**Schedule 1**

**Specification**

**Orientation Programme (OP) for Unaccompanied Asylum- Seeking Children (UASC) who are in the Care of OCC**

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| 1. **Introduction**
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| * 1. This service specification sets out Oxfordshire County Council’s (OCC’s) requirements for the provision of an Orientation Programme (OP), which provides education and information to UASC as they arrive in Oxfordshire.
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| * 1. The local authority has a statutory duty to provide suitable housing, education and health services to looked after children (LAC).
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| * 1. The aim of the UASC Orientation and Induction Programme (OP) is to help unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASCs) arriving in Oxfordshire to integrate into the local community and gain equal access to local services by providing education and relevant information as soon as they arrive. The activities of the programme are to:
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| * + Assess the young people’s English level
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| * + Support the development of their English language
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| * + Provide induction to the local area and to the legal, social and educational frameworks within which they are living through information sessions
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| * + Support them to identify education provision and provide transition into school.
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| * 1. The OP is now in its seventh year of delivery and the contract with the existing Provider ends on 30 September 2019, with no further option to extend.
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| 1. **Background Information**
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| * 1. Newly arrived unaccompanied asylum -seeking children face complex challenges to transition and integrate into mainstream school or college.
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| * 1. Not only do they need to adjust to a new country and understand different cultural and educational norms without family support, but this is often in the context of having witnessed or experienced trauma. Very practically, this can mean it takes time to adjust sleep patterns and routines.
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| * 1. At the very least, most young people will have experienced an education very different to the English system; however, many will have had significant time out of school or may not have been to school at all. School and college entry is frequently delayed for these young people.
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| * 1. At times, these delays are exacerbated by a lack of robust education profile data about the young person, which can also lead to young people being placed at an inappropriate level or in an inappropriate form of provision.
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| 1. **Local context**
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| 3.1 The profile and number of UASC within Oxfordshire has grown over the last years. This has occurred due to the introduction of the Home Office National Transfer Scheme (NTS), the crisis in Syria and middle east, leading to larger number of UASC and families seeking asylum within Europe and then often arriving in the UK. |
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| 3.2 UASC arrive into Oxfordshire via many routes including planned arrivals through the NTS or spontaneous arrivals travelling through clandestine means. Spontaneous arrivals are generally identified through the police or ‘walk-ins’ at council offices. |
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| 3.3 Oxfordshire has a strong history of responding to the needs of UASC and currently has a small dedicated countywide UASC team to meet the needs of these children upon arrival. Oxfordshire joined the NTS scheme in 2016 and is currently being funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) to undertake activities related to meeting the needs of a growing UASC population. |
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| 3.4 Currently Oxfordshire is caring for 65[[1]](#footnote-1) UASC, and there is a Home Office target of 99 for Oxfordshire which reflects 0.07 of our child population. Oxfordshire have taken seven young people accepted through the NTS since it started in 2016. |
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| 3.5 The UASC team, who sit within the wider city LAC team, currently carry out all the work for new arrivals and then the case is passed to the relevant LAC area team after the second LAC review. This specialist team key work UASC arranging accommodation and orientation from their arrival in the country.  |
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| 3.6 The expertise to support UASC has been held within the city as services have grown in response to demand, which has meant that support services and expertise to support UASC outside Oxford city is extremely limited.  |
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| 3.9 It is recognised that there needs to be some flexibility to effectively support UASC in other areas of the county where accommodation is available with local support services grown to respond to this.  |
| 1. **Service Requirements**
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| 4.1 The OP will enable UASC aged 13-17 years old to integrate into the local community in which they reside and gain immediate access into a learning pathway.  |
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| 4.2 Oxfordshire recognises the success[[2]](#footnote-2) of the existing programme and wishes to build on this success through: |
| * More flexible geographical delivery of the programme
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| * Delivery of a term time programme which also offers a reduced programme during the school summer holiday period.
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| * Increased breadth and repeat delivery (where required for individuals) of information sessions
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| * Increased transitional support into school or college
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| 4.3 The Provider will work in partnership with OCC’s virtual school for LAC and care leavers[[3]](#footnote-3), to prepare a pathway into learning in Oxon or beyond for UASC, in the target age range. |
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| 4.4 The provider will deliver a four- week rolling programme that will: |
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| * Provide a weekly educational programme of a minimum of 25 hours a week over 4 days. There will generally be a morning and afternoon session every day which run between 10am-3pm
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| * Include all new arrivals aged between 13-17 years who become looked after
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| * Induct UASC into the UK and local area in which they will be living in Oxfordshire and services they can access
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| * Assess their English as an Additional Language (EAL) proficiency and deliver significant EAL input to facilitate communication and therefore access to and participating in the local community and services.
