

MEETING THE NEEDS OF TEENAGE MOTHERS IN CLACKMANNANSHIRE



EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE



**Clackmannanshire
Council**

www.clacksweb.org.uk

Completion Date: August 2012
Review Date: March 2014

Contents

Acknowledgement

1. Introduction and Background
2. Key Principles
3. Child Protection
4. Initial responses when first learning of a pregnancy
5. Notification of Pregnancy
6. Educational Planning During pregnancy and Post Birth
7. Staged Intervention and GIRFEC
8. Practical Supports
9. Attendance
10. Monitoring and Evaluation
11. References

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Respect and Responsibility: Strategy and Action Planning for Improving Sexual Health (2005)
Appendix 2	Respect and Responsibility: Delivering improvement in sexual health outcomes 2008 - 2011
Appendix 3	GIRFEC 2A
Appendix 4	Flowchart

Acknowledgements

This guidance was produced by Clackmannanshire Education Development Service.

It is based on models of good practice and positive approaches which have been developed in conjunction with partners and agencies across Forth Valley including Falkirk Council Education Service, Stirling Council and NHS Forth Valley.

FORWARD
Belinda Greer
Head of Education

Our Education Service and partner agencies are committed to implementing an integrated approach, in line with GIRFEC (*Getting it Right for Every Child May 2012*) principles and practice, to ensure that young women who become pregnant at school receive the support and guidance which they are entitled to.

Improving the educational outcomes and consequent longer term social, economic and health inequalities of pregnant mothers, is a key priority for our Service.

I am delighted that this Guidance recognises that all young women who become pregnant while at school need timely access to advice, support and specific help in order to achieve their potential.

The health and wellbeing of our young people is a responsibility we all share and this framework will provide consistency in approaches across our educational establishments.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
DUTY OF CARE

The Code of Professionalism and Conduct sets out key principles and values for registered teachers in Scotland. It sits within the wider framework of GTCS standards, including the Standard for Full Registration

Your professional responsibilities towards pupils must

- treat pupils equally, fairly and with respect, in line with the law and without discrimination
- treat sensitive, personal information about pupils with respect and confidentiality and not disclose it unless required to do so by your employer or by law
- be truthful, honest and fair in relation to information you provide about pupils
- be a positive role model to pupils and motivate and inspire every pupil to realise his or her full potential
- maintain an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of, and implement and comply with, child protection procedures as they may currently apply in your workplace
- raise any concerns which you may have about the behaviour of any colleague in connection with child protection, using the appropriate procedures.

Children and young people, and their family life is the focus of a range of legislation to protect children, to ensure their rights are respected, and to describe the rights of parents. The work of practitioners in education is also guided by a framework of duties and powers.

The Scottish Government ,Safe and Well: Good Practice in Schools and Education provides a snapshot of key issues from legislation and guidance concerned with keeping children safe and well. It informs teachers, head teachers, schools and local authorities of issues they need to consider when planning and working with children.

Each section describes legislation, or groups together various pieces of legislation which refer to similar areas of practice. It may be helpful for all school staff to understand the basic legal framework in which they work, and for children and young people and their parents to have access to simple information on their own rights and responsibilities.

SUMMARY

Clackmannanshire Education Service is committed to raising the attainment and achievement of all young people including those who come to parenthood at an early age.

The guidance focuses on the educational needs of young pregnant women due to the impact that a disrupted education can have on the future life choices and opportunities for the young woman and child.

The guidance aims to assist schools to recognise and meet the needs of school age pregnant women and highlights the responsibilities schools have in this regard. It identifies a referral and monitoring process following the GIRFEC(Getting it Right for Every Child) principles.

Educational Guidance - meeting the needs of teenage mothers in Clackmannanshire

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Meeting the Needs of Teenage Mothers in Clackmannanshire has been produced to help educational establishments support pregnant young women and teenage parents to continue with their education, allowing them to reach their full potential. It highlights the responsibilities that schools have in this regard, as well as listing other services the young woman can be referred or signposted to. Consistent application both across and within schools will ensure that individualised and tailored supports are offered to meet the holistic needs of young women who become pregnant when of school-age.

The population of Clackmannanshire continues to have high levels of teenage pregnancies [1,2](#)

With a higher rate of teenage pregnancy than most other western European countries, reducing unintended teenage pregnancy is a national target for the Scottish Government. Teenage pregnancy is also linked to deprivation with the rates of teenage pregnancy in deprived areas more than treble those of the least deprived areas.

