



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE DIRECTORATE**

**EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

**CHILDREN IN CARE & CARE  
LEAVERS**

SS2008YPT01

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Halton Borough Council (HBC) as a Corporate Parent has the responsibility for all Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Put simply, this requires HBC in its corporate parenting role to do for Haltons Looked After Children at least what any good parent would do for their own children.
- 1.2 Recognising the many obstacles Looked After Children and Care Leavers face in accessing, maintaining and succeeding in employment, the Council is committed to fulfilling its Corporate Parenting responsibilities by providing direct opportunities for employment.

## **2. PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 The Corporate Parenting responsibility extends across all Directorates within HBC and as such emphasises the need for all managers to have an ongoing awareness of how they contribute to improving life chances and outcomes for this vulnerable group of young people.
- 2.2 HBC in meeting its Corporate Parenting responsibilities is committed to improving the Life Chances of Looked After Children and Care Leavers by providing them with opportunities to:
  - ◆ Improve existing skills
  - ◆ Learn new skills
  - ◆ Increase knowledge
  - ◆ Provide access to training and development programme
  - ◆ Enjoy work experience
  - ◆ Support progress into employment
- 2.3 It is also underlined within three of the five key outcomes of the Children Act 2004 specifically:-
  - ◆ Enjoy and Achieve
  - ◆ Make a Positive Contribution
  - ◆ Achieve Economic Well-being

## **3. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

- 3.1 Improving outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers is one of the recent key priorities agreed with Dfes and CSCI by the Children and Young People's Directorate and performance in this area is a significant consideration in the Directorate's Annual Performance Assessment. Consequently, performance in this area will impact on the Council's overall CPA rating and it is essential therefore that the Employment Policy is fully implemented by Managers across the Council.

#### **4. CURRENT SITUATION IN HALTON**

- 4.1 At any one time in Halton there are approximately 90 Care Leavers aged 16 – 21 yrs who would fall within the scope of the Employment Policy and a significant proportion of these are not engaged in Education, Employment or training (NEET).
- 4.2 The Connexions Service is integral to the implementation of this Policy and is fully committed to support both Care Leavers and Line Managers involved in providing employment opportunities for Care Leavers. A link personal advisor from Connexions has been identified for the Employment Policy and will contribute to its planning and co-ordination.

#### **5. PROCESS IN HALTON**

- 5.1 In the first instance, this will be through 'work related opportunities' (two weeks work placement) which schools have a statutory responsibility to arrange for young people in years 9 – 11. When offering to take these placements the Council should always give priority to Looked After Children.

- 5.2 In addition each Directorate will offer as a minimum at least one Care Leaver at any given time:

- ◆ 26 weeks paid employment
- ◆ A placement supervisor
- ◆ Opportunities to access skill development

This will be achieved by recruiting to a permanent vacancy on a temporary basis for six months or from existing budgets.

- 5.3 The Council will guarantee that any Looked After Child or Care Leaver applying for a permanent post will be offered an interview provided they meet the essential requirements of the person specification. Application forms from Care Leavers will indicate their status.

- 5.3 The Council will also endeavour to provide Care Leavers with work placements required as part of a college course.

- 5.4 Corporate Training will give priority to Looked After Children on placement or in employment with the Council in attending training courses.

- 5.5 During the 26 weeks paid employment the young person will:

- ◆ Be provided, where possible, with the same opportunities as regular employees including training and development opportunities
- ◆ Be subject to the same conditions of service as an employee
- ◆ Receive remuneration at the rate for the post they are in
- ◆ Be eligible to apply for posts as they arise
- ◆ Be eligible to access training provided by Corporate Training Unit

## 6. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONNEXIONS**

6.1 During the 26 week paid employment Connexions will:

- ◆ Provide a link with the placement supervisor and will support their role as appropriate including on the job support to young people
- ◆ Make every effort to ensure that all young people move into Education, employment or training at the end of their placement with Halton Borough Council
- ◆ Extensive job seeking activity will be provided during the final six weeks of the employment experience for those young people who do not have permanent employment within the Council. This will include planned visits to the Connexions Centre and support with applications, letters, and production of a CV.

6.2 The Connexions Advisor or the young person's social worker will provide support to young people who maybe assessed as needing support or who may experience difficulties during their work placement.

6.3 Progress within the work placement will be reviewed at regular intervals organised by Connexions and involving the young person, the placement supervisor and the social worker.

## 7. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORATES**

7.1 Prior to, or during the work placement, the young person may be provided with the opportunity to 'shadow' a nominated officer for one day from the Directorate in which they are placed.

