

RAG COMPLIANCE WITH THE CHARTER FOR CARE LEAVERS

APPENDIX 1

Charter Promise	Evidence	Provisional RAG Status
Respect and honour your identity <i>We will help you develop your own personal beliefs and values and accept your culture and heritage. We will celebrate your identity as an individual, as a member of identity groups and as a valued member of your community.</i>	<p>Southwark Speaker Box Council is open to all children and young people in care and care leavers up to the age of 24. Speaker Box is important in allowing children looked after and care leavers an opportunity to developing and express their own views, values and feelings. Speaker Box also provides young people with the opportunity to peer network with others of different or similar identity groups.</p> <p>Speaker Box has developed the 'Understanding Us' training and development programme for council staff and created the 10 Golden Rules for social workers to ensure that respect and understanding of individual's identity is embedded in Southwark's way of working.</p>	GREEN
Believe in you <i>We will hold a belief in your potential and a vision for your future even if you have lost sight of this yourself. We will help you push aside limiting barriers and encourage and support you to pursue your goals in whatever ways we can.</i>	<p>The Adolescent and Aftercare Service have an active partnership with Southwark Connexions and Southwark Works to provide allocated staff who are able to target the most vulnerable care leavers who may struggle to access the employment, education and training markets.</p> <p>In partnership with the virtual school social workers identify the young people who do not have firm plans and directly intervene to help young people (16+) clarify their pathways and access special projects to help them engage and prepare.</p>	GREEN
Listen to you <i>We will take time to listen to you, respect, and strive to</i>	<p>The 'Tell It Like It Was' annual survey of care leavers gives young people the opportunity to express their opinions on the care and support they have received, both in care and in order to transition out of care.</p> <p>All social workers and personal advisors have completed or are scheduled to complete the Speaker Box</p>	GREEN

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<i>understand your point of view.</i>	<p>training, aimed at developing knowledge and understandings of issues facing the young people in / that are leaving care.</p> <p>As part of the '10 golden rules' young people in care are promised that they will be listened to and involved in decisions about their care. This includes decisions about their futures and transitions out of care.</p> <p>Speaker Box has had some significant achievements including a direct influence on local policy decisions. Speaker Box has been recognised as a national example of best practice by Ofsted.</p>	
Inform you <i>We will give you information that you need at every point in your journey, from are to adulthood, presented in a way that you want including information on legal entitlements and the service you can expect to receive from us at different stages in the journey.</i>	<p>Speaker Box aims to inform young people of their rights and to enable them to ask informed questions and to enable children and young people to make more informed decisions about their care and treatment. Speaker Box produces a regular newsletter for all children and young people in care and care leavers.</p> <p>As part of the '10 golden rules' young people in care are informed of and involved in decisions being made about their care, and that they have the opportunity to speak with their social worker alone during every visit.</p> <p>Those preparing to leave care are invited to open days to help to inform them of their options when transitioning out of care, and to give them the time to prepare and to make fully informed choices.</p>	GREEN
Support you <i>We will provide any support set out in current Regulations and Guidance and will not unreasonably withhold advice when you are no longer legally entitled to this service. As well as information, advice, practical and financial help we will provide</i>	<p>Southwark Council provides care leavers with support set out in current Regulations and Guidance. Southwark also seeks to continue supporting care leavers once for example through care leaver involvement in Speaker Box.</p> <p>The Adolescent and After Care Service have a 'Succeeding into Adulthood' policy to support care leavers transition to adulthood. This includes maintaining meaningful contact and support with care leavers to 21 (25 if in education), multi agency working, including to target those seen as vulnerable to crime or gangs, promoting semi-independent skills post 16, and linking with outside businesses and organisations to offer a range of apprenticeship and work experience opportunities.</p> <p>To continue to support and advise care leavers even when they no longer have a legal entitlement to</p>	GREEN

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<i>emotional support.</i>	services the Adolescent and After Care Service is ensures signposting care leavers to appropriate services to ensure that their needs are met.	
Find you a home <i>We will work alongside you to prepare you for your move into independent living only when you are ready. We will help you think about the choices available and to find accommodation that is right for you.</i>	<p>Southwark Specialist Services has a long standing protocol with Southwark housing that enables care leavers to access level 2 priority for Southwark housing at 18. Year end performance for 2011/12 was 90.4% of care leavers in suitable accommodation.</p> <p>For all young people who are deemed to be vulnerable at 18 and require additional support, Southwark housing allow the children looked after service to have a designated number “supporting people” placements which provide up to 2 years supportive housing until the young person is ready and able to cope with their own tenancy.</p> <p>Ofsted noted that within Southwark: “the existence of strong partnerships with housing are well established ensuring priority for care leavers through Supporting People arrangements and providing secure tenancies for care leavers. A large majority of responses to the inspection survey show that care leavers live in good or very good accommodation”.</p>	GREEN
Life long champion <i>We will point you in a positive direction and journey alongside you at your pace. We will trust and respect you. We will remain your supporters in whatever way we can, even when our formal relationship with you has ended.</i>	<p>The Care Planning Regulations placed responsibilities upon local authorities to ensure young people have opportunity to remain in stable long term placements. Southwark Staying Put Policy ensures young people with a stable foster placement can continue to live in their former foster home as a transition to independence. This is more in line with what is experienced nationally by young people outside of the care arena. During 2011/2012 Southwark supported over 24 young care leavers to stay put with former foster carers.</p> <p>Section 23CA of the 1989 Act means care leavers up to the age of 25 can return to Southwark and request an assessment of their needs for support should they wish to resume their education. Southwark routinely offers further education and higher education packages of support to young people, including financial support, assistance with accommodation costs and course materials, and the allocation of a PA. In 2011/2012 the service offered 45 packages to young people for further and higher education support.</p> <p>The Adolescent and Aftercare Service is embarking upon a programme of transformation, which includes all young people’s placement plans post-18 being reviewed at a panel, and all young people being allocated a</p>	GREEN

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	<p>personal advisor at 17 and a half to assist them with the transition from care to aftercare.</p> <p>The service will re-launch a life skills programme in 2013. The intention is to make this mandatory to all young people under 16, in an attempt to further develop their skills in living independently.</p> <p>To continue to support care leavers even after the formal relationship has ended the Adolescent and After Care Service can sign post care leavers to appropriate services for which they are eligible, including other council services and services provided by the voluntary sector. In addition the service will ensure all care leavers are aware of and engage with appropriate community provision in their area.</p>	