In the most deprived areas in 2008 the rate of teenage pregnancies in the under 16 age group was more than 4 times the rate in the least deprived areas (14.6 per 1,000 and 3.2 per 1,000 respectively). A similar pattern was also present in the under 18 age group, with 69.4 per 1,000 in the most deprived group and 17.7 per 1,000 in the least deprived. Within the under 20 age group the rates were 96.7 within the most deprived groups and 23.8 per 1,000 within the least deprived.

Unwanted pregnancy results in personal distress, increasing requests for abortion and poor outcomes for young mothers and their children. Causes are multifactorial with social deprivation, poor attainment and disengagement at school as key factors. Prevention of unwanted pregnancy is not simply a clinical issue but needs a multiagency approach which this guidance will support.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

Across Clackmannanshire, Education Development Services and its partners are implementing an integrated approach in line with National Guidance, A Curriculum for Excellence and the GIRFEC principles to ensure that all pregnant young women and teenage parents get help and support and have timely access to appropriate levels of information and signposting. Clackmannanshire Education Development Service is committed to raising the attainment and achievement of all learners, including those young people who come to parenthood at an early age.

The National Strategy and Action Plan, Respect and Responsibility (2005)
Appendix 1 and 2 sets out proposals to ensure that everyone, including

those who may face discrimination maintain the knowledge ,skills and attitudes necessary for good sexual health and wellbeing.

The National Sexual Health and Blood Bourne Virus Framework (2011 – 2015) intends to promote and support ongoing delivery of the key elements of Respect and Responsibility, this agenda is translated into the following outcomes for Sexual Health and Wellbeing:

1. Fewer sexually transmitted infections; fewer unintended pregnancies
2. A reduction in the health inequalities gap in sexual health
3. People affected by blood bourne viruses lead longer, healthier lives
4. Sexual relationships free from coercion and harm
5. A society and culture whereby the attitudes of individuals, the public , professional and the media in Scotland towards sexual health are positive, non-stigmatising and supportive

Reducing teenage pregnancy-guidance and self assessment tool, Learning and Teaching Scotland(2011) highlights the key characteristics of approaches that are effective in achieving a reduction in pregnancies and also recognises the need to ensure appropriate provision for young women who do become pregnant at a young age.

The implementation and delivery of interventions to meet these outcomes will be addressed via the Forth Valley Local multi agency Sexual Health Strategy Group. Priorities from this group are actioned locally by the Clackmannanshire Sexual Health Implementation Group (SHIG) which identifies local priorities and delivers interventions to enable local progress in sexual health and wellbeing.

Equalities

The development of this guidance has the additional purpose of countering the negativity sometimes displayed by schools towards teenage parents. There is no evidence to suggest that the presence of a young pregnant woman within a school encourages other young women to become pregnant. Anecdotal information would indicate that the opposite effect may be the case. Equally, it should be noted that either directly or indirectly indicating that a young pregnant woman is no longer welcome at school or no longer entitled to receive education , is discriminatory behaviour and must therefore be avoided. This guidance reflects the schools' duty under The Equality Act 2010 which prohibits schools from discriminating against, harassing or victimising women or those associated with them on the grounds of actual or perceived pregnancy.

Schools also have a role in supporting the parents/carers of the young pregnant women. Parents/carers need to be reassured that continued involvement in education will benefit both mother and father(if still in education) and enhance their ability to successfully support their child.

Schools need also to be supportive and understanding, acknowledging the additional needs that mothers and fathers to be enrolled in school may have. In some cases both parents may be attending the same school :this may cause some issues and should be monitored.

It is important that young fathers and fathers to be are given flexibility to attend, where appropriate, appointments, support groups, etc with the pregnant mother(if requested) to develop good parenting skills.

3. CHILD PROTECTION AND KEY RISK FACTORS

There will be specific circumstances where young people may be at risk of significant harm as a result of under age sexual activity. The national guidance issued on under age sexual activity and child protection provides more extensive information and guidance to professionals. ⁴ This document highlights the main issues from the national guidance to be considered for young people within Clackmannanshire .

When practitioners who work with young people become aware of situations where under age sexual activity has taken place, they have a duty to consider the impact that this has had and if this behaviour is indicative of a wider child protection concern.

