



Staying Close FAQ

Staying Close

1. How many young people leaving residential care do you expect pilots to work with?

We want pilots to seek to work with as many young people leaving residential care as possible. However, we do recognise that a significant proportion of young people leaving residential care may not want to engage with Staying Close.

2. What regional or geographical spread are the Department looking at?

Our ambition is to run Staying Close pilots in different locations and contexts across the country. We don't have a specific list of areas where we want to run pilots and will award funding based on the quality of the bid.

3. What will happen at the end of the pilots? How will the young people benefitting from or planning for Staying Close continue to be supported?

We are piloting Staying Close first to understand how it can be delivered most effectively and this will include how to support young people when the transition to full independent living. We recognise that for the pilots a Staying Close arrangement should not end solely because the pilot ended. We will consider this in more detail before the pilots begin and we want local authorities to think about this when developing their bids.

4. What ongoing support will the Department provide?

DfE will continue to work closely with potential bidders to develop proposals and once the projects are running. The DfE delivery partner, Spring Consortium, will provide individual coaching support and challenge to bidders developing proposals and later to successful projects.

5. Every young person is different. How can the outcomes in the brief be used to reflect individual needs and progress?

As well as the outcomes set out in the brief we expect pilots to use goal based outcomes tailored to each individual to enable them to track progress from their starting point and towards goals that reflect their individual situation and aspirations. Goal based outcomes allow providers to evaluate the progress young people make towards a goal.

6. How have young people's voices influenced the design of the pilots?

Sir Martin Narey recommended that we introduce Staying Close, subject to first running pilots, and he spoke to a range of young people in residential care (and those who had left residential care) about their experiences. We also invited young people to speak at the event on 9 November to hear their views and perspective.



7. To what level of detail should ideas be developed before a proposal is submitted?

For the EOI stage we recognise that ideas and partnerships will not be fully worked up or agreed.

8. What's up for discussion? Can projects challenge (or change) the policy focus?

No. The purpose of this strand of the targeted funding opportunity is to pilot and test variations of Staying Close. However, we are open to ideas and proposals of how to deliver Staying Close and the specifics of what it includes.

9. Will there be a group of young people who don't benefit from either Staying Put or Staying Close? How will they be supported?

We will pilot different variations of Staying Close through this targeted funding opportunity and learn about what works, including which young people are able to benefit from a Staying Close arrangement. We will also review Staying Put, as part of the National Fostering Stocktake. Both the pilots and the review will help us to identify what works and where more needs to be done to ensure that all young people leaving care can benefit from support as they transition into adulthood.

10. Are Local Authorities expected to commission or to deliver pilots?

We are interested in testing different ways of delivering Staying Close and this could include the LA commissioning or delivering the pilot.

11. How is 'suitable' accommodation defined?

The [Care Leavers \(England\) Regulations 2010](#) provide a definition of suitable accommodation. Accommodation should meet the needs of the young person and support them as they make the transition to adulthood.

12. Who has responsibility for the welfare of young people in a Staying Close arrangement? Will the corporate parent role continue?

The originating local authority will continue to have responsibility for the young person whether the Staying Close arrangement is in or outside the local authority. They will continue to have responsibility as the corporate parent although a provider or other local authority may deliver some of the services that the young person receives.

13. Is Staying Close always the best option for that young person? What can we put in place when it is better that they move further away?

We agree that Staying Close will not always be the best option for a young person and this could be for a number of reasons. As set out in the brief we are clear that Staying Close is not just about the geographical location but critically about enabling existing relationships to continue. For example, a young person going to university is unlikely to remain living round the corner from their children's home but they could still benefit from a Staying Close arrangement that allows them to stay in touch with their former carers and return during university holidays.



Evaluation and monitoring

14. How will the pilots be monitored?

Through the pilots we will test different approaches to monitoring and inspecting the quality of the accommodation and support provided to the young person. We will learn from the pilots to develop our approach to monitoring and inspection for rolling out further. Through the innovation programme we will also evaluate the Staying Close pilots and we will work with bidders to develop this. Evaluation and monitoring will consider both the quality of outcomes achieved through Staying Close and the cost of delivering it.

We will share further information about evaluation and monitoring at the next stage of the process.

15. How will Staying Close be inspected and judged by Ofsted?

We want to test different ways of monitoring and inspecting Staying Close through the pilots. We are working with Ofsted to consider how we can work with them to monitor the pilots and, in the future, all Staying Close arrangements.

16. How will the projects be evaluated?

A key aim of the Innovation Programme is to have a transformative impact on the children's social care system beyond the individual projects that it funds. With that in mind we are in the process of revising our evaluation strategy to take a more thematic approach with a tighter focus on testing interventions, their outcomes and costs and benefits. We will work with projects to ensure they have a robust, proportionate and focused evaluation.

Innovation Programme Process

17. What happens once an EOI is submitted?

Interested parties who submit EOIs corresponding to the policy briefs will be invited to a solution generation event. The residential care event is on 22 February. This will involve challenge and support from peers and coaching from appropriate specialists. Participants will then have the opportunity to work up their final bids before submitting them to the Department.

18. Will proposals be disadvantaged if they have not had previous involvement in the Innovation Programme? Or if they have?

No. We are interested in proposals which are innovative and which match the criteria set out in the policy briefs, regardless of whether or not bidders have been involved in the programme before.

19. Is funding only available to opportunity areas, as named by the Secretary of State?

No. Local Authorities and organisations from across the country and from across the private, public and voluntary sectors can all apply for funding. Successful bids will meet the criteria listed in the policy briefs and will not be restricted by geography.



20. Can an organisation submit more than one bid?

Yes. You will need to demonstrate that each of the bids is deliverable (ie that you have the capacity to deliver each of them). If you are submitting more than one bid, it would be helpful if you could submit them at the same time.

21. When do you expect pilots to start?

We expect funding to be available from the start of the 2017/18 financial year. We recognise that pilots might not be able to begin straight away to allow time for set-up.

22. How long will pilots run for?

Funding is available until March 2020 and we are open to pilots running until then. We expect pilots to run for at least 12 months.

23. How much funding is available?

The Staying Close pilots will be funded via the innovation programme which has £200 million available over this Parliament. We have not set funding limits because we want to encourage creative bids from a range of organisations. We will make funding decisions based on the quality of the bid.

24. How will funding decisions be made?

Funding decisions will be made in a transparent way against the criteria set out in the innovation briefs. The Department will take the advice of the Innovation Programme Investment Board on which projects to fund. Final decisions will be taken by Ministers.

25. Who can apply for funding?

Local Authorities and organisations from across the private, public and voluntary sectors can all apply for funding. We are keen to have a mix of organisations involved.