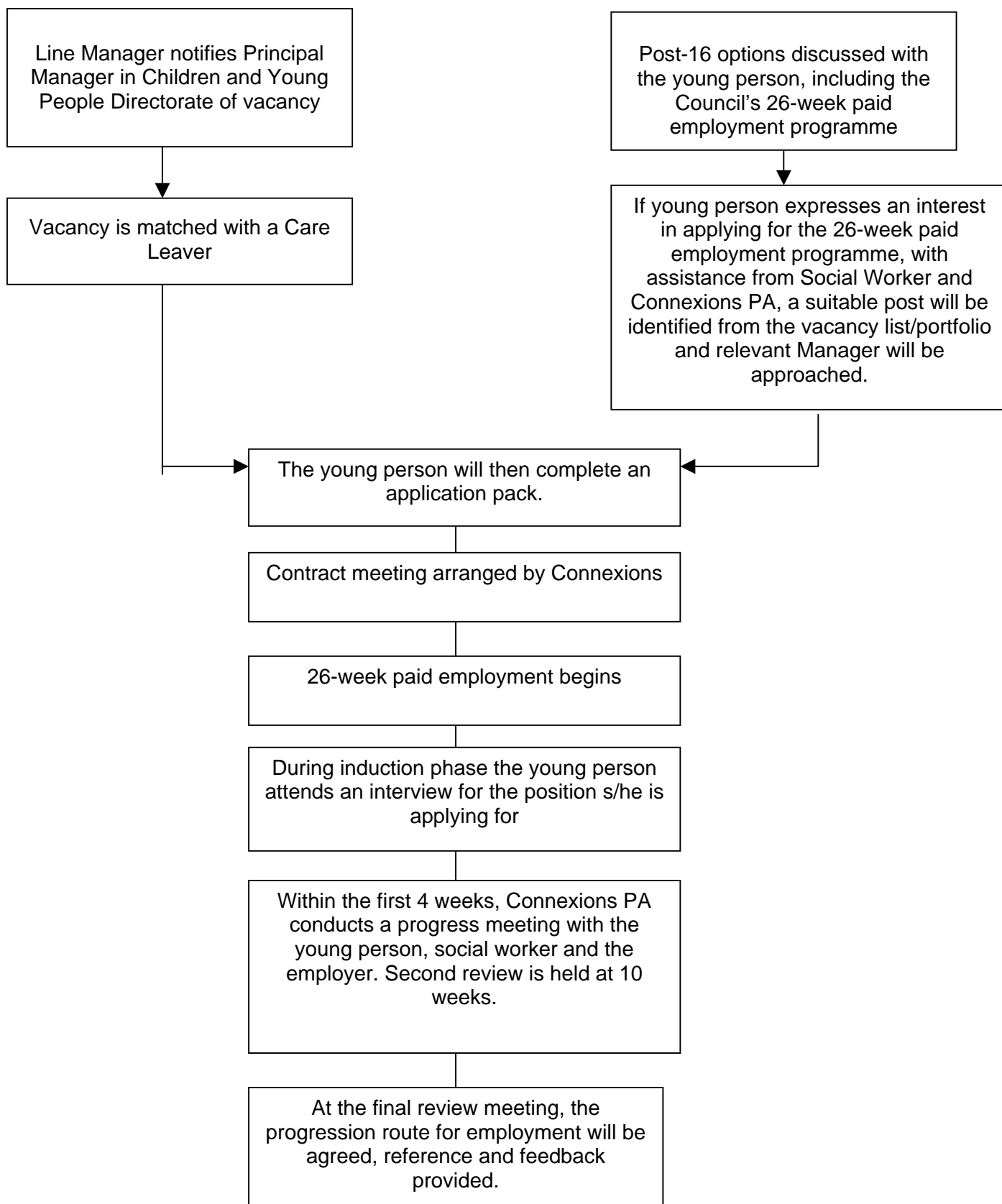
7.2 The Children and Young People's Directorate will also employ young people on specific projects relating to the development of Policy/Procedures/Practice or relating to the employment of social work staff.

7.3 Personnel will monitor the implementation of this Policy and information regarding work placements will be reported to Strategic Directors, the Corporate Parenting Scrutiny Group and thereafter to the Life Chances and Employment Policy and Performance Board.

**Appendix 1**

## Procedural Flow Chart

### Employment Policy (26 week paid employment)



**EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

## **LEAD OFFICERS**

<b>Chief Executives</b>	Jim Yates – Principal Executive Officer
<b>Children and Young People</b>	Sharon Williams – Head of Education, Support for LAC
<b>Corporate and Policy</b>	Jane Burgess – Principal Personnel Officer
<b>Environment</b>	Dave Hall – Section Leader – Transport,  Gerry Fitzpatrick - Enterprise, Employment and Skills Manager
<b>Health and Community</b>	Howard Cockcroft – Operational Director Culture and Leisure
<b>Young Peoples Team Link for Employment Policy</b>	Hilary Barker – Principal Manager