

Introduction

The Care Matters initiative, the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 (Regulations and Guidance) require each local authority to have a "Staying Put" Policy. It is also a requirement for Fostering Services to have their own Staying Put Policy. The policy sets out arrangements whereby the CFT will promote the opportunity for a young person to remain in a former fostering arrangement beyond a young person's 18th birthday. This arrangement promotes stability in preparation for independent living and adult life and is referred to as a Staying Put Arrangement.

Refer also to HM Government Guidance 2013 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/201015/Staying_Put_Guidance.pdf

Expectations

Discussions should take place between the CFT's Supervising Social Worker and Foster Carer as to the Foster Carer's views in respect of Post 18 year's accommodation for the young person prior to the young person's 16th Birthday. The young person's social worker will also establish the young person's views. The outcome of these discussions should be recorded in the Young Person's Pathway Plan and by the Supervising Social Worker in the Foster Carer and Young Person's Charms Records.

A Staying Put Arrangement

Eligibility Criteria

The young person can continue to reside with their current foster carer post 18 years of age if the young person and foster carer want this arrangement to go ahead and there are no reasons identified as to why this arrangement should not go ahead.

Aims of a Staying Put Arrangement is to:

- ⌚ extend the transition to adulthood within a supportive family environment
- ⌚ ensure young people can remain with their former foster carers until they are prepared for adulthood
- ⌚ experience a transition similar to their peers
- ⌚ avoid social exclusion
- ⌚ ensure future stable accommodation and tenancy sustainment
- ⌚ ensure that the gap in the quality of life between those in the care of a local authority and those raised in supportive families is significantly reduced.

Forum for decision making

A Staying Put Arrangement should be discussed with the Foster Carer and the Young Person prior to the LAC Review around the young person's 16th Birthday enabling the outcome of these discussions to be communicated into the LAC Review and Pathway Plan process. If there is dispute around this arrangement this should be further discussed in the young person's LAC Review. The Fostering Agency's Panel will be informed of the Foster Carers decision and change in circumstance for that young person. A Foster Carer can continue to provide foster placements to other children alongside a Staying Put Arrangement. The Foster Placement will continue to be monitored under Fostering Regulations and CFT Procedures.

Foster carers need to be aware that the CFT will not always be involved in a Staying Put Arrangement once finalised. This will be dependent on the Staying Put Policy of the Local Authority for the young Person. The CFT will support and guide you through the transitional arrangements up to the young person's 18th Birthday. (Refer to Pathway 1 or 2 for the different Staying Put Pathways)

Financial Implications

Staying Put Policy and Guidance



Foster Carers need to be aware that there will be financial changes when undertaking these arrangements. During discussions with Foster Carers, the CFT's Supervising Social Worker will share the potential implications of this with you. Each Local Authority's Policy is different, and the financial package differs. If the CFT remain involved with the Staying Put Arrangement, you may receive a proportion of, or the equivalent of the standard weekly professional fee for the Staying Put Arrangement. The expectations placed upon you in terms of provision for the young person is less, for example, you are not expected to provide pocket money or clothing. The young person is also expected to make a financial contribution to this arrangement. The amount and who this is paid to, will be agreed with the young person's local authority.

If the Foster Carer is in receipt of benefits. You will need to seek individual financial advice on the impact of the Staying Put Arrangement on your own benefits. Benefits which **could** be impacted include: Housing Benefit, Council Tax and Council Tax Benefits, Income Support and National Insurance and Pension Credits.

When young people remain living with their former foster carers under a Staying Put Arrangement, the Income Tax and National Insurance Framework and liabilities for foster carers have been extended to apply to former foster carers who are now Staying Put Providers. (Refer to HMRC Helpsheet 236 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualifying-care-relief-foster-carers-adult-placement-carers-kinship-carers-and-staying-put-carers-hs236-self-assessment-helpsheet/hs236-qualifying-care-relief-foster-carers-adult-placement-carers-kinship-carers-and-staying-put-carers-2015>)

Safeguarding and impact of fostering household

Health and Safety Checks of the household will continue to take place by the supervising social worker from the CFT or appointed support worker of the Local Authority if the CFT do not remain involved in the Staying Put Arrangement. A Risk Assessment of the young person will remain in place, reviewed at regular intervals (minimum of 6 monthly). A DBS check will be undertaken of the young person prior to their 18th Birthday.