Identified practitioners should make a judgement about what information is needed and make an assessment on this based on the GIRFEC ⁵principles and decide which professional is best placed to carry this out. **Appendix 5** is a flow chart highlighting the actions that can be taken based on assessments. Different individual agencies and professionals have different roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting the well being of the young person involved in under age sexual activity. Regardless of which agency the young person comes into contact with, there needs to be a consistent approach to assessing cases and agreeing an appropriate response.

The legal age of consent for sexual activity in Scotland is stipulated in the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 as age 16 (or age 18 if the young person is vulnerable in some way). Sexual intercourse and oral sex between children and young people under the age of 16 also remains unlawful. Further information is available on the Scottish Government website.⁶

Different responses may be required depending on the age of the young person but any under age sexual activity that involves a child under the age of 13 should be dealt with in accordance with Clackmannanshire Council's Child Protection Guidelines.⁷ For children aged 13 or over a range of issues should be considered. What remains important is that young people are offered a consistent, joined up approach from every service involved with them.

Where there are no child protection concerns, young people may still have worries or require support and this will require to be addressed either on a single agency or multi-agency basis.

Information sharing with the relevant agencies is imperative to ensure the best possible decisions are made. This can often include the police and they will consider how best to proceed based on the best interests of the young person and the nature of the sexual activity

Sexual activity over the age of 16 is legal, however the activity may not have been consensual or the young person might have vulnerabilities and related needs. It should also be noted that it is an offence for a person to pay for the sexual services (prostitution) provided by a child under the age of 18 (see *Section 9 of the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005*).

RISK FACTORS FOR TEENAGE PREGNANCY

It is important to recognise key factors that may affect teenage pregnancy. These may include the following;

- Poor school performance
- Poor school attendance
- Low educational expectation
- Lack of knowledge and understanding about contraception and sexual health and relationships
- Poor access to contraception
- Unprotected sex
- Incorrect or inconsistent use of contraception
- Peer pressure
- Early childhood sexual abuse
- Exposure to domestic abuse and violence
- Girls whose fathers left the family early in their lives
- Girls who are Looked After and Accommodated
- Economic disadvantage
- Older male partner
- Single or teen parents
- Lack of a nurturing environment
- Poor health care

4. INITIAL RESPONSES WHEN FIRST LEARNING OF A PREGNANCY

A young woman will make a conscious choice about when and who to tell about her pregnancy. It is important therefore for her to know that her information will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately.

Confidentiality

In general, if a young person or her parent /carer informs someone in school other than the Head Teacher directly, they should be made aware that the Head Teacher and the relevant Pastoral Care staff will have to be informed if additional supports around education are required. Which other school staff are informed should be negotiated with the young woman.

The initial intention should always be to support the young woman to either continue or re-engage with learning at their own school. In most cases, this is where their educational and friendship networks are established.

Only when it is assessed that a young woman will not or cannot engage with her own school, should alternatives be explored.

5. NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY

Once consent from the young woman has been received to share information, Schools should notify their local Authority via the Educational Establishments GIRFEC Forms 2a (**Appendix 3**)

It can take time for a young woman and her family to come to terms with a pregnancy. For many, letting the school know about the pregnancy is an important first obstacle to be negotiated.

How the issue is handled by the school can therefore affect both the young woman and her family's immediate and long-term responses to education and wider offers of assistance.

It is very important for the young woman and her family that the response from the school is non-judgemental and offers reassurance that supports will be available to meet her changed circumstances.

In particular, it is important to highlight that educational attainment is still possible and desirable and that the school will look at options as to how the situation can be managed, both before and after the baby is born, taking into account the young woman's individual circumstances.

6. EDUCATIONAL PLANNING DURING PREGNANCY AND POST BIRTH

Teenage mothers' participation in education, employment or training beyond the compulsory school leaving age is generally very low, in comparison to other 16 to 19 year olds.

Although many young mothers have had negative experiences of education, they generally have a strong desire to provide a positive future for their child, and recognise that their own education will help them achieve this.

Ideally, pastoral care/guidance teachers or the SMT with responsibility for Pupil Support should understand the obstacles which teenage mothers face in accessing learning and staying in learning, both on a practical level in relation to childcare and transport (or other issues like their housing situation) and in terms of their own self esteem and confidence.

The key to supporting young women is regular communication, both formally and informally, meeting with them to discuss their educational progress and any other issues they may need support with.

