

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Learning and Children's Services

Team Improvement Plan

2008-2009

Service: UASC TEAM

Team Manager: Alan Thorne

Service: UASC TEAM

Lead Officer: Alan Thorne

Key Purpose of Service:

The provision of assessment, case work and support services, (including accommodation) to Unaccompanied Asylum seeking Children referred to the Royal Borough of Kingston. Statutory responsibilities apply under the Children Act 1989 and the Children Leaving Care act 2000.

Evaluation of Effectiveness of the Team and Review of Progress on the Team Plan for 2007-2008:

- *Evaluate the effectiveness and performance of the team overall, as very good, good, satisfactory or requires improvement to address weaknesses in specific areas*
- *Use bullet points*
- *Refer to outcomes in relation key objectives, targets and performance indicators. Include evidence of progress and impact. Say what is better as a result.*
- *With reference to key performance indicators, especially published Performance Indicators in the CYPP, and other benchmarks including APA and CPA indicators, assess progress towards 2010 targets.*

2007 – 2008 has been a good year for the UASC Team. Despite a number of staffing changes the team has performed to a high standard with all reviews and assessments being completed on time. The team budget has been managed effectively and the last budget meeting indicated that the team's budget will not be overspent.

There has been a vast improvement in the quality of service offered to UASC over the past year: -

- Accommodation for UASC has improved over the last year, the majority of accommodation is now sourced through LASC.
- All UASC in LASC properties have a key worker as well as a personal advisor and/or social worker.
- THE UASC Team was able to take new referrals.
- All workers have established a good relationship with their service users
- All clients are allocated to a member of the team.
- All service users aged over 18 have a Pathway Plan.
- The number of UASC in education, employment and training has remained high.
- The numbers of complaints have drastically reduced and the three complaints received by the UASC Team within the last year were dealt with at stage 1.
- The team structure for 2008 – 2009 has been agreed.
- The three members of the UASC Team undertaking Social Work Training are on target to qualify in summer 2008.
- The UASC Team have managed ICS well.

- Service users with mental health needs have been well supported and a good working relationship has been established with CAMHS.
- UASC have been supported to access leisure and community activities. The YMCA has offered the use of the YMCA gym to UASC at a discounted price.

What Needs to Improve Further

Refer to key performance indicators, criteria in inspection/APA or other evaluation frameworks that you use to evaluate your service, and existing strategic plans. Identify the 3 or 4 key things that require priority improvement in 2008-2009.

- All Young People aged over 18 to have their Pathway Plan reviewed at least every 6 months
- The number of UASC in employment, education training to improve further.
- There are going to be some staff changes during May and July when our two locum staff leave, and the two trainee social workers return. These changes need to be managed sensitively and the returning workers will need a good induction and regular supervision.
- The UASC Team's financial procedure needs to be implemented.
- The relationship with the UASC accommodation providers/key workers need to be further developed and maintained.
- Young people need to be better prepared to leave the service.

Key Team Objectives for 2008-2009

*Preferably no more than 5 or 6 key objectives that will be the focus for your improvement plan in the coming year. These should be taken from the Children and Young People's Plan and/or Cultural Strategy and/or Adult Learning Plan. **If it is a new objective it should be included in the CYPP or other strategic plan.***

1. To maintain a stable staff team and to ensure that the newly qualified social workers returning to the team received a good re introduction to the service.
2. To continue to give priority to the physical and mental health needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people. Ensuring all UASC and YP who are LAC or Care Leavers have where appropriate access to CAMHS, health assessments, dental checks, immunisations and clear health plans, with clear outcomes and preventive actions identified.
3. To ensure that all young people have a Pathway Plan, that is regularly reviewed and that their support needs identified in the plan are addressed and that the plan is uploaded onto ICS.
4. To continue to ensure that all UASC and Young people are supported to access suitable good quality accommodation.
5. Continue to increase the number of UASC to access and sustain education, employment or training opportunities.
6. To continue to work closely with mainstream services within the children's trust to ensure full inclusion in all areas around health, education, housing/accommodation, leisure and cultural activities.

Resources, Budget and Staffing in 2008-2009

- *Brief statement about resources, including staffing numbers, staffing budget, non-staffing budget, income and total resource.*
- *Comment on how resources are being targeted to priorities, including support for professional development of staff*
- *Refer to use of capital assets to achieve best value*
- *Refer to any 'Gershon' efficiencies that are planned i.e. doing more with the same resources, doing the same with less resources or invest to save initiatives.*

The budget for the services of the UASC is made up in the following way:

Grant funding from the Home Office dependant upon the number of UASC referred and remaining as open cases:

Under 16's £105.34 per day

16- 17 years £47.18 per day

Over 18 dependant upon circumstances

Base budget from RBK £627,045

Changes to the grant circumstances and the variance in referrals makes it difficult to predict overall spend.

