the referral process as soon as the need for supported accommodation is identified. The earlier a potential provider is notified, the better the planning and the more likely the young person will get the most appropriate placement to meet their needs.

**PLEASE NOTE the new LCS ‘Placement Specification and Request Form’ referred to in box 1 below is not in place yet. There is work underway to amend the current Placement Specification Form to include information required by SP Referrals.**

**Until those changes are made, the process is as follows:**

**SW/YPA MUST provide placements team with the SP Referrals or Camden Pathway Referral Form and risk assessment, alongside other relevant documentation. They do NOT need to also complete the LCS placement specification form.**

**The rest of the process outlined below should be followed.**

**This process will continue until necessary changes have been made to the Placement Specification Form on LCS system.**

**A young person 16+ requiring Supported Accommodation:**

YES

**SW/YPA**

Arrange a Placement PlanningMeeting with housing provider and YP

(within maximum 5 days following start of placement) to agree a Placement Support Plan

**(SEE SECTION 4)**

**CLA SW/YPA**

1) Completes a ‘Placement Request and Specification’ Form

2) Updates risk assessment (on LCS)

**CSC Placements Team**

Identify suitable placement options including whether fostering is appropriate - Is a placement in Islington’s Housing Pathway an option?

**CSC Placements Team**

Submit the suite of referral documents to SP Referrals Team

**Supporting People (SP) Referrals Team**

assess …

Is Housing Pathway accommodation appropriate and are there vacancies?

**SP Referrals Team**

Forward the referral to the relevant Housing Pathway provider

**Housing Provider**

Arrange a housing assessment interview with the YP and their SW/YPA

(within maximum 2 weeks of receiving the referral)

**CSC Placements Team**

Seek placement through Camden housing pathway

OR

Seek placement in Assessment Centre (through Private Housing Partnerships Team)

OR

Spot purchase alternative supported housing and supply provider with referral information.

**N.B CSC Placements Team MUST**

seek and receive approval from relevant Head of Service (CIN/CLA) or Service Manager (IF) to spot purchase (or to fund additional support hours).

**Housing Provider**

Confirm placement and move in date to YP and SW/YPA (confirmation in writing)

Housing assessment

Placement Planning

Placement search

Referral for supported accommodation

YES

NO

NO

**For CIN YP, CIN SW**

Submits BOTH documents AND any other relevant documents direct to SP Referrals Team Plan

**For LAC and CLs, CLA SW/YPA**

Submits BOTH documents AND any other relevant documents (eg. Care/Pathway Plan) to Children’s Social Care (CSC) Placements Team

|  |
| --- |
| **REFERRAL (AND RISK ASSESSMENT)****The young person’s SW/YPA should:*** Include YP’s views of strengths/protective factors, needs, risks and outcomes they want to achieve from a placement
* Explain why Supported Accommodation is appropriate
* Provide sufficient detail about any known risks (EG. anger management, antisocial behaviour, offending, harmful sexual behaviour, gangs, youth violence) and vulnerabilities (e.g. emotional and behavioural needs, missing, CSE, mental health, substance misuse, self-harm, SEND), including sufficient history, current needs and triggers
* If the risk assessment flags any risk in relation to gangs, contact the Safeguarding Gangs Coordinator for a consultation prior to completing the referral. The Coordinator will liaise with Integrated Gangs Team (IGT) do checks is required (see below IGT section)
* Update risk assessment with the IGT information
* Liaise with YOS case worker (if YP on YOS order) for up to date specific details about the YOS order and risk to themselves and others
* Include current safety plans (e.g. in relation to gangs/CSE) and any measures to be considered in devising a safety plan for the placement (e.g. young person does not feel safe in certain parts of the borough). This should include information on how to alert the allocated worker about absences from placement and when an EDT referral might be needed.
* Provide additional information that will inform the type and degree of support in the placement (eg. YP doesn’t work well with female workers)

