



Keyworker's Guide

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Manager's Responsibilities

The manager of the home is responsible for ensuring that each child has a dedicated Key Worker who will build a positive and constructive relationship with the child. The manager should appoint a key worker prior to admission for pre-admission visits, or certainly upon admission for the child's introduction to the home.

The manager of the home should ensure that all Key Workers are suitably trained and fully competent to carry out the duties required of them.

Ideally, the Key Worker should remain constant throughout the child's time at the home; however, the manager of the home may decide that the Key Worker for a child should change if:

1. The child complains that the relationship is not working,

2. The member of staff leaves the employment of the home or is likely to be on a long-term leave.
3. The member of staff is unable to establish a positive relationship,
4. The manager believes that the relationship is not in the best interests of the child or the member of staff.

The manager of the home should ensure that Key Workers are properly supervised and offered support and guidance.

The Role of the Key Worker

All staff have a duty to each young person living in the home regardless of their role.

A Key Worker is a named member of staff who has a central role in respect of a particular child.

A Key Worker's areas of responsibility are broad and involve getting to know the young person in an enhanced way, including their case history and the details of their file. It is also important to get to know other individuals and service providers involved with the wider care of the child.

General Responsibilities of the Key Worker include:

- To act as a positive role model
- To assess the needs of the young person
- Support the young person's links with their families and local community and promote continued contact.
- Establish guidelines for behaviour.
- Provide emotional support.
- Create a safe and happy environment in which to live.
- Help young people to access education, health, and leisure services.
- Provide advice on independent living to young people who are about to leave care,
- Oversee the placement planning and recording systems for the child,
- Collate information required for child's Placement Planning Meetings and Looked After Reviews.

Monthly/Weekly Responsibilities of the Key Worker include:

- Complete and update monthly paperwork, which includes the Placement Plan, Risk Assessment, Behaviour Management Plan, and the Young Person's Monthly Review.

- Ensure the child has engaged with at least 4 key working sessions each month (aim to complete 1 per week) and recording on Relevant systems.
- Send weekly updates to the child's social worker over email summarising the child's week and recording as a professional contact.

The Key Worker should be the main co-ordinator of multi-agency services for the young person. They should help other staff follow the agreed approaches and care strategies set out in the Placement Plan. They should also help to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of each of the services.

Wherever possible, the Key Worker should be involved in visits prior to admission, therefore, to become a familiar face who will be present at the time of admission.

During the early stages of placement, the Key Worker should help the new young person settle in and make sure they have a copy of the Children's Guide and understand the house rules.

The Key Worker should ensure that all the young person's records and recording systems are adequately set up and that recording is taking place.

The Key Worker, supported by the rest of the staff team, should assist the young person to maintain social, recreational, cultural, and religious links through daily living activities inside and outside the home.

Most used Keyword documents.

- Keyworker Session ○ Young Person Monthly Review
- Placement Plan ○ Risk Assessment ○
- Behaviour Management Plan ○ Resident's purchased clothing. ○ Professional contact (weekly update to Social worker)

Key Worker Guidance

1. Be there for the young person

Being there each morning ...

or making sure someone is doing it for you.

Check that the bedroom is tidy, that there are clean clothes to wear, that they have had a wash, brushed their teeth and are fully ready for the day ahead.

Talking to the child to make sure that they understand what is planned for the day. If there are meetings, appointments or court appearances planned, talk through how these will go, possible issues etc.

Raise any risks or concerns with your Manager or supervisor.

Being there during the day

Take a regular interest in the young person's health needs, including appointments with the dentist, doctors, and opticians.

Make sure the young person has adequate clothing - bought, cleaned, dried and ironed.

Ensure that the young person is clean and presentable.

Encourage bedrooms to be kept clean, personalised (the child should have an input into the personalisation of their room), in a good state of repair and be well equipped, there should be adequate facilities for personal belongings and clothes to be stored away and kept safe.

Safety

Young people in residential care can feel vulnerable and frightened. Some are bullied or abused. Your job is to 'Be There' for them.

Know your key young person's file, background, and family details; know their interests and hobbies; encourage them to take part, join clubs etc; find out what makes them happy, sad, and angry; what frightens or worries them. Try to ease or reduce their concerns by offering advice, guidance, or direction.

Plan at least one individual key working session with the young person each week, (see Planning and Recording a Key Worker Session) and use this as an opportunity for you to talk about how they are doing, address any issues, talk through possible ways to behave differently and plan for the short and medium term etc.

Being there at night:

Bed or night times are potentially the worst time for Looked After Children, as it is a time when young people will reflect and show anxiety about what has happened that day or in

the past, or when they will show anxiety about what lies ahead in the morning or plans for the future.