The Supporting Teenage Mothers in Education Flow Chart has been produced to provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the school and its associated partners. **(Appendix 4)**

Regular contact and support serves to encourage attendance, helps to motivate the young woman and allow the school to respond to needs that will invariably change during the pregnancy and in the post-birth period.

It is important to recognise that the young women may experience a range of social and emotional issues that may affect her ability to continue to engage with learning.

These issues could include

- perceived bullying by other students
- experiencing discrimination
- having mixed feelings about the pregnancy
- mood swings
- depression
- conflict with the father of the baby (particularly if he is in the same school)
- disruption at home
- financial or housing worries

It is not the school's responsibility to respond to all of these issues but acknowledging that they exist and signposting to appropriate services can be invaluable to the young woman and her family.

7. STAGED INTERVENTION/GIRFEC

Drawing up a support plan linked closely to the Staged Intervention Process⁹ is a valuable method of structuring the support that the young woman requires.

(It assists to identify needs, to note how the school can meet these requirements and who has responsibility for putting these plans into action.)

Formal meetings/reviews will ensure that appropriate structured support is put in place. It assists in identifying needs, resources and strategies and allocates an appropriate key person to coordinate a response.

A key identified contact must be appointed to co-ordinate the plan and chair all the meetings

The Initial Planning Meeting should focus on the young woman maintaining, as much as possible, full attendance and continuation of her subjects. It is

recognised that this may not always be achievable but it sets a tone that educational attainment is important.

Points which could be discussed at the meeting include:

- The young woman's current academic record and input required to maintain or improve on this
- The expected delivery date of the baby and how this may affect her studies e.g. preliminary examinations, final examinations, portfolio deadlines, work experience, etc
- Which school professional will provide day-to-day support and be the main contact person for the family. This has tended to be the young woman's pastoral care/guidance teacher
- Immediate requirements in school ,including who needs to know, what practical supports are required etc
- How time off, both during the pregnancy and afterwards, will be and recorded and managed
- How to maintain studies during time off e.g. home tuition, work being sent home etc.
- How other professionals can contribute to the support mechanism in place
- Childcare considerations for returning to school and any assistance that can be offered
- Good Practice

8.PRACTICAL SUPPORTS

Work undertaken by the Support and Re-Integration Officer with Glasgow Schools(Glasgow City Council Guidance Notes [10](#)) highlighted a number of practical supports which have included,

- a toilet pass.
- an 'early class release' pass, to avoid busy corridors, or the rush for the school bus
- completion of Risk Assessment Procedures eg.practical obstacles
- transport to examinations.
- additional support to allow the young woman to catch up on any work missed due to absences.
- supplying school work for the holidays to enable the young woman to get ahead of her class in preparation for time off.
- exam timetabling
- childcare options
- parenting/breastfeeding class
- staff training
- childcare options
- transitions 16+,College arrangements
- housing
- arranging online work for easier access.
- referring a young woman for counselling.
- booking a careers interview to help a young woman plan ahead.
- being flexible with uniform requirements as the pregnancy progresses.

The most important support has been a positive, welcoming and non-judgemental approach by all staff in school

9. POOR ATTENDANCE/NON ATTENDANCE-WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Some young women who become pregnant when of school age may have had attendance problems. It can be challenging to re-integrate these young women back into school.

(An unintended consequence may be that a young woman's pregnancy can act as a motivating force for her to look more closely at her life choices and options for the future.

Schools can provide a stable and nurturing environment for young women who have had to adapt to a range of social and emotional changes.

However, it is unrealistic to expect all young women to want to return to education and some may only wish to attend on a temporary or part-time basis. Options such as phased return, compressed timetable and studying in a designated area such as a pupil support base can provide a level of re-engagement. A referral to Clackmannanshire Schools Support Services may provide the supportive environment that the young woman requires.

Only when it is assessed that a young woman will not or cannot engage with her own school, should alternatives then be explored.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is the role of Clackmannanshire's Screening Group to monitor and evaluate each case in line with the GIRFEC principles and Practice
ADD REF

Monitoring and evaluation of this Guidance will be undertaken by Education Services at regular intervals to ensure compliance with legislation and in line with local and national priorities

11. REFERENCES

1. NHS Health Scotland, Children and Young People health and wellbeing profiles

Clackmannanshire CHP November 2010

<http://www.scotpho.org.uk/profiles>

2. ISD Data Tables Sexual Health

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics//Sexual-Health/Publications/data-tables.asp>

3. Equality Act (Scotland) 2010

www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2011/9780111012215/contents

4. Child Protection

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/313390/0099356.