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| * Support the young person to identify the most appropriate education provider or other employment, education and training (EET) provision for the young person. For statutory school age learners this will be via the established admissions protocol.
 |
| * Provide effective transition support to the identified school or other EET provision ensuring that partners are well prepared to receive learners who are at the end of the 4 -week programme
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| * Provide effective transition support to the young person, ensuring that they are aware of positive opportunities in their local community and know where to access onward emotional or practical support as required.
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| * Be flexible to cope with fluctuating numbers of UASC and support their varying learning abilities within a warm and nurturing learning environment.
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| * Offer opportunities for young people at school/college to return to the OP for repeat information sessions where appropriate
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| * Offer a reduced programme during the summer for new arrivals or repeat information sessions (as required) for those who have attended the OP previously.
* Be accessible and the provider will be proactive at identifying barriers to access and work with the UASC team and young person to remove any barriers affecting attendance.
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| 4.5 The OP will consist of both a taught and experiential curriculum which will be delivered through a classroom environment as well as out in the community. The following topic areas will be included: |
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| * Emotional health
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| * Education
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| * Asylum process
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| * The law
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| * Social induction
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| * Safety and first aid, including emergency services
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| * Substance misuse
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| * Respectful behaviour
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| * Life skills, e.g. cleaning, cooking, personal responsibilities.
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| * Sexual health
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| * The prevent agenda and vulnerability to radicalisation
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| * Female genital mutilation
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| * Managing money
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| * Staying Safe and what others can do and what they can do themselves to stay safe.
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| * Public spaces and services e.g. cafes, libraries, transport, parks
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| * The law – who’s who and what they do.
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| * Red Cross – family tracing.
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| * Cultural awareness/’norms’.
 |
| * The Royal family/Government
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| * Geographical awareness – trip to London.
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| * Discrimination – strategies for dealing with this.
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| * Internet and mobile phone safety
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| * Housing –what is provided through the supported housing pathway and how to live with others and work together.
* Age assessment process
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| 4.6 In delivering the programme the provider will need to:  |
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| * Work with partners[[4]](#footnote-4) to agree support of the delivery of information sessions
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| * Problem solve delivery/ scheduling issues as they arise to ensure smooth delivery of the agreed programme and its component elements in a geographical location near to where the young person resides
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| * Monitor attendance of young people at the sessions and ensure that all fixed sessions are attended including written contribution to the first LAC review (and second if programme is still underway).
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| * Provide written feedback for age assessments based upon contact and observations of the young person
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| * Work effectively with interpreters[[5]](#footnote-5)
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| * Recruit volunteers as required to support the delivery of the programme
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| * Identify and escalate any safeguarding concerns through local processes which are compliant with Oxfordshire’s Safeguarding Children’s Board (OSCB)[[6]](#footnote-6) procedures.
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| 4.7 The provider will be responsible for the reporting of session delivery and attendance to OCC through: |
| * Tracking of young people’s destinations at weeks 5 and 6
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| * Evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme through attendance and continued engagement
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| 4.8 The provider will be responsible for finding[[7]](#footnote-7) and funding a venue which is suitable for the delivery of the programme in a geographical location near to where the young person resides. |
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| Volume |
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| 4.9 Between 28 August- 31 December 2018[[8]](#footnote-8) there were thirteen newly arrived UASC participants on the Orientation Programme. There was one young person who did the programme for the second time but every other young person completed it for 4 weeks and then moved on to longer term educational provision. There were twelve boys and one girl and their nationalities were the following: |
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| 5 | Eritreans |
| 3 | Sudanese |
| 1 | Afghan |
| 1 | Albanian |
| 1 | Iraqi (Kurdish) |
| I | Yemeni |

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1. As of 6 February 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Case-study-Orientation-Programme.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Virtual School for Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers aged 0-25, is a partner to all schools. The team ensure that schools and other professionals understand statutory responsibilities and are aware of the best practice. They work to ensure that communication about our LAC and Care leavers is regular and constructive and that all parties are working together successfully to help them thrive. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This includes social workers, colleges, schools, EET providers and voluntary organisations. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Children’s Social Care will meet the costs of interpreters. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.oscb.org.uk/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. OCC will provide some support (where required) to identify any OCC buildings which may be suitable for the delivery of this programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. OP Key2 Narrative Report, Cycle 24, January 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)