Spend time with the young person helping them to identify and come to terms with their feelings and emotions.

Do what you can to ease or reduce fears or worries by talking to the young person in a positive and supportive way.

Alert colleagues to the young person's feelings, identifying how this might affect their behaviour and give advice about how to deal with potential problems.

When settling down for bed it is also useful for doing practical things like making sure they have clean clothes for the next day, toiletries and a clean towel, that they know what is going on the next day and any plans that have been put in place for the short term.

Being there day-to-day

Plan for the future by remembering birthdays and anniversaries or special occasions and make them special for the child.

Help the young person to maintain positive links with their family, significant people in their lives and friends by planning ahead for important dates that may have a relevance to the child such as birthdays, anniversaries, and other significant events in their lives.

Keep all the other staff informed and up to speed about what is happening in the child's life.

Advocate on the young person's behalf.

Get to know the Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer who is allocated to the young person.

Keep the young person informed about any changes which are happening in their lives, both at the home, in education, in their overall plan, with the social worker and at home with their family.

If issues need to be dealt with when you are off duty make sure you inform the manager of the home or colleagues. If you are likely to be away on leave plan ahead; do not leave the young person wondering what is going to happen in your absence.

Health Care.

The Key Worker must actively promote the health care of each young person and enable them to learn about healthy living.

In doing so they should liaise with key health professionals, including the Named Nurse for Looked After Children, the young person's GP, and dental practitioner.

The Key Worker should ensure that the physical, emotional and health needs of the young person are identified, and appropriate action is taken to ensure the medical, dental, and other health services needed to meet them are in place. Young people should be provided with guidance, advice and support on health and personal care issues appropriate to their age, needs, and wishes.

The Key Worker must ensure that relevant health care procedures are adhered to, in particular, that the young person is registered with a GP and has access to a Dentist; and that they have an up-to-date Health section of their Placement Plan.

Education Achievement

The Key Worker is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of the young person and liaising with education professionals.

This may include ensuring that the young person is:

- Provided with facilities conducive to study/complete homework, ○ Given help and encouragement with homework, ○ Provided with reading support where needed,
- Encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities, ○ Encouraged to discuss any problems they may have at school in privacy and encouraged to attend.

Key Workers may be required to attend parent's evenings and other school events with or without the child. The Key Worker should ensure that they are receiving all the necessary information and literature regarding events that effect the child's education. These duties should be carried out with the purpose of strengthening home/school links and improving the child's educational outcomes.

External Contacts

Key Workers need to keep themselves and their key young person in touch with interested parties outside the home.

Family contact

Are there restrictions on contact? Is the young person calling or writing to their family? Build a relationship with the family where appropriate.

Home visits

Are there restrictions? Should they be planned/accompanied?

Social workers

Keep them regularly (weekly) informed of good news as well as bad and build up a working relationship. Ensure social workers visit frequently, statutory visits should take place every 6 weeks unless a significant incident occurs then the social worker should visit and discuss the incident with young person and arrange professionals meeting if necessary.

Education

The young person's school need to be informed and aware of issues, and you should be equally aware of how they are getting on at school.

Specialist/expert support and guidance:

If the key young person needs additional support or guidance from specialists or experts (e.g., on substance misuse, budgeting, sexual health), talk to your manager or the social worker about how it can be obtained. When support has been identified the Key Worker needs to ensure that arrangements are made for them to access this support.

Complaints

The Key Worker must ensure the young person understands how the Complaints Procedures work, that they have a copy of the complaints procedure (this can be found in the Children's Guide) and is confident enough to use the procedures if necessary.

Also, it is the Key Worker's responsibility to ensure the young person has an up-to-date copy of the Children's Guide and other information produced by the home for children; ensure the young person is fully aware of the Fire Precautions and is aware of fire exits.

If there are particular requirements/needs identified in the key young person Care Plan, Health Care record or Placement Plan (e.g., information on substance misuse, budgeting, sexual health), make sure this is obtained and provided - in a form which is accessible and understandable to them.

Paperwork, Files, Placement Plans and Daily Records.

Ensure that records and the young person's files record is up to date and well organised.

Make sure the young person's Placement Plan is kept up to date and relevant to their interests and needs; make sure they have a copy.

The Key Worker must ensure that the young person's file is kept up to date, that relevant/up to date copies of the following records are contained in it:

- Local Authority Care Plan and Pathway Plan ○
Placement Plan ○ Risk Assessment ○ Behaviour
Management Plan ○ LAC Health Assessment
- Any other specialist health care or educational reports
or plans.

Planning and Recording a Key Worker Session

What is a Key Working session?