The UASC Team's budget is closely monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis.

Contribution to Key Service Developments in the Children and Young People's Plan/Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan

- *Brief statement about how your team will contribute to service developments to support children, young people and families. Include references to extended services, working in school clusters and multidisciplinary teams or integrated services.*

The UASC Team, as part of the Looked After Service, uses in a multi-disciplinary approach to meet the needs of the young people that we work with.

The service is developed in line with mainstream children's services and is well represented through the children and young people's ECM sub Groups. There are clear objectives relating to UASC within the Children and Young People's Plan.

Medium Term Financial Planning Principles

Say how your team plan objectives contribute to

- **Prevention and early intervention:** *The team are supporting prevention by ensuring assessed need is appropriately met. All new referrals are assessed on their day of arrival and if under 18 are looked after by the Local Authority. If a young person is age-disputed by the Home Office a Merton Compliant Age Assessment is undertaken.*
- **Personalisation, choice:** *Through consultation and empowerment UASC are encouraged to be self determining and as independent as possible. Particularly through education employment and training.*
- **Local settings:** *UASC are supported to use local resources and to participate in local events.*
- **Customer focus:** *The team has a clear customer focus all young people in the team have an allocated worker and all young people placed via LASC have a key worker. All young people aged under 18 have their care plan reviewed at least every 6 months by an Independent Reviewing Officer, all young people aged over 18 have a 'Pathway Plan, that is reviewed every 6 months by their social worker/personal advisor.*
- **Working with Partners:** *The team will continue to engage and work with the community, voluntary sector, including a wide range of partner agencies both within and outside of the Children's Trust.*

Consultation with service users and opportunities for participation by users in deciding priorities and service developments

- *Brief statement about how you have consulted stakeholders and partners, and enabled participation by young people and adults in decisions about your priorities and new and existing service developments.*
- *Refer to outcomes of surveys or consultation exercises and how information from these has helped shape your team priorities for improvement*
- *What are your plans for 2008/09 to ensure adults, young people and children are able to influence priorities and services developments. List any consultation activity, proposed timescale and who will be consulted.*

UASC have regular consultation, with support from interpreters, regarding their care plans prior to their LAC/Pathway Plan Review. In addition UASC have access to the Looked After Children's Forum facilitated by the LAC Participation Officer. All UASC are regularly consulted regarding a number of issues including, health, education, employment and training.

Newsletters and flyers are used to notify UASC of particular events or groups which are of interest.

Equalities

- *Is your team currently meeting the Equality Standard 3 / 4? (criteria for equality standards should be available on the intranet in March)*
- *What action are you taking to ensure you meet Equality Standard 3 / 4? Identify any equality targets set as a result of analysis of monitoring data from previous EQIAs and actions to achieve levels 3 and 4.*
- *List and evaluate any completed equality impact assessments carried out in 2007-2008*
- *Identify new assessments for 2008-2009 on new policies or service developments*

In 2007/2008 EQIA Assessments were carried out on:-

- LASC Arrangements for Post 18 Services
- Accommodation Strategy

In 2008/2009 an EQIA will be carried out on the UASC Financial Policy and process.

All 2008/2009 Team objectives impact upon equality issues due to the diverse nature of the client group and the current structures local national which have an effect upon access to services. Equality and fair access to services are central to the issue of aligning UASC Team more closely with the mainstream children's services across the Children's Trust.

Risk Assessments and Business Continuity

- *Identify key risks which could affect either the delivery or quality of the service, and actions to minimise these.*

Risks would include : –

Staffing

- The two social workers in the team from May 2008 will be newly qualified.
- 1 experienced locum personal advisor will be leaving the team in July 2008, leaving only 1 experienced Personal Advisor.

Accommodation

- Shortage of good quality local accommodation in the borough.
- Temporary accommodation hard to access and often unsuitable.

Budget

- Changing government priorities which effect numbers of entrants and grant funding.
- Tracking young people and ensuring compliance in claiming benefits remains a challenge.

Set out planned actions to ensure that services can continue in the event of major disruption or emergency, e.g. flooding, IT system failure, fire etc

- In the event of catastrophic failure of local systems a duty would be provided in a local outstation. Providing global communications infrastructure still available contact of clients would be via mobile ICT. Cascade of staff contact information held by the team and central.

Current and incoming casework would be prioritised by using traffic light system and risk assessment signed off by a senior member of staff.