*The SW/YPA should submit referral information to the Placements Team including: ‘Placement Request and Specification’ Form, the Social Care Risk Assessment and other relevant documents (e.g. copy of the current care/pathway plan; Personal Education Plan – PEP). If YP is on a YOS order, Asset+ Explanations and Conclusions document and the YOS Pathway Plan should also be included.***Integrated Gangs Team (IGT) should, in liaison with the Gangs Safeguarding Coordinator:*** Conduct checks to see if there are any parts of the borough that the young person should not be placed in. Some YP may need to be placed out of borough for safety reasons (e.g. to protect them from reprisals with gangs) – in these instances IGT will need to subsequently maintain cross-border relationships with equivalent teams in other boroughs.
* Provide SW/YPA with relevant information
 |
|  |
| **PLACEMENT SEARCH****The Placements Team should:*** Quality assure the referral documents (including the risk assessment) and request further information/detail from SW/YPA as needed
* Consider, in consultation with SW/YPA, IGT (where relevant) and providers, the most appropriate placement for the young person (considering location, type of placement needs, level of support required). For example, consideration to whether it would be beneficial to keep gang members affiliated with particular postcodes out of areas where there is a detrimental association. (e.g. having lots of x gang members in provision in that postcode).
* Inform SW/YPA of the placement options and if there are gangs risks, request the SW/YPA liaises with IGT for checks on potential addresses
* Provide SP Referrals Team, Private Housing Partnerships Team or spot purchase provider with all the referral documents (‘Placement Request and Specification’ Form, the Social Care Risk Assessment and other relevant documents (see section above) PLUS the Supported Housing Record.This record is held by Placements Team and added to by each supported housing provider, giving providers a greater understanding and context to the young person’s placement history.

**SW/YPA should (if there are gang risks):*** Contact the IGT requesting they do checks of potential placement addresses
* Update the risk assessment with any relevant information from the IGT
* Update the Placements Team with any information supplied by IGT

**Integrated Gangs Team (IGT) should:*** Conduct checks to see if there are any parts of the borough that the young person should not be placed in
* Do checks on potential placement addresses to see if there are any young people at that address that are known to be at risk from the YP or put the YP at risk
* Provide SW/YPA with relevant information
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|  |
| **PLACEMENT SEARCH (if Housing Pathway an option)****SP Referrals Team should:*** Consider whether the pathway has suitable provision according to level and type of support needs and risks and check availability
* If vacancies, pass referral information onto housing provider
* If no suitable vacancies then refer back to Placements Team
* Regularly provide a summary of voids and move-on within the pathway to the HASS Commissioning Team (summarising from the monthly logs submitted by providers)
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|  |
| **PLACEMENT PLANNING (housing assessment)****Housing Provider should:*** Within 2 weeks of referral, arrange for an assessment interview with the young person and their SW/YPA to undertake a housing risk assessment to identify level of needs and consideration specific to placing the young person in a particular provision. If the provider operates more than one provision, the assessment will also ascertain which setting/area of the borough would be most appropriate
* Use the social care risk assessment as a basis for completing the provider’s own housing assessment (specific to the placement), including their risk matching analysis regarding risks associated with other YP in the setting. This will ensure the assessment builds on the information already provided so the young person does not have to repeat their story
* (If they have settings across different tiers of need) discuss with the YP and SW/YPA about level of support needs required (high/medium/low) and aim to come to an agreement on the type of placement required
* Confirm how any monitoring information about use of placement or concerns about the YP’s risky behaviour (eg. regular late night absences from the placement) will be shared
* Provide an electronic copy of their completed assessment and risk matching analysis along with a unit risk management plan (where relevant) to the SW/YPA and the Placements Team
* Following the assessment interview, inform the YP and SW/YPA in writing to confirm an offer of a placement, address of placement, and possible move in date
* If the assessment identifies a level of need or risk that the Provider feels they may be unable to support, they should firstly discuss with the SW/YPA, and if they then decide they cannot offer a placement they should notify the SW/YPA and the YP in writing with a clear explanation for not offering a placement.

**SW/YPA should:*** Attend the assessment interview and contribute to the housing assessment
* Save the electronic copy of the housing assessment and the confirmation letter on the YP’s file on LCS

**SW and Placement Officer should:*** Where there are concerns about a child/YP and they are being placed out of borough, consult with the social work team in the placing authority and request a unit risk management plan from the provider

**Temporary Accommodation Team have a legal duty to:*** Notify Children’s Social Care whenever a family is being placed out of borough where there are concerns about a child, to ensure that a SW and Placements Officer consult with social work team in the placing authority
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## Challenging a Housing Decision

### In the event that the Provider does not accept the referral:

**SW/YPA should**, if they feel there is a lack of evidence to support the Provider’s decision**:**

* Discuss directly with the provider to see if the matter can be resolved with the best interests of the young person, and the safety of the young person and others, in mind
* If the matter remains unresolved and children’s social care continue to challenge the provider’s decision, the SW/YPA should escalate to the Placements Team

**The Placements Team should:**

* Review the referral and risk assessment information
* Attempt to resolve the issue with the SW/YPA and the Provider with the best interests of the young person, and the safety of the young person and others, in mind
* Challenge provider if there is lack of evidence to support the Provider’s decision
* For providers subject to a block purchase contract with London Borough of Islington, Placements Team should escalate to the HASS Commissioning Team who will challenge on any matters regarding the fulfilment of contractual obligations.

