

**CHILDREN IN CARE – ACCESS TO SOUTHWARK
LEISURE FACILITIES**

PROTOCOL

Introduction

Since April 2008 Southwark's Looked After Services and Fusion have had a working protocol to provide free "lifestyle memberships" to older children in care and care leavers.

Under Statutory Guidance issued under the "Care Matters" and "Every Child Matters" framework, Southwark has responsibilities as Corporate Parents to provide a range of targeted interventions for Children in Care to promote healthy lifestyles and access to sport and leisure opportunities.

Fusion is commissioned by the London Borough of Southwark to provide leisure facilities and services. This protocol has been made possible through Fusions wish to support one of the most vulnerable groups of young people in Southwark.

Service Description

The protocol provides for children looked after and care leavers to receive free memberships to attend any Fusion facility in the London Borough of Southwark.

Up to 150 lifestyle memberships (top membership available) will be issued to children in care and care leavers aged 14-20.

In addition to accessing gym and swimming facilities a comprehensive range of classes i.e. step, body pumping etc will also be available under the terms of the free membership.

Application Process

The application process is led by child in care services through the young person's allocated social worker (14-18) or personal advisor (18-20). The leaflet describing the protocol and services available also acts as an application form which is approved by the Head of Service.

Under the protocol Peckham Pulse has been identified as the enrolment centre which can ensure reception staff are fully briefed and that any confusion with regards to how the scheme works or young people feeling stigmatised is kept to an absolute minimum.

Peckham Pulse staff will be able to accept the leaflet/application form as authorisation and issue a membership card in the same way as any other Southwark resident.

Membership and renewal of their card will be on an annual basis with free membership lasting until the young person reaches the age of 20.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All approvals issued by the Child in Care Service (Adolescent and Aftercare) will be logged on their data base (Carefirst) including date of referral.

Fusion and Child in Care Services will identify lead administration officers who will regularly exchange information relating to new approvals and new membership cards issued.

Leisure Service usage (uptake) will be monitored by Fusion who will be able to report and track on which young people/care leavers are using the service, the frequency and which leisure facility they are attending.

The protocol will be monitored on a bi annual basis by lead officers in Fusion and Children in Care Services.

Under protocol arrangements, young people who do not use the service over a six month period will be written to by the Head for Children in Care Services to confirm that their membership has been concluded or will not be renewed at the end of their membership period (as appropriate following six monthly review meetings).

During the bi annual meetings standard reports will be provided to provide the following key information:

- 1) Total number of cards approved by CLA Services over the preceding six month period by age, gender, ethnicity, placement address (CiC Service).
- 2) The number of young people/care leavers approved who have actually attended Peckham Pulse and obtained their membership card (Fusion).
- 3) Of the total memberships issued under the scheme, how many sessions were attended by each member and centre location.
- 4) Overview management of the scheme to determine whether child looked after services are utilising 150 memberships and are they regularly accessing the service.

Each year an annual report will be provided for Southwark's Corporate Parenting Committee and Corporate Commissioning Services outlining the progress of the protocol.

Agreement/Protocol Period

Following a formal review of the protocol by the Corporate Parenting Committee in November 2010 and service review in Jan 2011 it is proposed that this agreement be extended for a further three year period from 1 April 2011 until the 31 March 2014.

An update authorisation/information leaflet will be developed by Southwark Communications Team, Child in Care Services, Fusion and Speakerbox representation for use from 1 April 2011

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