5. GIRFEC

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1141/0080595.doc

6. Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/sexualoffencesactguidance>

7. Clackmannanshire Council Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines

<http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/site/documents/childcare/interagencychildprotectionguidelines/>

8. Research data here

9. Clackmannanshire Staged intervention

<http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/learning/stagedintervention/>

10. Glasgow City Council Guidance Notes-meeting the needs of Teenage Mothers

Useful contacts

Education Development Service

Clackmannanshire Council

Kilncraigs

Alloa

FK10 1EB

01259 452452

Appendix 1

Respect and Responsibility: Strategy and Action Plan for Improving Sexual Health (2005)

This National Strategy Document places responsibilities on all Local Authorities to:

- Work through the Local Authority Director with responsibility for education services to ensure the delivery of consistent and appropriate sex and relationships education in all school settings and for those excluded from school
- Ensure providers of sex and relationships education training provide this on a multi-agency basis, where appropriate, and that training takes account of issues relating to different cultural and religious practices and beliefs
- Ensure schools demonstrate mechanisms to involve parents and carers in sex and relationships education programmes consistent with the McCabe Report recommendations
- Ensure that a member of each secondary school's management team is responsible for ensuring that each school based sex and relationships education subscribes to current guidance and delivers key learning objectives to all pupils
- Ensure that on education in early school levels the emphasis will continue to be on stable family relationships, friendships and on developing an understanding of how we care for one another
- Ensure that all schools are able to demonstrate that they provide pupils with equitable information about sexual health services and how to access them
- NHS Boards will work in partnership to provide support and advice to Local Authorities to ensure that the content of the taught curriculum, policy development and staff training is evidence based and meet the needs of children and young people

Appendix 2

Respect and Responsibility: Delivering improvements in sexual health outcomes 2008-2011

Included in these are young people specific outcomes which states that:

All young people receive evidence informed, age appropriate Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and have access to a linked local drop-in service which provides as a minimum, general health advice, Chlamydia testing, pregnancy testing and free condoms.

Increased confidence and competence of education, nursing, community learning, social work, voluntary and community sector staff leading to provision of relevant interventions which meet young people's needs.

The following actions have been identified to achieve this:

- Young people not in school, young offenders and those who are looked after or accommodated are prioritised for the provision of sex and relationships education and one to one support by those services engaging with these groups.
- Drop-in services offering general health advice, Chlamydia testing, pregnancy testing and condoms in or within walking distance from schools/young people's centres staffed by nurses and those delivering local youth work services. These facilities should be open for a minimum of 2 hours per week.
- Sex and Relationships Education provided in all primary and secondary schools which is age and stage appropriate and is non-discriminatory and sensitive to the diverse backgrounds and needs of all children and young people.
- High quality, consistent information on all aspects of sexual health including relationships advice, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, (including HIV) and location of services provided to young people in all settings, such as schools, libraries, youth projects and health centres. Specifically, Local Authorities should ensure that school firewall systems do not prevent access to health promoting websites.
- Sex and Relationships core training and ongoing CPD is provided for all staff that have been identified as having a key relationship with young people.

Appendix 3

EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY



Form 2A: SHANARRI Assessment (Universal)

Child/Young Person's Name	
Date of Birth	
CHI Number	
Date of Assessment	

If the urgency of the concern suggests a risk of harm you should follow your agency's child protection procedures immediately.

Purpose : Click to select

Agency: Click to select

1. Reason for Involvement

Summarise the issues which give cause for concern. Include how many occasions or how long this has been happening and indicate impact on child/young person.

2. Description of Child/Young Person's Well-being

<i>Is there anything getting in the way of this child's well being?: (Tick both boxes if applicable and include a summary of strengths and concerns within each relevant domain)</i>			
Area	Strength	Concern	Give brief summary
Safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Achieving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Nurtured	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Respected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Responsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Included	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3. The following discussions/actions have taken place regarding this concern:-