**Provider should:**

* Attempt to resolve the issue with the best interests of the young person, and the safety of the young person and others, in mind
* Provide clarity over any decision that is at odds with SW/YPA assessment
* Raise any unresolved issues with the HASS Commissioning Team and Placements Team

**The HASS Commissioning Team should:**

* Challenge Housing Pathway providers on any matters regarding the fulfilment of contractual obligations

### In the event that the Provider disagrees with the SW/YPA assessment of low, medium, high need (e.g. disagreement over whether the young person requires a placement with 24-hour support):

**The Provider should**:

* Discuss directly with the SW/YPA to see if the matter can be resolved with the best interests of the young person, and the safety of the young person and others, in mind
* Consult with Placement Team if the matter remains unresolved

**The Placement Team should:**

* Review the information available on referral and risk assessment of the young person
* Attempt to resolve the issue with the best interests of the young person, and the safety of the young person and others, in mind
* Challenge providers if there is lack of evidence to support the Provider’s decision
* For providers London Borough of Islington has block purchase contracts with, Placements Team should escalate to the HASS Commissioning Team for a challenge in line with the terms of their contract

## Placement Planning (at move-in)

A **placement planning meeting** (also known as a moving in meeting) MUST take place for every young person moving into a new placement.

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| --- | --- |
| Responsibility for arranging the meeting: | * SW/YPA
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| Responsibility for chairing and noting the meeting; and writing the support plan  | * Over 18s - Housing Keyworker
* 16/17 year olds – SW (who hold statutory duty to complete a Placement Plan)
 |
| When: | * Good practice – before the young person moves into the placement
* Minimum expectation – within 5 days following the start of the placement. This complies with statutory requirements for Looked After Children.
 |
| Location: | * At the placement
 |
| Who MUST attend: | * Housing Support Keyworker (or in their absence their manager)
* SW/YPA (or in their absence their manager)
* Young Person
 |
| Who should also attend: | * Any other relevant professionals working with the young person (e.g. TYS Worker; Mentor; YOS Worker if YP is on a YOS order)
* Parents or those with parental responsibility
 |
| Purpose of the meeting: | To Agree:* The purpose of the supported accommodation offer
* The proposed length of the supported accommodation offer
* What longer term housing option the young person is intending to work towards
* Range of support the YP needs within the placement (informed by the CSC risk assessment, the current Care/Pathway Plan and the risk assessment conducted by the housing provider)
* Anticipated type, frequency and severity of incidents, response to incidents and what should be shared and when **(see section 4 – information sharing)**
* Outcomes the young person will work towards in the placement
* Frequency and type of support the housing provider will provide
* What parts of the support plan the SW/YPA will be responsible for
* What parts of the support plan other partners will be responsible for
* Dates of all the 3 monthly Placement Reviews for the duration of the planned placement and to agree which reviews will form part of the Care/Pathway Plan Reviews. In these circumstances the SW/YPA will chair and note the review and will revise the plan. This will reduce the number of reviews a young person needs to have and will ensure a more coordinated approach to reviewing progress and further support planning. The support plan may need to be reviewed sooner if there is a significant change in needs or risks

Also Agree (as relevant):* safety and risk management plan if there are significant risks and vulnerabilities
* what indicators of increased risk to YP or others may look like and what the response should be and by whom
* specific arrangements for when to report a young person as missing (for YP where concerns regarding missing episodes). This should include details of when yp should be reported to the police as missing, when SW/YPA should be informed and when Emergency Duty Team (EDT) should be contacted. N.B. Notifications of absence (including but not only regarding when police have been notified) should be sent directly to the allocated SW/YPA, NOT EDT. EDT should only be contacted where there is a crisis, a serious incident or where further advice is needed regarding a serious incident.
* specific arrangements (if YP on YOS order) for updating YOS case worker re: information relevant to ability to comply with YOS order.
* curfew arrangements (if there are risks regarding the YP being out late at night) N.B. curfew can only operate in 24 hr projects
* curfew if part of YOS order or court or bail arrangements

