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One Front Door

Where a young person approaches the Council because they have nowhere safe to stay, the case must be referred into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for allocation to Children's Social Care. Where this presentation is directly to CSC, they will be accommodated under the Children's Act 1989 until assessment.

Where this presentation is to Knowsley Housing Solutions, a MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form) is completed by KHS at <https://marf.knowsley.gov.uk> and they are accommodated under the Housing Act 1996. MASH will allocate the case to a CSC social worker. The ten working day deadline for a Children and Families Assessment to be completed by CSC begins as soon as the MARF referral is submitted.

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Better Together

As soon as the case is allocated, CSC should contact KHS on **0151 4432333** to arrange a joint visit with the KHS duty officer. The duty officer should be available for joint visits **on the same day if notified before 12PM, or within 24 hours otherwise**. If there is no answer from HOS within these timescales, the CSC manager should contact **Maureen Ashcroft** (or **Joanne Evans** if Maureen is absent.)

The purpose of the joint visit is to inform the young person of their options and begin the assessment of **whether the child is owed duties under S17 or S20 of the Children's Act**.

Under S17, young people are provided accommodation by the local authority under the Housing Act 1996 to safeguard their wellbeing. Under S20, young people are given the 'looked after' status under the local authority and are accommodated by Children's Social Services.

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Options

The preferred option is **always** a return home where this is safe and appropriate. The young person should always be offered the option to come into Local Authority/Foster Care where this is not possible. Members of the wider family of the young person who are able to accommodate should also be considered.

Where required, KHS can facilitate placement into the emergency Crash Bed for up to ten days whilst the young person is under assessment, which is typically a placement with a hosting family in the local area.

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Advocacy

The young person must **always** be offered the opportunity to work with an advocate for independent advice on their options, and the social worker must make a referral to the **National Youth Advocacy Service** at the earliest possible opportunity.

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Assessment

CSC must complete their assessment within ten working days of the original MARF and share this with KHS.

- **NFA/Return Home** - The case is closed where both parties agree that the young person has suitable accommodation and support. CSC to refer to Early Help to prevent repeat presentation where appropriate.
- **S17** - CSC complete a CIN plan. KHS continue to accommodate, now under a 'relief' duty, which they look to discharge by making **one** reasonable final offer of suitable accommodation (usually supported housing).
- **S20** - Young person becomes 'looked after' by the local authority. CSC identify suitable ongoing accommodation for the young person.

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Accommodation Offers

Following assessment, a young person may be referred for the following accommodation outcomes:

- **Permanent offer of accommodation** with householder providing Crash Bed accommodation
- **Shelagh Delaney House (ages 16 to 21)**
<https://www.shap.org.uk/housing-support-and-well-being/shelagh-delaney-house>
 Short-term (ten weeks) emergency accommodation for homeless young people provided by **SHAP**, with support to assess needs and secure further permanent accommodation, including referral to:
- **Octavia Court (ages 16 to 24)**
<https://www.shap.org.uk/housing-support-and-well-being/octavia-court>
 Longer term (up to 9 months) self-contained one-bedroom flats for young homeless people provided by **SHAP**, with support to assess needs and achieve independence

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End of Duty

- If a young person under the relief duty refuses a final offer of accommodation, the relief duty owed to them is brought to an end and they are referred back to CSC.

- If KHS cannot make a final offer of accommodation to a young person within 56 days of relief duty, a decision must be made on if they are intentionally homeless.

If they are found intentionally homeless, the homeless duty ends, interim accommodation ends and the case is referred back to CSC.

If they are not found intentionally homeless, KHS continue to accommodate and assist under the 'main duty' until a suitable final offer can be made.