4. The child/young person has the following views regarding this:-.

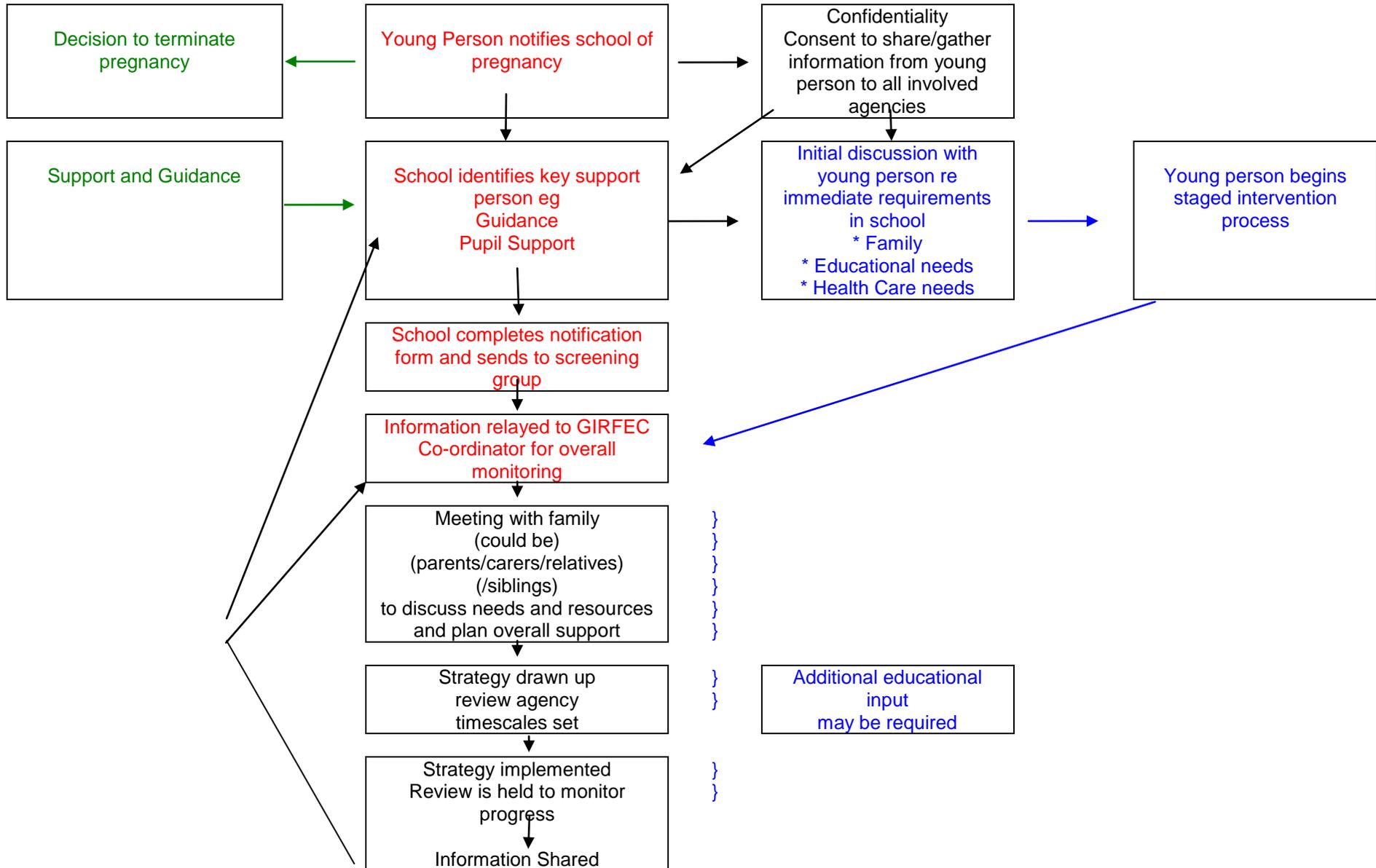
5. The parents have the following views regarding this:-