To inform the young person of:* what they can expect from the housing provider
* what is expected of them during their time in the placement (including how their actions away from the placement could have an impact on their safety and the safety of others) – the Housing keyworker should provide the YP with a Moving In Handbook
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| Placement support plan should include: | * Clear outcomes the young person hopes to achieve during the placement AND timeframe
* Actions that will support the young person in working towards these outcomes
* Who is responsible for these actions?
* Timescales for actions
* Date (within 3 months) the support plan will be reviewed
* Safety plan if relevant
 |
| Following the meeting | * Housing keyworker (or SW if YP is 16/17 years old) to send notes (including clear actions) of the meeting
* Housing keyworker to send electronic copy of the placement support plan to the SW/YPA AND a copy to the YP within 2 weeks of the meeting
* SW/YPA to attach support plan to the YP’s file on LCS
 |
| Placement Plan Reviews | **Dates**: of all the 3 monthly Placement Reviews for the duration of the planned placement will have been set at placement planning meeting. **Chair**: If YP is under 18 or if the review is part of the Care/Pathway Plan Review the SW/YPA should chair, note the meeting and circulate the revised plan.**Venue**: YP may wish for reviews that coincide with Care/Pathway Plan Review to take place at a venue other than the placement **Purpose**: Review the Placement Support Plan, taking into account:* Take into account outcomes the young person has achieved, changes to their strengths, needs and risks
* Milestones achieved and new/amended outcomes the young person will work towards in the placement
* Plans for move on

**Following the meeting**:* Housing keyworker to send notes (including clear actions) of the review and revised placement to the SW/YPA AND a copy to the YP within 2 weeks of the review
* If YP is under 18 or the review is part of the Care/Pathway Plan review the SW/YPA is responsible for circulating review notes and revised placement plan
* SW/YPA to attach review and revised placement plan to the YP’s file on LCS
 |

## Move on

### Planned move on

A young person’s move-on from one placement to another should be planned and agreed between the housing keyworker, SW/YPA and YP. Where this can’t be agreed, this should be escalated in line with Section 2.1.

### Move on within a provider’s schemes

When a Provider identifies that it is appropriate to move a young person within their own schemes, when a YP is found to require higher/lower support, they should first discuss this plan and seek the agreement of the YP and their SW/YPA.

Where young people are known to be associated with gangs or at risk from gangs, the SW/YPA should seek a police check from IGT to ensure there are no known risks of moving the YP to the suggested new placement. Providers and SW/YPA should also consider whether it would be beneficial to keep gang members affiliated with particular postcodes out of areas where there is a detrimental association. (e.g. having lots of x gang members in provision in that postcode).

The Provider should also inform SP Referrals and CSC Placements Team.

### YP requiring an extension to their tenancy

If YP needs to an extension to their tenancy due to ongoing support needs:

**SP Referrals Team should:**

* check with the provider that YP is engaging; ask for confirmation on ongoing support needs; request detail of what work is planned and outcomes anticipated by extending the tenancy; or ongoing needs requiring access to adults pathway.

# Information sharing

Professionals working with children and young people should share information in line with the DfE Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners[[6]](#footnote-6) (March 2015). Included in this guidance are Seven Golden Rules for sharing information effectively and the Key Principles that help professionals to share information between organisations. These principles are: Necessary and Proportionate; Relevant; Adequate; Accurate; Timely; Secure; Record.

No professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child/young person safe. If a professional has concerns about a child’s welfare (or a care leaver’s welfare) and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, then they should immediately share with children’s social care, following up in writing within 24 hours.

Professionals cannot adequately assess risk if they do not have all the necessary information. They should use their judgement when making decisions on what information to share and when and should follow organisational procedures or consult their manager if in doubt.

When a young person is placed in supported accommodation the SW/YPA remains the lead worker and therefore should be the central person with whom partners should share safeguarding information. It is the responsible of the SW/YPA to ensure all relevant partners are provided with information updates (in line with the principles referred to above) to enable everyone to work together to safeguard the young person from harm.

**Where information is urgent it should be shared immediately via telephone and followed up in writing.**

**The SW/YPA should:**

* Agree with provider at Placement Planning meeting what information should be shared and when (e.g. if a young person is known to self-harm frequently the SW/YPA needs to know every time, especially if it escalates in severity or frequency, or hospitalisation/mental health assessment is required)
* Share information with
	+ All relevant services (including the housing provider) about which other services are working with the young person to ensure everyone knows who else is working with the young person
	+ Housing Keyworker that enables the housing provider to effectively support and safety plan with the young person. It also allows the provider to consider potential risks posed by/to other young people within the housing provision, or by/to visitors, including the young person’s friends, siblings, girlfriend/boyfriend and older acquaintances.
	+ Other partners that enables relevant agencies/services in the TAC to support the young person appropriately and to ensure agencies in the TAC work in a coordinated way with all the relevant knowledge to safeguard the young person and promote their welfare
* In Care/Pathway plan reviews. These reviews should be coordinated in a way that ensures the housing provider can feed into the review. Placement Support Plan Review meeting should not happen at the same time as a statutory CLA Review/Pathway Plan review, but rather before of these statutory reviews so a plan is presented to the IRO to endorse. The IRO cannot attend a meeting where plans are being made for young people. The role of the IRO is to scrutinise the Local Authority’s care plan and to endorse this.
* Review the risk assessment whenever there is significant change in the young person’s circumstances or incidents that alert the worker to new or changed level of risk and vulnerability. The SW/YPA should involve the housing keyworker and other relevant professionals in this review.

