

This chapter should be read in conjunction with [Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Young People Arriving at Heathrow - Inter Agency Protocol between Hillingdon Education and Children's Services, UK Border Agency and the Metropolitan Police](#)

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1. Referrals

All referrals in relation to unaccompanied minors arriving in Hillingdon who have or are likely to claim asylum must be referred to the Asylum Service and will be dealt with by the Asylum Intake Team.

A minor is defined as a young person who is or (if there is no documentary evidence) is assessed to be under the age of 18.

A minor is regarded as unaccompanied if he or she has no adult relative or guardian to turn to in this country.

This will include all referrals to the Children and Families Service from Heathrow Airport, which come via the Emergency Duty Team or the On-Call Team which responds to referrals from Heathrow and make appropriate interim arrangement for the child's accommodation and living arrangements - see [Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Young People Arriving at Heathrow - Inter Agency Protocol between Hillingdon Education and Children's Services, UK Border Agency and the Metropolitan Police](#).

Referrals may also be received from Asylum Seekers Detention Centres (Harmansworth and Colnbrook), in which case the Detention Centre will complete and send a Referral Form.

2. Age Assessments

Where necessary, an [Age Assessment](#) will be used to establish the young person's age.

If an Age Assessment is required, it will be carried out by two workers from the Asylum Intake Team, together with an interpreter.

If the young person is assessed to be under the age of 18, see [Section 3, Response to Referrals](#).

If the young person is assessed to be 18 or older, he or she will be referred to the Home Office for a decision in relation to his or her future status - in the meantime the young person will remain in the placement already arranged for him or her.

See [Age Assessments of Young Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers - Practice Guidance](#).

See also [Joint Working Protocol between the Home Office and ADSS in relation to Age Assessments \(December 2005\)](#).

3. Response to Referrals

Where a referral is accepted, the child or young person will become **Looked After** and a **Care Plan** will be drawn up.

In relation to the arrangements for their placements, this will depend on their age or assessed age.

(In relation to many referrals the child may already be in an emergency placement arranged by the Emergency Duty Team/On-Call Team at Heathrow).

For children under 16, a placement will be identified via a referral to the Placement Team as for any other **Looked After Child** - see [Placements in Residential Care Procedure](#) and [Placements in Foster Care Procedure](#).

In relation to young people aged 16 to 18, the usual arrangement will be for a placement in semi-independent accommodation with support and this will be made directly with the appropriate provider. Where there are specific reasons why the young person requires foster care or residential care, a referral to the Placement Team will be made as for a child under 16.

As well as confirming the arrangements for the placement, the first priority of the worker from the Asylum Intake Team will be to ensure that the young person is following the correct procedure for his or her asylum claim - e.g. that arrangements are made to attend interviews as required and within the correct timescales.

All other procedures for Looked After Children contained in Part 4 of the manual will apply

4. Safeguarding Issues

Where any issues are identified by the Asylum Service which indicate that there are child protection concerns in relation to a child or young person - e.g. as a result of **Trafficking** or potential sexual exploitation - and that a **Section 47 Enquiry** may be required, a referral must be made to the Referral and Assessment Team. This will be made in writing following a discussion between the two team managers involved.

The Referral and Assessment Team will take the lead in any Section 47 Enquiry and **Core Assessment** - although where appropriate the worker from the Asylum Service will continue to be involved as a co-worker in the case.

The future case responsibility will then depend on the outcome of the Section 47 Enquiry and will be agreed between the two team managers involved.

5. Private Fostering

Some young people may claim to have relatives who will care for them. These claims should be fully explored. In these circumstances, as it is likely that any such arrangement will fall within the definition of **Private Fostering**, a referral will be made to the Referral and Assessment Team. This will be made in writing following a discussion between the two team managers involved. The requirements of the **Private Fostering Procedure** will then be followed.

6. Care Leavers

The support for care leavers is as set out in the Leaving Care Procedure but will be provided by the Asylum Service.

The only exception is that, at the point where support for a care leaver ends and the care leaver is also a parent who has

exhausted all rights of appeal, an exit strategy will be drawn up for the young person - for example consideration will be given to making a referral to the Referral and Assessment Team for an assessment of whether the care leaver's child is a **Child in Need**. This may be a case which comes within the No Recourse to Public Funds chapter.

End

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