Identify who is responsible for actions to ensure internal control requirements are fulfilled and how the risks will be monitored

- The strategic and team managers are responsible to ensure internal control requirements are fulfilled and how the risks will be monitored

Children and Young People's Plan Objective	Give priority to the physical and mental health needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people. Ensuring all UASC and YP who are LAC or Care Leavers have where appropriate, access to CAMHA, health assessments, dental checks, immunisations and clear health plans , with clear outcomes and preventive actions identified.
Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan Objective	
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>Monitored by lead officer, with team in team meetings, and with lead officer and line manager in supervision. This objective will be monitored through the Health Matters Strategy Group.</i>
Resources and Staffing	As Above

What are we going to do?	How are we going to achieve it?	By when	By whom	How will we know we are successful in achieving the objective?
<i>Complete one of these action plan pages for each objective</i>	<i>key tasks and milestones</i>	<i>month, year</i>		<i>Performance Indicators/outcomes. Express these as measurable outcomes. Use existing key PIs where appropriate</i>

Ensure all new referrals have timely access to LAC Medical/Health Assessment	<p>Social workers and PA's use UASC Health Screening Tool to identify health need.</p> <p>New arrivals registered with a GP and A LAC Medical is requested within 7 days</p>	July 2008	Social Workers/PA/LAC Nurse	% of new arrivals having access to health checks/LAC Medicals
Ensure Annual annuals medicals, dental & sight checks are up to date.	<p>Agree role remit of LAC Nurse in respect of the UASC Service Implement.</p> <p>Input data onto ICS.</p>	July 2008	Tim Wells/John Budden/LAC Nurse	Recorded data on ICS. Health needs of young people explored at LAC/Pathway Plan Reviews.
Ensure that all Young people can access to information re sex education and drug awareness	<p>Work in partnership with RBK Drug worker and Teenage Pregnancy co-ordinate.</p> <p>Issues re drugs and sex education are covered in Pathway Plans.</p> <p>Liaise with the young person's school</p> <p>UASC to cover these issues in group work activities.</p>	September 2008	Alan Thorne UASC Team	Young people have access to groups, information and support services and are aware of where to seek further advice and support

Children and Young People's Plan Objective	Ensure all UASC and YP are supported to access suitable good quality accommodation and if eligible are supported to move into independent accommodation when they leave care.
Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan Objective	
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitored by lead officer and line manager within supervision and team meetings.
Resources and Staffing	Resources and staffing as section above.

What are we going to do?	How are we going to achieve it?	By when	By whom	How will we know we are successful in achieving the objective?
<i>Complete one of these action plan pages for each objective</i>	<i>key tasks and milestones</i>	<i>month, year</i>		<i>Performance Indicators/outcomes. Express these as measurable outcomes. Use existing key PIs where appropriate</i>
Ensure the housing provided to UASC is of a high standard	Monthly monitoring meetings with the service provider (Hillgate Properties) Ensure that Pathway Plans and	Ongoing	Alan Thorne	Young people will be in good quality housing that meets their needs.

	<p>Pathway Plan Reviews identify the young person's accommodation needs for when they leave care.</p> <p>Support young people to secure appropriate accommodation when they leave care.</p>	Ongoing		<p>Young people have accommodation, if eligible, when they leave care.</p>
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Children and Young People's Plan Objective	Improve the access/attendance of UASC in schools and colleges (New referrals)
Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan Objective	
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>How this will be monitored and by whom</i>
Resources and Staffing	As above

What are we going to do?	How are we going to achieve it?	By when	By whom	How will we know we are successful in achieving the objective?
<i>Complete one of these action plan pages for each objective</i>	<i>key tasks and milestones</i>	<i>month, year</i>		<i>Performance Indicators/outcomes. Express these as measurable outcomes. Use existing key PIs where appropriate</i>
Ensure that all UASC are supported to access education, employment or training	Work in partnership with young people to identify their support needs within the care planning & assessment process.	July 2008		% of UASC in education % of UASC gaining formal qualifications.

	<p>Build relationships with schools and colleagues – so that we can work together to enable UASC to achieve.</p> <p>Work closely with the young person's key worker and ensure that they are supporting their clients to access education.</p>			
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Children and Young People's Plan Objective	To implement a clear financial policy to UASC that provides a fair and equitable access to financial support, life chances and transition to state benefit.
Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan Objective	
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitored by lead officer, with team in team meetings and with lead officer and line manager in supervision
Resources and Staffing	As section above

What are we going to do?	How are we going to achieve it?	By when	By whom	How will we know we are successful in achieving the objective?
<i>Complete one of these action plan pages for each objective</i>	<i>key tasks and milestones</i>	<i>month, year</i>		<i>Performance Indicators/outcomes. Express these as measurable outcomes. Use existing key PIs where appropriate</i>
Implement the new financial procedure	Ensure all staff members and service users are aware of the new financial procedure and that it is used effectively with all service users.	June 2008		Financial Procedure agreed and implemented.