**The Housing Provider should:**

* Share any safeguarding information promptly with the SW/YPA to ensure the social worker can promptly assess the level of risk, identify what actions are needed and work together with the housing keyworker and other professionals to minimise the risk of harm to the young person and others.
* Contribute to revising the CSC risk assessment as and when there appears to be a significant change in level or type of risks and vulnerabilities and use this to inform any necessary changes to the placement risk assessment and placement plan
* Provide a **monthly log** to the HASS Commissioning Team, Placements Team and SP Referrals Team detailing who is in the setting; their RAG rating regards progressing with their Placement Plan (e.g. Green – placement going well; Amber – there are a few problems; Red – placement not going well); general behaviour; incidents; YP’s status (e.g. Progressing with Plan; Awaiting Move-on).
* Housing keyworker will provide a weekly log on request directly to SW/YPA if they provide clear justification for the need for more frequent updates (e.g. case going to court or level of risk presented by or to YP warrants more frequent updates)
* Consider their safeguarding duties not just with regards to the young person being placed/already placed with them but the potential risk of harm to other children and vulnerable young adults, such as visitors including girlfriends/boyfriends, siblings, family members. CSCT or the police should be contacted in line with safeguarding procedures, where there are concerns about a child or young person’s safety.

**The HASS Commissioning Team/Placements Team should:**

* supply Housing Providers with the monthly log template
* Placements Team should disseminate monthly log information about individual YP to the relevant SW/YPA
* HASS Commissioning Team to use the log to review the broad performance of providers in relation to progress of young people, identifying any themes and matters for follow up with providers and where relevant, to address through the Provider Forum or though contract monitoring meetings.

**SP Referrals Team should:**

* Use the monthly log to hold oversight of voids, move on within the pathway and potential up and coming vacancies.

## Information sharing where there are concerns regarding gangs and offending

### Daily intelligence from police gang unit within the Integrated Gangs Team

A number of young people in supported accommodation are at risk of harm from gangs and serious youth violence. For those young people the following section is relevant and should be read in conjunction with [ISCB Gangs Safeguarding Protocol](http://www.islingtonscb.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Gangs%20Safeguarding%20Protocol%20and%20Appendices.pdf).

The flowchart below relates primarily to YP placed in Islington or coming to police attention in Islington. YP engaging in gang/criminal activity outside of Islington will not show on the IGT overnights.

IGT police gangs unit brief IGT on a daily basis about any overnight issues/incidents.

IGT will remove any non-relevant /sensitive intel to ensure only relevant information is passed to SW/YPA i.e. sensitive information about any sources will have been removed

**Integrated Gangs Team (IGT)**

To share relevant police gangs intel re: young person with their Social Worker/Young Person's Advisor and their Deputy Team Manager (via email unless urgent)

**SW/YPA** To EMAIL relevant information to housing keyworker (and any other key professionals in the TAC) within 24 hours

**SW/YPA** To convene a TAC meeting/strategy meeting if needed and provide partners with as much notice of meeting as possible

(in line with [Islington Gangs Safeguarding Protocol](http://www.islingtonscb.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Gangs%20Safeguarding%20Protocol%20and%20Appendices.pdf))

Urgent?

**SW/YPA** To CALL housing keyworker (and other professionals in TAC) promptly

No

Yes

**The SW/YPA (or their manager) should:**

* Inform housing keyworker if YP is on gangs matrix either as a victim or perpetrator and ensure the provider is informed if police have special measures (quick response time) in place for a YP. This may be for gangs but may also be for other concerns such as CSE, DV or Missing.
* Provide timely information so the provider is able to effectively support and safeguard the YP, and others, in the placement.

