**Looked After Children (Students) and Care Leavers**

**Service Level Agreement**

**Introduction**

Looked After Children (Students) and Care Leavers are young people who currently are, or have previously spent time in Local Authority Care. They may have lived with foster parents, lived in a care home, supported lodgings or in sheltered accommodation. The College of North West London uses the following definitions:

**Looked After Children (Students):** The term ‘Looked After’ was introduced by the Children Act 1989 and refers to children who are subject to care orders and those who are voluntarily accommodated. A child is someone under the age of 18.

**Care leaver:** Care leavers will be aged 16-24 and meet the definition of the Leaving care Act 2000 which states that a care leaver is someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday.

**Expectations**

Pre-Entry to the College you can expect that the College will:

* Work with school staff where possible to raise the aspirations of Looked After Children and Care Leavers
* Work with key agencies to ensure smooth transition to Further Education
* Act as an advocate on behalf of Looked After Children and Care Leavers where necessary
* Offer advice and support to ensure that Looked After Children and Care Leavers are choosing the right course and that they are aware of their financial entitlement from the College’s financial support schemes
* Ensure that Looked After Children and Care Leavers are aware of the Designated Members of Staff for Looked After Children and Care Leavers and the support available within the College

Whilst you are studying on your chosen programme of study you can expect that the College will:

* Target Looked After Children and Care Leavers as a priority category of students
* Offer mentoring and academic support
* Ensure that Care Leavers and Looked After Children are aware of any financial support that they may be entitled to and support them to apply for this funding
* Have a Designated Member of Staff available within the College to provide advice and support
* Support the success of Looked After Children and Care Leavers, signposting to study skill support and IAG / Careers support as appropriate
* Liaise with the Local Authority when required
* Respect the confidentiality of Looked After Children and Care Leavers
* Liaise with tutors and other staff if required
* Liaise with outside agencies if required
* Advocate on a Looked After Child or Care Leaver’s behalf if necessary

As a student at the College of North West London we expect that you will:

* Adhere to college rules and Code of Conduct
* Inform your Designated Member of Staff if you are struggling with your studies so that appropriate support can be put in place

We expect that our partner organisations will:

* Encourage Looked After Children and Care Leavers to make realistic application to appropriate Further Education courses
* Inform the Designated Member of Staff of any Looked After Children or Care Leavers who would like to, or are attending the College of North West London
* Inform the Designated Member of Staff of any additional information about the young person that they deem necessary to support the Looked After Child or Care Leaver to succeed

The College of North West London will:

* Maintain and improve its provision for Looked After Children and Care Leavers
* Evaluate the impact of Looked After Children and Care Leavers support offered by the College
* Champion the educational success of Looked After Children and Care Leavers at a local and National level
* Monitor the success and retention of Looked After Children and Care Leavers