A Key Working session is a discussion or activity that takes place between a staff member and a young person in the home about a certain topic. This can be done individually or as a group. They should be recorded within the relevant system for each young person under the Keywork session form. You may print a key piece of information and ask them if they want to read it with you - they may decline but you can still log this as an attempt and state that they were not ready to engage.

Why do we do Key Working sessions?

Key Work sessions are a way of helping our young people to learn and reflect on experiences in the home and can be useful after an incident to look back on what went well and what could be improved. Key Work sessions also evidence to OFSTED and other important professionals the work we are doing with young people to help them make progress alongside their care plan.

Young people will show challenging behaviour. It is important that the behaviour or incident is discussed with the young person, however the timing of the conversation is equally as important. The relationship of the staff member delivering the key work session should be considered carefully. Listening to the young person, exploring, and understanding the antecedents should be the initial conversation.

There is often an underlying issue that will be the trigger, often this will be nothing to do with the staff member that has had to de-escalate the challenging behaviour. Once the initial cause of the behaviour has been discovered and the young person has had the opportunity to explain their version of events you will have a better understanding of the events of the day. Showing Empathy and using open questions (curiosity) is often the best way to effectively communicate with a young person.

For example: I understand that you were (unhappy, angry, sad), it is important to name the emotion, I want to make sure you are ok? Can you tell me about your day? I cannot put

myself in your position but what could I do to help? The session should inform practice and changes that can be made for the young person to try and prevent further incidents, ask for the young person's input into the behaviour management plan.

What should Key Work sessions be linked to?

Key Work sessions should be linked to the young person's placement plan, and they should be around the identified needs and potential risks of the young person. Some examples of good Key Work sessions might be.

- Risks of substance misuse and reflecting on incidents.
- ○ Risks of Missing From Home and reflecting on incidents. ○ ○ Independence and pathway planning. ○ ○ Healthy eating and diet. ○ ○ Mental Health and Wellbeing. ○ ○ Family Relationships and reflecting on contact. ○ ○ Positive / Negative behaviour and reflecting on incidents. ○ ○ Online / Mobile Phone Safety.
- Child Sexual Exploitation.
- Radicalisation. ○ County Lines / Criminal Exploitation. ○ Covid-19 & staying safe.
- Any other identified risks of young person and education around this.

Key Work sessions should also link to the Quality Standards set out in the Children's Homes Regulations. These are:

- The quality and purpose of care standard.
- The children's views, wishes and feelings standard. ○ The education standard. ○ The enjoyment and achievement standard. ○ The health and wellbeing standard. ○ The positive relationships standard. ○ The protection of children standard. ○ The leadership and management standard.
- The care planning standard.

How often should I complete Key Work sessions?

Staff should aim to complete a key work session each shift for their allocated key child, which works out as 4 pieces of Key Work per month.

Or as a suggestion staff could identify a piece of key work based on the young person's needs from each section of the placement plan – there are six sections of the placement plan which would create six pieces of key work for each month which would be exceeding expectations.

How do I identify Key Work sessions that need completing?

As stated above Key Work sessions should be linked to the young person's placement plan. When a young person's placement begins their social worker will highlight the young person's needs and how the placement should support the young person in meeting these identified needs.

A good key work session will link to the young person's identified needs. As the young person develops in the placement, their behaviours may change, and their needs will change. This allows staff to identify key work sessions that need completing by identifying the young person's needs. Staff may also identify that multiple key work sessions need completing on a specific topic, if the young person does not develop a full understanding after the first one, or if further incidents occur etc.

It would also be beneficial for staff to speak with their key young person and discuss what key work sessions they might want to complete or topics they want extra support with.

Plan ahead

It is not exhaustive, but this is a list of things you should do in planning a Keyworker session:

- Plan, talk to the young person and build time into your week when it will be suitable to conduct a Keyworker session.
- ○ It is important that the young person feels comfortable so consider which is likely to be better: a formal meeting or informal i.e., during an activity. ○ ○ Plan the meeting or activity in advance, arrange for petty cash etc.
- ○ Inform the young person of the date, time and where you will be having the meeting.
- Ask the young person to think about issues they want to talk about.
- What is the purpose of the session: Progress Chasing; Dealing with specific issues, behaviours or problems, Planning for a Review or Court Appearance, developing ideas for the future, Talking about the past. ○ Think through (with your supervisor, or Manager) what you need to deal with or talk about and how you can make it work.
- Relationships take time and change is always difficult so do not try to do too much too soon.
- The young person may try to reject or avoid you. Do not let this get to you; keep at it but talk to your supervisor or Manager if you need support or guidance.
- Start small, concentrate on the positives. ○ If you are unsure about the young person's safety talk to your supervisor or manager and ensure you plan to reduce or avoid your concerns. ○ Afterwards talk to your supervisor or manager - Do this immediately if you have any concerns or feel uncomfortable about what has happened.