**The Housing Keyworker should:**

* share information with SW/YPA related to any concerns that a young person may be at risk of harm from gangs. This will enable the SW to make accurate assessment of the level of risk from gangs and what safeguarding procedures are required to safeguard YP from significant harm
* where there is a significant incident, the placement should also inform the police immediately in line with organisational safeguarding procedures
* Keep a log of information that could be used to disrupt any potential gang/violent activity (for e.g. keeping a log of anyone visiting the young person, noting car registration plates, name of taxi firms dropping off/picking up yp, photos of visitors, sharing CCTV footage with police) and pass information onto SW/YPA
* Keep a log of useful information about the young person that raises concern, for e.g. wearing new clothing the YP can’t afford; new belongings; receipt of gifts; appearing with injuries; access to expensive items, regular change of mobile phones.

### Bronze Group and Multi-Agency Risk Panel (MARP)

There may be some young people in supported accommodation who are considered to be at significant risk or a risk to others due to their gang association/involvement or offending. These young people may be discussed at either Bronze Group or MARP where senior officers from council, police and key partner agencies devise and review an intensive risk plan.

**The SW/YPA (or their manager) should:**

* Attend Bronze when requested to, to contribute to the assessment of risk and feed into a clear multi-agency risk management plan
* Contact the housing keyworker prior to attending Bronze to ensure they have up to date information from the placement
* Update case notes on LCS
* Contact the housing keyworker (and other relevant partners) after Bronze to update them on what was agreed explaining any actions that are of relevance to, or that are expected of, the housing provider
* Update the safety plan as relevant and share with housing keyworker

**The Housing Keyworker should:**

* Provide SW/YPA with accurate, up to date and timely information to help inform discussion at Bronze or MARP
* Update the young person’s case file following Bronze or MARP, including attachment of any information from SW/YPA such as an updated safety plan
* Undertake any actions identified at Bronze or MARP that are required of housing provider

Where there is a need for **emergency risk planning** or a **strategy meeting** the SW/YPA, the Gangs Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Housing keyworker (or their managers) should attend the meeting along with YOS and other key partners, to share information, identify level of risk and agree a plan.

### Proactive communication between IGT, Police and Housing Providers

Members of the IGT are each assigned an area of the borough and are responsible for keeping abreast of gang related issues in their area.

**IGT workers should:**

* Meet with supported accommodation providers within their patch regularly (at least bi-monthly) to update them on gang related locality issues
* Attend quarterly placement review meetings for young people they are working with

Metropolitan Police North Central London Safer Neighbourhoods Officers are visible within the community.

**Safer Neighbourhood Team should:**

* Identify a linked safer neighbourhood police officer for all supported accommodation provision in the borough
* Visit supported accommodation providers in their patch regularly (at least bi-monthly) to have a presence within those settings, be visible and accessible to young people living in supported accommodation and share relevant information with providers to address risks and community incidents.

### Information sharing where there are concerns regarding child sexual exploitation (CSE)

**The SW/YPA (or their manager) should:**

* Share timely information with housing keyworker
* Invite keyworker to all CSE Strategy and Professionals Meetings

**The Housing Keyworker should:**

* share information with SW/YPA where there is concern that a young person may be at risk of harm. This will enable the SW, in consultation with SIPP Worker, to make an accurate assessment of whether CSE threshold has been met and whether the police need to be informed.
* The exception to the above is where there is a significant incident that requires the placement to also inform the police directly
* Keep a log of information that could be used to disrupt any potential CSE (for e.g. keeping a log of anyone visiting the young person, noting car registration plates, name of taxi firms dropping off/picking up yp, photos of visitors, sharing CTV footage with police)
* Keep a log of useful information about the young person that raises concern: wearing new clothing the YP can’t afford; new belongings; receipt of gifts; access to expensive items, regular change of mobile phones
* Undertake training or seek advice from their link Safer Neighbourhood Officer to be clear on what counts as police intelligence so staff feel confident what procedure to follow if a YP presents staff with information (eg. in the form of social media message, video footage etc.)
* Attend CSE Strategy Meetings and Professionals Meetings for YP in their setting
* Attend CSE Mapping Meetings – these are ad hoc multi-agency meetings convened where there is a need for mapping and intelligence gathering that needs input from wider network of agencies. The mapping identifies intended victims and suspects where there are groups of young people all connected to one individual or address of concern. These meetings inform the whole process including disruption and providers play a key role. Providers need to follow strict information sharing protocols around what information from these meetings can and cannot be shared.

If a Provider is concerned a young person may be at risk of CSE they can contact the CSE, Missing and Trafficking Co-ordinator for advice.

