Initial Plan

Digital Guide to Being a Looked After Child

CM3202 One Semester Individual Project, 40 Credits

Author: Caitlyn Powell (C1724819)

Supervisor: Dr Catherine Teehan

Moderator: Dr Martin Caminada

Contents

Project Description

Being a child or young person in care can be a daunting experience as lots of different adults and agencies are involved at different stages. Other Local Authorities have developed guides to being a young person in care to outline the role of these important adults and agencies in their life, and important meetings during their experience. Child Friendly Cardiff and Children's Services have discussed the need for such a guide to being in care for children and young people in Cardiff. A young person in care may move home and change social workers and personal assistants many times, and a document outlining their rights and what they can expect during their time in care would be extremely beneficial in helping them understand what is happening and ease their transition. Having a document to refer to would also help the agencies involved to explain the process, as the number of young people in care has grown steadily in the last two decades (Statistics for Wales, 2019). Young people in care need easy access to key information about their placement, their next steps and the support available to them, and this information needs to be independently accessible to them regardless of their current support system.

This project aims to work with young people previously in care to create a digital guide for young people currently in care to access on any device, as and when they need it.

The Research Integrity Training course has been completed, and a confidentiality agreement with Cardiff Council has been signed in preparation for this project.

Project Aims and Objectives

The aim of this project is to produce a guide for children in care of all ages and abilities, to help them with both their initial transition into care and the process throughout. This guide should be in the form of a responsive web application as it needs to be accessible from different devices, and its design will need to be consistent with that of its sibling project with the same users, worked on by another student. It will use a chatbot to allow a child to ask questions about their situation and what they can expect and may allow a child to give feedback in a way that is suitable for their age. The main complexity of the project regards designing an accessible, appropriate web application for children in different age ranges, as well as ensuring regular communication with the different stakeholders.

Objectives to achieve this aim:

- Use an iterative methodology, as feedback will be received regularly and changes will need to be made throughout.
- Gather requirements for the project through discussion with my supervisor, the project leader, and members from Children's Services and the National Youth Advocacy Service, and by studying resources from other local authorities provided by the project leader.
- Decide how to create the first prototype by carrying out background research on the different web and chatbot technologies available, UI/UX design and communication for younger audiences, responsive web design and accessibility in general.

- Use wireframing to design the application's structure, considering the specific needs children may have, in order to communicate the structure and layout with student working on sibling project to ensure consistency.
- Create a prototype responsive web application, with guides tailored for different age groups and abilities, and a chatbot that allows young people to ask questions about being in care.
- Ensure regular communication with stakeholders to iterate on design and features.

Work Plan

Meetings with my supervisor will run on a weekly basis and meetings with the project steering group will be monthly. There will also be meetings with a group of experienced young people from the National Youth Advocacy Service, and at least one meeting with a Cardiff Council trial cohort of young people. The first meeting with NYAS is on February 22nd, and further dates TBC.

Week	Week Beginning	Objectives	Milestones
0	7th December	Attend meeting with project steering group to introduce members.	Completed Cardiff Council Confidentiality Agreement
1	1st February	Attend initial meeting with supervisor to discuss and begin initial plan.	Research Integrity Training completed.
2	8th February	Carry out background research – responsive web design, suitability of Django (or alternative framework), chatbots, writing & UI/UX for younger audiences, and general accessibility. Carry out requirements gathering with steering group/project leader.	Initial Plan submitted.
3	15th February	Continue background research alongside design of application, creating wireframes using Balsamiq. Begin 1st iteration of core web application.	Write-up of requirements and background research completed.
4	22nd February	Continue implementation of core application. Attend meeting with NYAS to gather information about suitability of content.	Initial design completed.
5	1st March	Continue implementation of core application, making any changes necessary based on meeting with NYAS.	
6	8th March	Attend review meeting with supervisor, meeting with steering	1st prototype completed and

		group/project leader, and UNICEF training sessions. Continue work on core application based on supervisor and project leader feedback.	shown to steering group/project leader.
7	15th March	Work on core application based on supervisor and project leader feedback and begin work on chatbot.	
8	22nd March	Continue work on chatbot. Begin first draft of final report using weekly log of activities and other documentation written throughout project.	
Easter break	29th March	Buffer week to continue working on final report and make further changes if necessary.	Final report first draft completed.
9	19th April	Continue work on chatbot. Attend meetings with NYAS and/or Cardiff Council pilot cohort to discuss chatbot language and suitability.	
10	26th April	Attend review meeting with supervisor. Finish application implementation and own testing and provide application to project leader & Cardiff Council pilot cohort to test.	2nd prototype completed and shown to steering group/project leader.
11	3rd May	Continue work on final report.	
12	10th May	Receive final feedback from supervisor about final report and complete.	Final report submitted.

Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Illness/personal circumstances	2	2	Work plan includes Easter break as a buffer in order to account for unexpected delays. A log of weekly activities will be kept to make catching up easy if necessary.
Stakeholders unavailable	2	3	Basic requirements for the project have already been discussed, and group meetings will be monthly (rather than weekly or bi-weekly) to ensure a high rate of attendance. Email will be used to give updates on work on a regular basis regardless of regularity of meetings.
Covid-19 impact on communication	2	1	Microsoft Teams will be used for meetings and Zoom will be available as a backup. Regular contact will also be made by email.
Loss of work data	1	5	Regular backups of work will be made on the university OneDrive.
Unintended impact on pilot cohort from guide content	3	4	Discuss content with young people previously in care at regular intervals to ensure content is suitable.
Breach of third party (Cardiff Council) confidentiality agreement	1	5	Personal data will not be used in creating prototype, nor disclosed to anyone.