Ongoing Training

Foster Carers will be offered ongoing training in the support of Staying Put Arrangements, Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults and the development of Life Skills.

Alternative Post 18 Accommodation Choices Shared Lives Arrangement

If the young person has a disability, they may be able to access a shared lives arrangement via adult services. The Foster Carer may also be able to become a shared lives provider for their young person, Post 18 years of age. This would require a further assessment by the local authority in which the young person resides. These arrangements should be discussed with the Foster Carer prior to the young person's 16th Birthday and the commencement of Pathway Planning. Policies and procedures of the individual local authority should be considered at this time. (Pathway 3)

University

The Local Authority can support one form of accommodation when a young person attends University. If the young person is continuing to live with their foster carer, the CFT would advise that a Staying Put Arrangement is agreed. If the young person chooses to live in University accommodation, this is usually for 40 weeks of the year. For the remaining 12 weeks the Local Authority may agree a Staying Put Arrangement or Supported Lodgings Arrangement with the foster carer if the young person wishes to return to their foster carer for this 12-week period. (Follow Pathway 4)

Privately Rented Accommodation

Staying Put Policy and Guidance



The young person should be supported by their Foster Carer and Social Worker in identifying appropriate accommodation and a moving on date agreed by all parties. (Follow Pathway 3)

Supported Living

The young person should be supported by their Foster Carer and Social Worker in identifying appropriate accommodation and a moving on date agreed by all parties. (Follow Pathway 3)

Social Housing

The young person should be supported in completing applications for social housing by their foster carer and local authority social worker in advance of the young person's 18th Birthday. (Follow Pathway 3)

Return to live with Birth Family

The young person should be supported by the foster carer (where possible and appropriate) and the young person's social worker or personal advisor in making the transition to live with birth parents. (Follow Pathway 3)

Post Staying Put

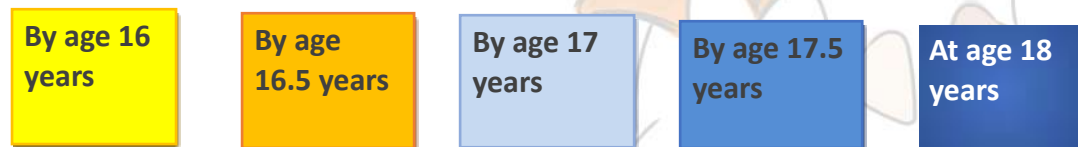
A Staying Put Arrangement can remain in place until the young person's 21st Birthday. The young person may choose to move on from a Staying Put Arrangement at any age. The Living Agreement should state the notice period to be provided to the Staying Put Provider by the Young Person should they wish to move on. The Staying Put provider can also give notice on a Staying Put Arrangement at any time but must provide the required notice period as set out in the Living Agreement.

Post Staying Put Accommodation options should be discussed and reviewed on an ongoing basis during the Pathway Planning process, to enable effective planning. A Staying Put Arrangement may be extended until the young person completes the agreed programme of education or training being undertaken on their 21st Birthday however Staying Put Provider's should refer to the Staying Put Policy of the young person's Local Authority to confirm arrangements for such extensions.