## Information sharing where there are concerns regarding Missing

**The SW/YPA (or their manager) should:**

* Complete a Missing risk assessment
* Make housing provider aware of any concerns regarding previous missing episodes or risk of missing, at the Placement Planning Meeting
* Agree with housing provider the arrangements that should be followed for reporting the YP as missing
* Invite housing keyworker to all relevant Missing Panel meetings and strategy/professionals meetings

**The Housing Keyworker should:**

* Follow arrangements agreed at the Placement Planning Meeting or subsequent multi-agency meetings, as to when to report a young person missing. These should include details of when YP should be reported to the police as missing, when SW/YPA should be informed and when Emergency Duty Team (EDT) should be contacted. N.B. Notifications of absence (including but not only regarding when police have been notified) should be sent directly to the allocated SW/YPA, NOT EDT. EDT should only be contacted where there is a crisis, a serious incident or where further advice is needed regarding a serious incident.
* Use reasonable judgement (e.g. for provision with 24-hour support where curfew can be operated - if a young person calls after curfew and says they are on their way back and arrives back within 30 minutes this may be deemed okay but for a young person at higher risk and where there are known concerns, the provider may feel sufficiently concerned to report the young person missing sooner)
* If in doubt report the young person missing
* 18+ year olds are considered adults and therefore provider’s policies may not require as early a missing report to police. Also police will not ordinarily act until a longer time period has passed. However, if an 18+ year old is deemed vulnerable/at risk (e.g. on gangs matrix, CSE risk) the provider should report the YP missing in line with arrangements made with SW/YPA.
* Provide as much detail as possible when reporting a child/young adult missing to the police
* Record on the young person’s case notes useful contextual information each time the young person goes missing (e.g. the YP took bedding with them; when YP returned their presentation as good/appeared clean, didn’t appear to have been sleeping rough; YP returned under the influence of substances/alcohol)
* Use every opportunity to engage YP when they return. YP may only return to the property to receive their weekly subsistence and then leave again so providers need to plan for these interactions to maximise the opportunity to engage with the young person and inform the SW of young person’s return (likely return to collect subsistence); to reduce the risk of them going missing again and to support the young person to effectively safety plan
* Attend and participate in Professionals/Strategy Meetings, contributing to the decision making process

### Serious and untoward incident reporting procedure

### Definition of a serious incident

Although broad in nature the following would constitute a serious or untoward incident:

* Serious crime or violence to service users, staff or members of the public
* Serious threats to service users, staff or members of the public
* Unexpected death or serious injury within the service
* Unexpected emergency admission to hospital
* Housing management incidents that lead to a serious disruption of a Council funded service including fire, flood, power failure, in particular those which lead to the building being unoccupied
* Any incident that leads to a Safeguarding Adults / Children Alert being raised.

Islington has made it a mandatory requirement for providers to report any serious or untoward incident that takes place in a Council funded service. This is to ensure that our young people receive a safe, secure and appropriate service when meeting their housing related support needs.

**The Housing Provider must:**

* Report all incidents to SW/YPA/their manager (or EDT if out of hours) immediately.
* Submit an incident report to HASS Commissioning Team (using the proforma provided by HASS Commissioning Team)
* This will enable Islington to
* Give support to the provider to resolve immediate difficulties
* Alert and inform stakeholders to the incident
* Manage any publicity
* Facilitate an enquiry into the incident

The report should provide an opportunity to learn from the incident and reduce any contributory factors.

It is expected that all service providers should have an incident policy that details the process for describing, reporting and reviewing the outcome of any serious or untoward incident.

# Reflective practice and development

**Provider Forum**

There is a minimum expectation that representatives from housing providers in the housing pathway and children’s social care attend a Provider Forum. In addition to this there may be other opportunities to reflect on practice and develop practice.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Responsibility for planning and co-ordination: | HASS Commissioning Team (who commission the young people’s Housing Pathway) and Children’s Social Care Placements team will hold joint responsibility for planning and convening the forum sessions |
| Frequency: | Quarterly |
| Agenda setting: | The terms of reference and agenda for each forum meeting will be driven by the needs and priorities identified by housing providers and their partners. |
| Attendance: | The expectation is that operational and strategic staff will attend from a range of services:* Unit Managers and Keyworkers from **commissioned** **supported accommodation housing providers**
* Unit Manager and Keyworkers from **spot purchase providers** in Islington and neighbouring boroughs
* Deputy Team Manager and Social Workers/Young Person’s Advisors from **Children Looked After Service** (including Independent Futures leaving care service)
* **Placements** team officers
* **HASS Commissioning** officers for the Housing Pathway
* **SP Referrals** team
* The following services as appropriate: Supporting People Referrals Team, Police, Integrated Gangs Team, CAMHS, Virtual School, health services, adult services, voluntary and community sector young people’s services
* Specialists to be invited when required to provide advice, guidance and training on safeguarding issues