6. Next Steps/Recommendations

7. Name and Contact Details of Person Completing Form

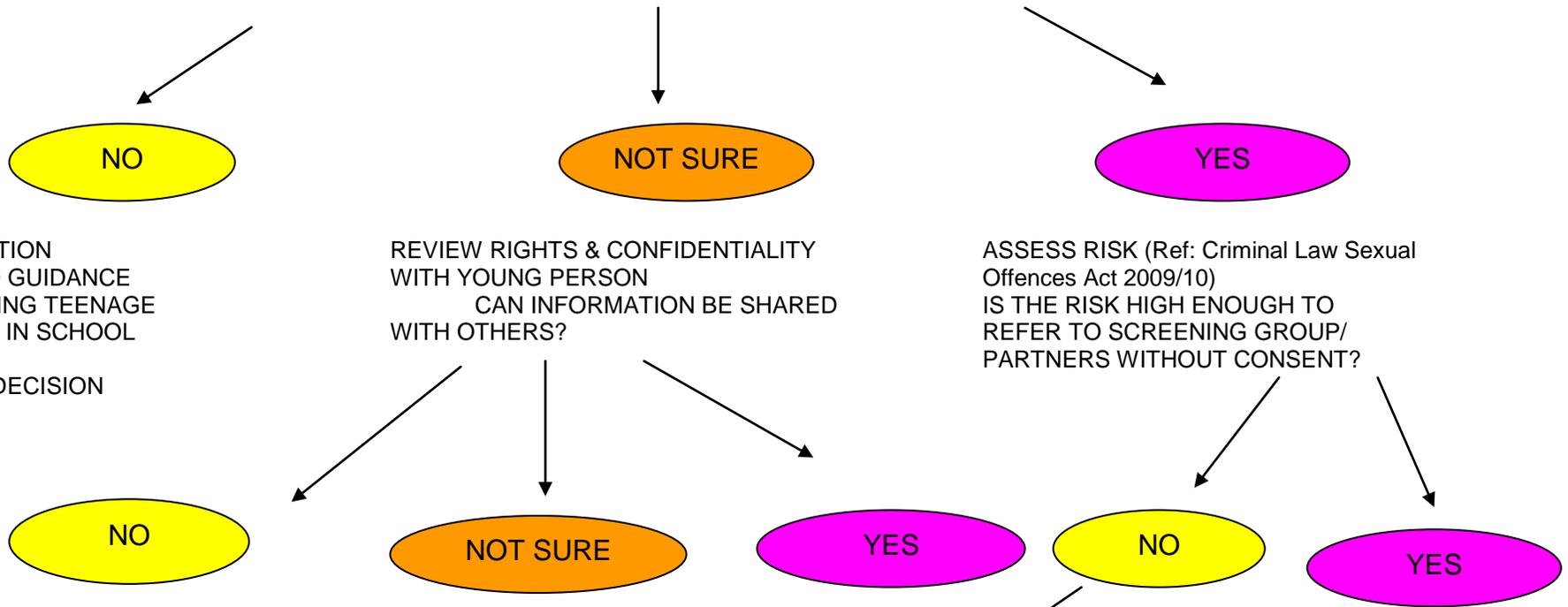
Name	Designation	Service	Date

APPENDIX 4 Supporting Teenage Mothers in Education: Educational Roles and Responsibilities



CHILD PROTECTION (SCHOOL) (NOTIFICATION OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY)

IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT, AFTER LISTENING TO THE YOUNG PERSON, DOES THE RELATIONSHIP CONSTITUTE SEXUAL ABUSE?



NO CP ACTION
REFER TO GUIDANCE
SUPPORTING TEENAGE
MOTHERS IN SCHOOL

RECORD DECISION

REVIEW RIGHTS & CONFIDENTIALITY
WITH YOUNG PERSON
CAN INFORMATION BE SHARED
WITH OTHERS?

ASSESS RISK (Ref: Criminal Law Sexual
Offences Act 2009/10)
IS THE RISK HIGH ENOUGH TO
REFER TO SCREENING GROUP/
PARTNERS WITHOUT CONSENT?

PROVIDE CONTINUED SUPPORT
IF REQUESTED
KEEP UNDER REVIEW AND
RECORD ON SEEMIS/
PASTORAL NOTES

MUST DISCUSS WITH CP
CO-ORDINATOR IN SCHOOL
FOR ADVICE ON FURTHER
ACTION. RECORD DECISIONS

SERIOUS BREACH OF
CONFIDENTIALITY
IMMEDIATE NEED FOR
DISCUSSION WITH CP
CO-ORDINATOR/AUTHORITY
OFFICER.
RECORD ON CP1 FORM
YOUNG PERSON NOTIFIED
OF INTENDED ACTION
SUPPORT/COUNSELLING
OFFERED

UNDER 13
A YOUNG PERSON UNDER 13 IS CONSIDERED UNABLE TO
GIVE VALID CONSENT TO ANY SEXUAL ACT THIS MEANS
THAT ANY SEXUAL ACT IS BY DEFINITION A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE