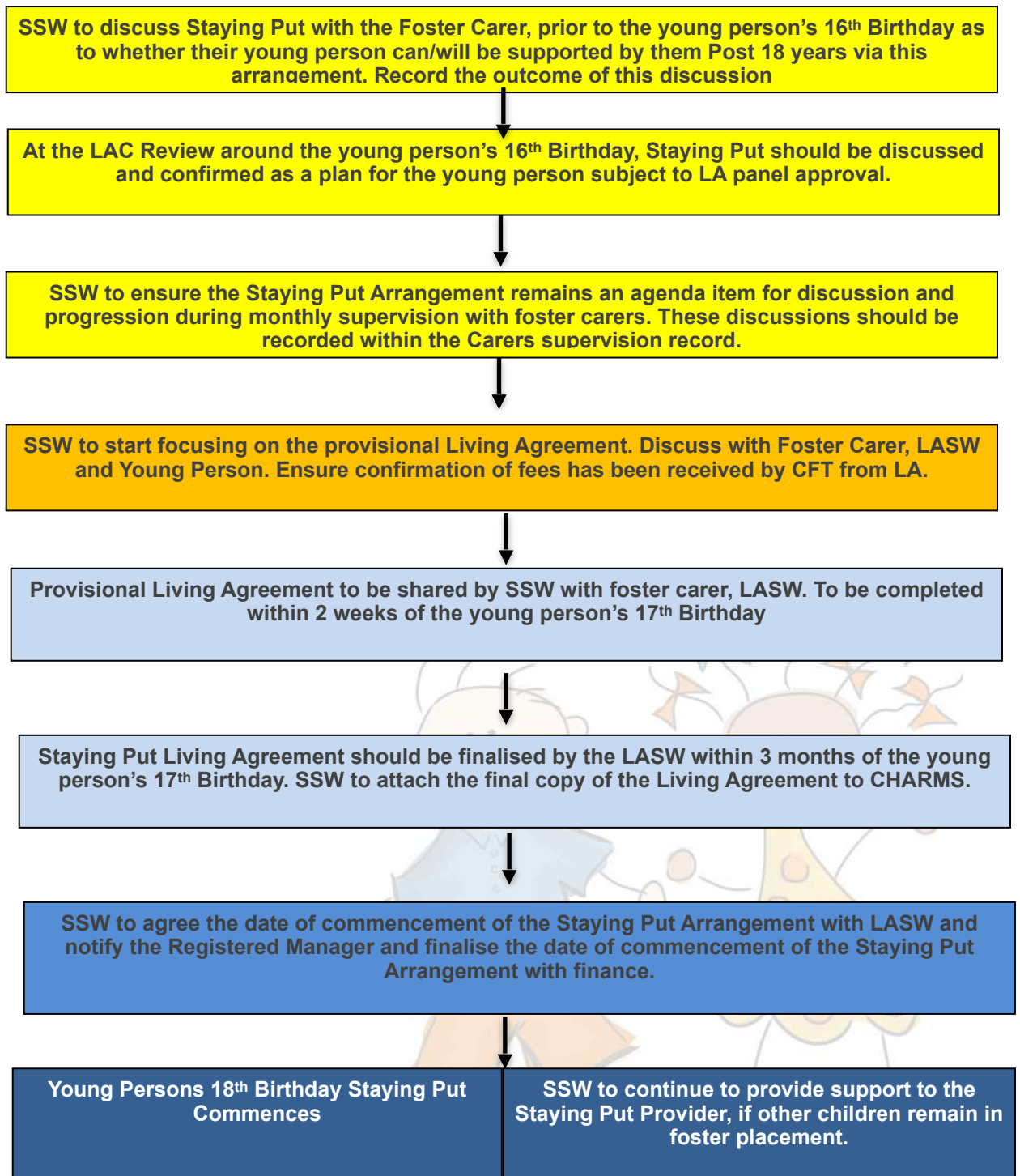
Staying Put Procedure

As described above, there are a number of Post 18 year's accommodation choices. The CFT's Procedures for each of those choices is outlined in Pathways 1 -4 below.

