

Press release: Advisor appointed to boost local support for care leavers

A new adviser to support young people as they leave the care system has been appointed as part of the government's drive to improve the lives of vulnerable children.

Mark Riddell MBE has been appointed as the National Implementation Adviser for care leavers, and will work closely with local authorities as they drive forward the new duties introduced through the Children & Social Work Act (2017).

The role includes helping councils to develop a stronger local offer of support for care leavers, offering Personal Adviser services for all care leavers up to age 25 and delivering on their special responsibilities as a 'corporate parent' – principles set out in the Act.

He will have a particular focus on supporting those councils that have had their leaving care services rated as inadequate or requiring improvement by Ofsted.

Robert Goodwill, Minister for Children and Families, said:

Young people leaving care are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and we are determined that they should get the high quality support they need to help them make the transition into adulthood.

I am delighted that Mark has taken up this post and look forward to working closely with him as we continue our drive to improve the experiences and outcomes of care leavers across the country.

Mark Riddell MBE said:

I am delighted to be offered the post and am passionate about improving support for care leavers. Young people leaving care face many challenges as they prepare for independence, and crucial to making that transition successful is the support from their 'corporate parents', the local authority.

I look forward to the challenge of working with these councils as they bring in the positive changes introduced by the Children & Social Work Act.

Mr Riddell brings with him a wealth of experience working with care leavers. Prior to accepting this position he was the leaving care manager in Trafford, the first local authority judged by Ofsted to have Outstanding care leaver

services.

He also acted as an informal adviser to the Department for Education on the development of the care leaver strategy, which sets out the additional support provided by local and central government to help care leavers succeed.