Bibliography

Statistics for Wales, 2019. *Experimental statistics: Children looked after by local authorities, 2018-19*. Cardiff: Welsh Revenue Authority.

Project Initiation Document

Project Title:	Guide to being in care	Project Manager:	Lee Patterson
Lead Director: Deborah Driffield		**Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Hinchey**	
External partners/collaborators:		**Cardiff University – Computer Sciences (Dr Catherine Teehan)** **NYAS** **Cardiff Council Children's Services – Jade Harrison Operational Manager**	

Version Control:

Main Author:	Lee Patterson		
Version / date:	16th November 2020	**Reason updated:**	Lee Patterson Comments

Background:	Being a child or young person in care can be a daunting experience, particularly when lots of people are involved in the child's life at different stages. A child in care may move home many times during their childhood, changing Social Workers and Personal Assistant multiple times along the way. There are care plan review meetings, personal education plan meetings, and health appointments that require organisation and attention. It is particularly difficult for a child or young person to document and have access to this information as and when they need. Many Local Authorities have developed a guide to being a Looked After Child which outlines the role of important adults in their life, and important meetings and documents they will encounter during their experience in care.
Project objectives:	The current lack of an accessible child friendly document or resource like those in other authorities has been highlighted in discussion between Child Friendly Cardiff and Children's Services. There is a need to create a new child friendly resource for children looked after in Cardiff, collating key contacts; key meetings; and key documents, accessible at any time by children and young people in care. • Care experienced children and young people are central to creating the content for the guide. • Cardiff University students have opportunities to develop skills and confidence as well as meaningful input in guide creation and design. • Guide becomes widely available and accessible to Looked After Children.
Links to strategic goal(s):	Child Friendly Cardiff Strategy Corporate Parenting Strategy

Outputs:	• Children's Services and NYAS to collate content for guide.
	• Children's Services to ensure data protection and safeguarding are considered at all phases of development
	• Cardiff University to assign a short project for students to support with digitising the guide to being in care.
Expected outcomes/indicators of success:	• Looked After Children have easy access to key information regarding their placement, contacts, and key stakeholders. • Looked After Children are better informed about their rights, next steps, and support services. • Children Services are better equipped to support Looked After Children through use of digital resource. • Reports can be drawn from resources to provide insight and feedback on Looked After Children usage, to better their experience and their care.

Method(s)	Resources required for each aspect of project (people and materials)
1. CFC create brief for Cardiff University computer sciences. (Brief converted into academic project by Cardiff University). 2. CFC create steering group to include NYAS, Children's Services, and Cardiff University. 3. Regular meetings with NYAS and Children's Services to tailor guide content. 4. Student(s) allocated to project and resource created in winter term. 5. Pilot guide with care experienced cohort (3 months). 6. Review and evaluation after pilot.	• Children's Management Team support • 1-2 Cardiff University students allocated to digital project in new year. • Task group members • NYAS Bright Sparks members

CYP Involvement	Steering group to include care experienced young people. Care experienced cohort used in trialling resource.
Timescale, including key milestones:	Nov 2020 – brief created/sent to Cardiff University. Converted into academic project by Dr Catherine Teehan. December 2020 – Students recruited to project Jan 2021 - Pilot cohort identified through NYAS and Children's Services. Jan – Feb 2021 – Content created with support from NYAS and Children's Services. Jan – March 2021 – Digital framework developed to host information March 2021 – Prototype/pilot digital resource created by Cardiff University & trialled out with identified cohort. April 2021 – Evaluate resource use and effectiveness. Present prototype to Children's Management Team

Key Risks and how these will be mitigated:	• Lack of support from Children's Management Team – Secure support from Deborah Driffield, Assistant Director, CMT members on Task group with regular updates to CMT. • Impact of Covid 19 – meetings held virtually unless COVID restrictions change to allow face to face. • Resources implication to develop the prototype to next stage – aim to pitch next stage development at start of financial year 2021/22
Equality impact assessment, including Welsh language standards (summary of key points in action plan):	Materials to be provided in Welsh. Accessible to those children with additional needs / disability. Consider data to see if translation into other community languages is required.
Responsibilities of Project Manager and project team members:	Liaise and co-ordinate across the partnership. Quality assurance of process. Safeguarding GDPR.

Quality assurance arrangements (e.g. peer review of materials, consultation with advisory panel/s)	Cardiff University supervision for student project. CFC team to engage with care experienced cohort and steering group. Updates to CFC C&YP Advisory Board	**Evaluation plan**	Review April 2021 after 3-month pilot.

Budget: To develop governance, secure partnership through application, implement and coordinate & evaluate programme

Item:	Costs:

Cardiff Council Staff Time	In kind – Education and Children's Services
Young Person Recruitment and Support	In Kind – NYAS Participation Officer
Student Support	In Kind – Cardiff University Staff

Anticipated Start Date:	December 2020	**Completion Date:**	April 2021
Signature of Project Manager:	Thomas Pughsley	**Signature of Senior Manager:**	Lee Patterson