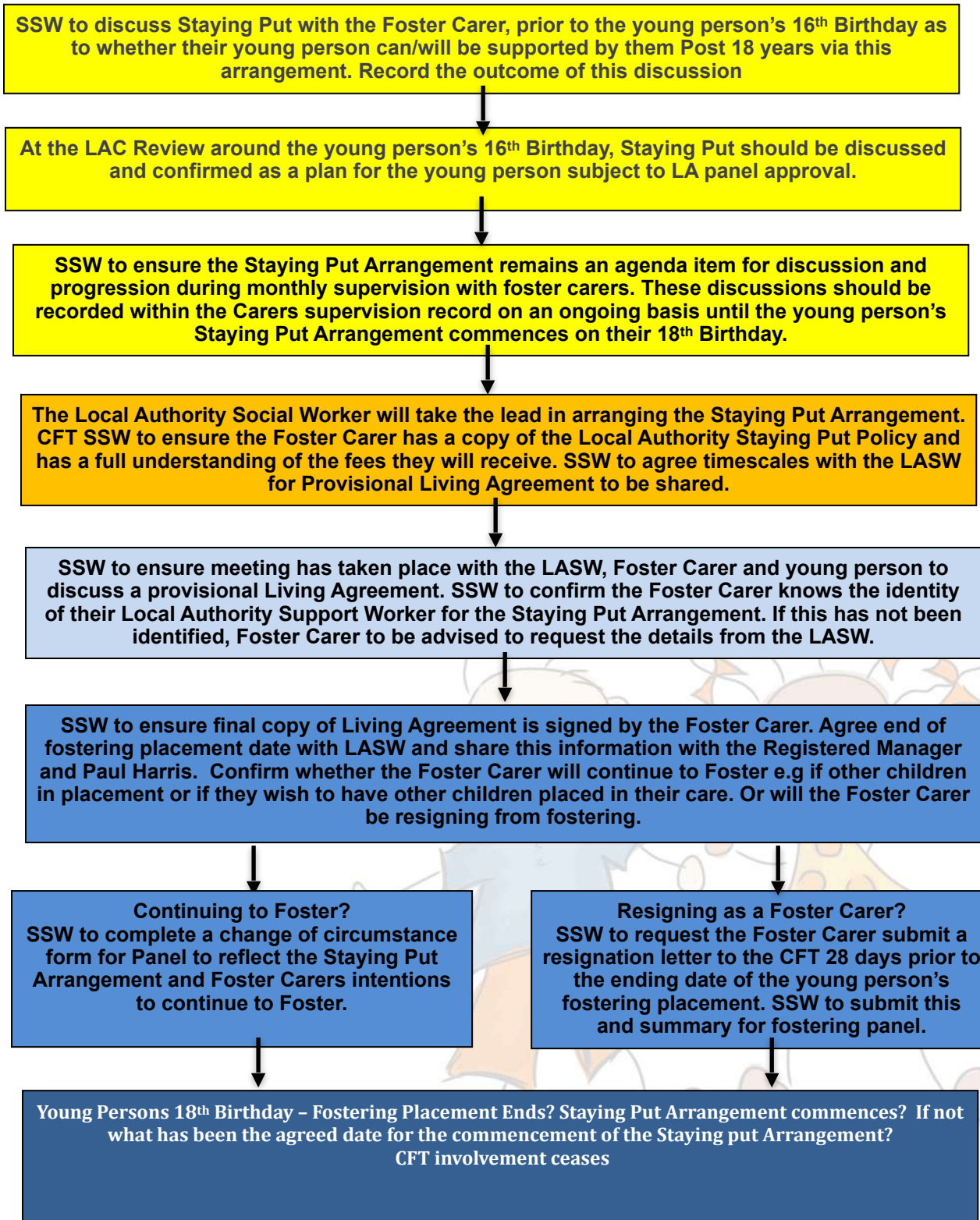
Colour Key For All Pathway's



Pathway 1 – If Staying Put is going ahead with The CFT remaining involved



Pathway 2 – If Staying Put is going ahead with the Local Authority



Pathway 3 – If Staying Put is not going ahead