	<p>Closely monitor spend across UASC and LALC service and review</p> <p>UASC Team members to ensure that young people are supported to manage their finances.</p>	Ongoing in UASC Monthly Budget Meetings.	Tim Wells, UASC Business Support, Alan Thorne and Matt Tizzard	<p>% of UASC Care Leavers accessing LC Grant and Life Chances Grant.</p> <p>Number of UASC Care Leavers in Supported Housing</p> <p>% of young people that leave the service with a clear exit strategy.</p> <p>Information and support needs clearly recorded in young people's Pathway Plan and Pathway Plan review document .</p>
Ensure where relevant all UASC claim appropriate benefits	<p>Review all current cases to ensure maximum benefit reclaim.</p> <p>Monitor and track claims</p>	Ongoing	UASC Business support	% of UASC claiming appropriate benefits.

Children and Young People's Plan Objective	Continue to increase the number of UASC and YP who access and sustain education, employment or training opportunities.
Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan Objective	
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>How this will be monitored and by whom</i>
Resources and Staffing	Resources and staffing as section above.

What are we going to do?	How are we going to achieve it?	By when	By whom	How will we know we are successful in achieving the objective?
<i>Complete one of these action plan pages for each objective</i>	<i>key tasks and milestones</i>	<i>month, year</i>		<i>Performance Indicators/outcomes. Express these as measurable outcomes. Use existing key PIs where appropriate</i>
Increase the number of UASC who are care leavers in further education, employment & training.	Continue target UASC who are NEET – develop action plans with support from connexions, key workers, Social workers, Personal Advisors and Carers	On going	Alan Thorne Education Matters Strategy	Proportion of Care Leavers in EET

	Ensure all care leavers have a 'Pathway Plan', that is reviewed every 6 months.		Group	Number of UASC who are offered work experience placements.
Develop Work Experience options for UASC	Work with connexions to develop and establish work experience placements for UASC	Ongoing	Alan Thorne Education Matters Strategy Group	

Children and Young People's Plan Objective	Continue to improve the links between the UASC Team and mainstream children's services within the Children's Trust, ensuring full inclusion in all areas around health, education, housing/accommodation, leisure and cultural activities etc.
Cultural Strategy/Adult Learning Plan Objective	
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>How this will be monitored and by whom</i>
Resources and Staffing	

What are we going to do?	How are we going to achieve it?	By when	By whom	How will we know we are successful in achieving the objective?
<i>Complete one of these action plan pages for each objective</i>	<i>key tasks and milestones</i>	<i>month, year</i>		<i>Performance Indicators/outcomes. Express these as measurable outcomes. Use existing key PIs where appropriate</i>
Continue to ensure UASC issues are included and addresses in relevant planning and development forums across the Children's	UASC Team Manager to join and participate in The Education and Health Matters Strategy Groups. UASC issues addressed	Ongoing	Alan Thorne	Representation and attendance

Trust.	through corporate parenting.	Ongoing	Alan Thorne/LAC Participation	Attendance at training and seminars
Best practice in working with UASC is followed	Specialist training for the UASC social workers in age assessment & Human Rights Assessment.	September 2008	Alan Thorne	
	Supervision, induction and appraisal for newly qualified social workers	Ongoing	Alan Thorne	
	Attending specialist LASC Training,	Ongoing	Alan Thorne	

Professional and Workforce Development, and Training

Evaluation of the Impact of Training and Professional Development during 2007-2008

The team remained relatively stable throughout the last year. The team had two highly productive away days in September 2008 and members of the team had the opportunity to attend specialist training including, communicating with children, Assessment Tools, Safety at work, Attachment, Trafficking, Mental Health, Bereavement & Loss.

The three trainee social workers supported by the UASC Team are on target to qualify in summer 2008, with 2 members of staff returning to the team.

Key priorities for professional and workforce development and training of the team in 2008-2009

1. Specialist training in Age Assessment
2. Specialist training in Human Rights Assessment
3. Induction, Appraisal & close supervision of newly qualified social workers.
4. Further participation & consultation for UASC.
5. Continue to work closely with colleagues in education, health, housing and the voluntary and private sector.

6. (Refugee Legal Centre, Home Office, LASC, Refugee Council etc)

Training and Professional Development Plan 2008-09

Priority for Training and Development	<p><i>Key team training need or workforce development activity for improving the skills and knowledge of the staff essential to improving team performance, achieving objectives and/or integrating children's services</i></p> <p>The team need specialist training in Age Assessment & Human Rights Assessment</p>
Lead Officer	Alan Thorne
Staff Involved	3
Resources/Costs	£1000 approx

Key Activities	Training Method	Expected Impact
Training in Age Assessment	Specialist training will need to be purchased.	<p>Workers will be confident in completing these complex assessments</p> <p>No legal challenges.</p>
Training in Human Rights Assessment	Specialist training will need to be purchased.	<p>Workers will be confident in completing these complex assessments</p> <p>No legal challenges</p>