

## **Can I ask questions during the assessment interviews?**

You can ask questions during the assessment interview as it is very important that you understand what is happening.

## **How do I find out about the decision?**

We will tell you the outcome of our decision as soon as we can. If we decide that you are over 18 we will explain how we reached that decision. We will have to inform the Immigration Authorities (The Home Office) and the people who work with you. We will tell you about your right to appeal our decision and where to get further help and information because you will be entitled to different things if you are thought to be over 18.

## **Can I get a copy of the report?**

You will be given a copy of the report, a copy will be kept on your social work files and a copy of the report will be sent to the Immigration Authorities.

## **Can I appeal the decision of the age assessment?**

You can appeal against our decision.

## **What will happen if I appeal?**

Your case will be reviewed by a senior manager. You may also ask your solicitor to help you appeal and sometimes a judge will have to decide on the case.

## **Where can I get more information about this?**

You can ask your social worker about anything to do with age assessment or you can talk to your guardian, solicitor or keyworker if you are worried or have questions about the assessment.



# **Age Assessment** **An Information Guide**

## **What's happening?**

You have been given this leaflet because there is uncertainty about your age. There could be a number of reasons for this including:

- You may not know your exact age
- Your appearance or demeanour may make it difficult to know what age you are
- You may not have a birth certificate, passport or acceptable documents that confirm your age

It is important to know what age you are so that we can understand how we can help support you and meet your needs. We need to assess your age and we want to let you know what an age assessment is and what will happen next.

## **Why am I being age assessed? What is an Age Assessment?**

When there is uncertainty or confusion about your age the immigration authorities (The Home Office) may ask us (the Social Workers) to work out what age you are. Sometimes Social Workers may decide to do an age assessment when we are not sure what age you are. We have been trained in making assessments of children and young people so we undertake the assessments and write a report about how old we think you are.

We need to do an assessment to work out how old you are so that we can protect you and other children and young people and make sure you get the right things that you need for your age. The Immigration Authorities (The Home Office) need to know how old you are so they can consider your asylum application and immigration status properly.

## **What will happen next? How will I be assessed?**

We will arrange an interview soon and will ask you questions about your life and how old you think you are and why you think you are that age. It is important that you tell us about any documents that you have or might be able to get that will prove your age but we understand that you

might not have any evidence. It is important that you tell us the truth at all times, if you don't know something tell us that you don't know and we will understand. It's important not to make things up when you don't know the answer. We will ask about your family and brothers and sisters and schooling. We will ask about what you did before you came to Scotland. We might need to meet with you several times to talk to you and to find out more about you and your life. We will talk to other professionals who are working with you to find out what they think about your age.

You do not need to have any medical tests, we will not take you to be x rayed for example.

## **Where will the assessment take place?**

The assessment interviews can take place in lots of different places and you have a say in this, it may take place at where you stay or in our office.

## **Who will assess me?**

There will normally be two people assessing you, one might ask more than the other person and take more notes than the other. This is normal and nothing to worry about. If you prefer to be assessed by a man or a woman please tell us and we will try and arrange this.

We will always organise an interpreter if we know you need one. It is very important that you let us know if you don't understand what the interpreter is saying because the assessment is important.

## **Can I have someone with me while I am being assessed?**

You can choose to have someone with you while you are being interviewed, this person would be called an appropriate adult.

## **Can I refuse to be age assessed?**

You can refuse to take part in the age assessment but we will still have to make a decision and write a report so it is important that you help us make the best decision we can.