Recording a keywork session on relevant system.

It is important that every keywork session completed with a young person is recorded on the relevant systems in place at the time. This is to evidence the work staff are doing to support the young person and encouraging them to progress alongside their placement plan.

When recorded, a keyword session must:

1. Be clear to read and include the correct grammar and punctuation.
2. Be factual on what happened during the keyword session and not include opinions or assumptions. For Example: no words such as 'may have', 'appear to be' or 'looked like'.
3. Include all the quality standards that were discussed or related to that keyword session.
4. Include the agenda of the person who initiated the keyword session. Was it the keyworker or the young person who wanted to complete a keyword session, and why?
5. Include reasonable targets for the young person to achieve. For Example: if the keyword session was around substance misuse, the target could be for the young person to engage with support from MOSAIC.
6. Include work to be followed up by the keyworker. For Example: extra observations on the young person, extra support, speaking to the social worker or other professionals, making a referral etc.
7. Include all details of the keyword session and a clear chronological timeline of events.

Example of Keyword Session Record

Summary: Key worker Session – Amber Smith 03.08.2020 Cannabis

Date of session: 03.08.2020

Time of session: 14:00 – 14:45

Quality Standards:

- The education standard
- The Health and Wellbeing standard
- The protection of children standard

Targets from last session and outcomes? First session on this topic.

Provide details of the Quality Standards discussed:

I have identified three of the quality standards above which have been discussed with Amber during this key working session. The details of this key working session can be found below, I have discussed with Amber how cannabis can affect your health and wellbeing and provided her with a leaflet to show her the facts about cannabis and how this can affect mental health. This was used to encourage Amber to gather a better understanding and education of cannabis and the effects it can have.

Key Child Agenda: To discuss recent cannabis use and how this affected her.

Key Worker Agenda: To educate Amber on the effects of cannabis use.

Targets set for the young person to achieve by the next session:

To not use cannabis.

To research and provide further effects/risks of cannabis.

Work to be followed up by the key worker by the next session:

To continue to support Amber with not using cannabis and offer MOSAIC involvement if required.

Any other matters to be discussed with the Team Manager and/or social worker and/or parents:

Make manager, social worker, and parents aware of Amber's cannabis use and discuss the support being given to her for this. To make everyone aware that if Amber continues to misuse cannabis that a MOSAIC referral will be offered, and further key work sessions will be completed.

Does the Placement Plan need updating? Yes

If Yes. Please provide details of areas to be updated in the Placement Plan?

The health, and emotional and behavioural development areas of the placement plan will be updated as evidence of the discussion had with Amber, if any further incidents occur then this will be added to Amber's identified needs and extra support will be sought in helping Amber to avoid using cannabis.

Does the behaviour management plan/risk assessment need updating? Yes

Please input the details of what has been discussed during the session here:

Amber began a discussion with staff ED around cannabis. Amber discussed with staff ED that she had smoked cannabis 'the other day' and that she will not be smoking it again because it made her feel as if she were in a different universe and she had begun crying. Amber stated that she had 'made a vow with herself not to have it again because she had never felt that way smoking it before'. This is the first-time staff had any knowledge of Amber smoking cannabis. Staff ED asked Amber if she had smoked this a lot previously and Amber stated she had not, but she had tried it a couple of times before when with her friends and had again this time because 'everyone else was doing it'.

Staff ED then asked Amber if she knew any information about cannabis and the effects it can have on people. Amber stated, 'it just gets you high'. From this staff ED identified that Amber would benefit from some education on cannabis.

Staff ED discussed with Amber how cannabis can affect people differently and different types of cannabis can affect you in different ways. Staff ED explained that sometimes the people you get cannabis from can mix this with different things such as chemicals, or other drugs which can have a negative effect. Amber stated that when she has smoked cannabis before she has never had a negative experience with it whereas when she had smoked it the last time, she could not stop crying, felt strange and as if she was in a parallel universe.

Staff ED found a resource for Amber to show her the facts about cannabis and how this can affect mental health, this was used to encourage Amber to gather a better understanding of cannabis and the effects it can have. See attached link.

[Cannabis | NHS inform](#)

After staff ED had shown Amber this, staff ED set Amber a task of researching the effects of cannabis and other ways it can affect a person. Amber has been given 1 week to complete this task and

another key working session will be completed next week to conclude this. If any further incidents occur with Amber smoking cannabis, then a MOSAIC referral will be offered for more support.