Managers of services are responsible for ensuring their service is represented at the forum and for identifying appropriate staff to attend, based on the agenda for each forum |
| The focus of the forum is to: | * Build a common ethos and uniformity of approaches and ways of working in support of young people placed in Supported Accommodation
* Aid communication and positive relationships and joint working practice across partners
* Share information and contact details
* Share good practice and learning from incidents
* Share non sensitive information about issues specific to housing in the borough (e.g. gang territories and border lines; multi-agency and partnership working in delivering activities; training needs; funding opportunities; local services and intervention programmes; and links with different Council teams
* Address common themes regarding risk and safeguarding eg. drugs awareness, gangs, child sexual exploitation, county lines, mental health
* Contribute to the development of the Knowledge Hub to create a virtual sharing environment where providers can post information and documentation and access information about opportunities including training
* Ensure links to forums that focus on adult housing provision and services
 |

# Strategic oversight and problem solving

Housing providers and Children’s Social Care may have individual arrangements to regularly review working arrangements and agree ways to improve the working relationship.

## Contract Review Meetings

As a minimum, there is an expectation that contract review meetings are used to review working relationships and agree ways to improve service delivery and joint working.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Who should convene the contract review meetings: | * HASS Commissioning Team for Housing Pathway Providers
* CSC Placements Team for spot purchase providers
 |
| Who should attend: | * Housing provider
* HASS Commissioning Team
* Placements Team
* Children’s Social Care Team/Service Manager (from CLA/IF)
* SP referrals Team (when applicable)
 |
| Frequency: | * Quarterly
 |
| Purpose: | * To review service delivery and outcomes
* Partners to review the joint working, recognising good practice and addressing issues
* To reflect on the current make-up of the young people in the setting, the effectiveness of planning re: move-on and anticipated capacity over the next quarter
 |

# Key contacts

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CSCT (Children’s Services Contact Team)** | 020 7527 7400 or CSCTreferrals@islington.gov.uk |
| **Emergency Duty Team** | 020 7226 0992 or EDTduty@islington.gov.uk |
| **SP Referrals Team** | Referrals.co-ordinator@islington.gov.uk |
| **IGT (Integrated Gangs Team)** | IGT@islington.gov.uk |
| **SIPP (Specialist Intervention Pilot Project)** | SIPP@islington.gov.uk |
| **Gangs Safeguarding Co-ordinator** | Sarah.Messenger@islington.gov.uk |
| **Children’s Services Placements Team** | CSPlacements@islington.gov.uk |
| **Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team, Islington** | Steve.Murfin@met.pnn.police.uk |

# Ratification

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date of protocol:****Date of review:** |  |
| **Signed off by:** |  |  |  |
|  | **Sean Mclaughlin** | **Carmel Littleton** | **Steve Murfin** |
|  | Corporate Director Housing and Adult Social ServicesLondon Borough of Islington | Corporate Director Children’s ServicesLondon Borough of Islington | Inspector Safer Neighbourhoods Team Metropolitan Police Islington |

# Appendix A: Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CL | Care Leaver |
| CSC | Children’s Social Care |
| CSE | Child Sexual Exploitation |
| HASS Commissioning Team | The Prevention Commissioning Team in Adult Social Care (Housing and Adult Social Services) who commission the young people’s housing pathway |
| HSB | Harmful Sexual Behaviour |
| IF | Independent Futures (Islington’s leaving care service) |
| IGT | Integrated Gangs Team |
| Private Housing Partnerships | The team in Housing who manage referrals to Temporary Accommodation including referrals to the Young People’s Assessment Centre |
| SIPP | Specialist Intervention Pilot Project (CSE/HSB) |
| SP Referrals | Supporting People Referrals Team in Housing, who manage referrals to the young people’s housing pathway |
| SW | Social Worker |
| TYS | Targeted Youth Support |
| YOS | Youth Offending Service |
| YP | young person |
| YPA | Young Person’s Adviser (case holder for young people in Independent Futures) |

1. Children’s Services refers to a range of services: Children ‘s Social Care (CSC) including Independent Futures (IF) Leaving Care Service; Youth Offending Service; Targeted Youth Support and Early Help Services [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The terms ‘Supported Accommodation’ and ‘Semi-independent Accommodation’ are used interchangeably. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Some housing providers may have individual protocols clarifying ways of working that are specific to their relationship with LBI Children’s Social Care. This protocol does not replace those but instead sits as part of the suite of protocols. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)