

STAYING ★ PUT ★ IS IT FOR ME ?

A GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THINKING
ABOUT STAYING PUT ARRANGEMENTS



INTRODUCTION



This booklet is for young people who are in care or who have left care. It tells you about staying with your Foster Carer after you turn 18 – This is called Staying Put.

There is a lot of information in this guide to help and support you make an informed decision about going into Staying Put Arrangements.

WHAT IS STAYING PUT?

In May 2014 the Law changed. For young people in Foster Care this means that all councils must support these arrangements if it is in your best Interests. Staying Put is an arrangement that allows a Care Leaver to continue to live with their Foster Carer after their

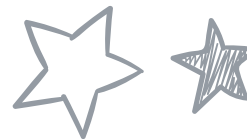
18th Birthday and up until the age of 21 if necessary. The actual timescale will depend on your needs and will be decided by your Staying Put carer, your social worker / leaving care personal adviser, the Staying Put carers supervising social worker in discussion with you.



What does this mean for me

This means that you can continue to live with people that you know and who have supported you as you have grown up. It also means that you do not have to leave your current home until you are ready or until you are 21 years old. You will be able to continue in education and training and you will have the time and space you need to make sure that you are ready to move into adulthood.

If you would like to stay with your foster carers, it is important that you are clear about why you want this to happen so you can explain these reasons to your social worker or PA.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

Just before you turn 16 your Social Worker, Personal Advisor, Foster Carer and the Foster Carer's Social Worker will get together to see if Staying Put is an option for you. This 'get together' will consider all of your needs as you start to plan for leaving care. This 'get together' will help your Social Worker know what needs to be included in your Pathway Plan and will write this with you. Part of the Pathway Plan must highlight that Staying Put is a possibility for you.

They will meet again at around 17 ½ and this time you will be included. Don't worry about the gap in time as the possible Staying Put Arrangement will be talked about at your reviews in case your situation changes – which is why it is important for you to attend.

If everything is in place and agreed you will sit down with your Foster Carer, Social worker/ Personal Advisor and work out all of the details before you turn 18. For example, your Foster Carer may want to continue have Foster Children in the home. At 18 you will stop being in Foster Care and your living arrangements will be known as Staying Put Arrangements. For you it will be home!



**Any questions,
just ask your Personal
Advisor and they will
explain it to you.**

HOW WILL IT BE DIFFERENT FOR ME? I AM STAYING AT HOME!



Well, when you move into a Staying Put Arrangement there is an expectation that you will contribute. This means that you will be expected to pay rent and board.

If you are claiming benefits then the rent will come from the Housing Element of the claim. Any board will be paid from the Personal Allowance element of your claim.

If you are in further education and getting the Leaving Care Allowance (£57.90) and 16-19 Bursary (£30.00) as weekly income; you will be expected to make a small contribution. Your rent will be paid for by Universal Credit. Your Personal Advisor will help you to make this claim.

If you are working part time you could still be able to claim Universal Credit. If you are working full time and not able to claim Universal Credit we will work with you and your carer to see how much you can afford to contribute. The agreed amount must be an amount that leaves you with enough money to live on and save.



WILL THERE BE RULES?

Just like when this was classed as your Foster Home, there are rules in place for you in a Staying Put Arrangement. This is called an Agreement. The agreement will set out how much rent you pay, how much board you pay and what the rules for the house are. You will need to think about things such as:

What time do I have to be in?

Can I have friends to stay over?

What are the rules around smoking and drinking alcohol?

Can my boy/girlfriend stay over?

All of these will be discussed and agreed so that you and your Staying Put Carer know what you can and can't do. This will avoid any conflicts between you.

The Agreement will also highlight what your Personal Advisor and Staying Put Carer will do to make sure that you are ready to move on and live independently.

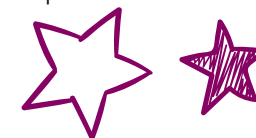
I AM GOING TO UNIVERSITY, CAN I STILL STAY WITH MY FORMER FOSTER CARERS?



Firstly, congratulations for getting into University! A Staying Put Arrangement can be in place until you complete your degree including where the course extends past you turning 21.

If you attend a University outside of the local area then you may wish to go home during the holidays. This is fine, but needs to be agreed with your Staying Put Carer and recorded in your Pathway Plan and Living Together Agreement.

During the times that you are home from University there will be an expectation that you contribute towards the board. This will be decided before you go to University. Any rent will be taken from your Higher Education Allowance and Bursary. We will also need to consider who else is living at the house, any Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) that may need to take place





I WANT TO JOIN THE
ARMED FORCES

Can I still stay with my former foster carers?

If you want to join the Armed Forces you may still be able to return home following any induction, training programme and leave periods.

An assessment will be carried out to make sure that this is possible. This will consider any rent you will be required to pay, any contributions (board), who else is in the property and how many rooms there are. These arrangements will be recorded in your Pathway Plan and Living Together Agreement.



Disclosure and Barring Checks

Because you will still be living in a foster care household, there are a number of legal requirements that have to be followed, particularly if there are young children living in your home. You will be required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS). This is generally a formality and something that all adults living in a foster home need.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

Why does planning for Staying Put start when I reach the age of 16?

Setting up a “Staying Put” arrangement can be quite complex as there are a number of tasks that need to be completed to support you and your carer. To ensure everything is in place by your 18th birthday, planning starts when you reach 16. Some of these tasks are related to making sure you and your carer have all of the information to decide if “Staying Put” will work for you both.

What sort of information will be put in my Living Together Agreement?

The information in your Living Together Agreement should be based on the house rules and expectations already set out in your Placement Plan. The Living Together Agreement will set out the day to day arrangements within the household, i.e. what time you are likely to be home in the evening, what to do if you will be late, for example.

What happens if I want to have a friend, or girlfriend/boyfriend to stay when I reach the age of 18?

Most of these issues will already have been planned and organised before you reach 18. Many of these decisions will be planned with you and your carer and will depend on who else is living in your foster/“Staying Put” home. Part of the decision about having friends staying over will depend on how well your carer/s know them. The detailed planning for stay over’s will be organised within your Living Together Agreement.

The Difference Between Foster Care and Staying Put Arrangements

What support do I get and what support does my Staying Put carer get when I reach the age of 18?

As a care leaver you will have an social worker / leaving care personal adviser who will support you and help you plan your next steps, this will include any support with education, training or employment which may include financial support. Your “Staying Put” carer will also have a supervising social worker or a support worker from the fostering team.

Why do I need a DBS check?

All adults living in a foster carer household require a DBS check and therefore it is a key requirement and formality.

Do I have to Stay Put until I reach the age of 21? What happens if I decide I’m ready to leave when I reach the age of 19?

No, if you feel you are ready for independent living, want to move to college or for a job you can leave at any point, however, we would want to plan your move in advance and therefore ask for at least 28 days’ notice. This is particularly important as it may take time to organise your next accommodation.

What at are the rules about smoking and drinking in the “Staying Put” Arrangement?

The arrangements for smoking and drinking in the “Staying Put” household will depend on what was agreed before you were 18, on what is ‘reasonable’, on who else lives in the house, on respecting each person in the house and as agreed with your “Staying Put” carer/s. The rules will be set out in your Living Together Agreement.



Foster Care	Staying Put Arrangements
You are under the age of 18 and Looked After	You are over the age of 18 and are now an adult
When you are in ‘care’ you have a placement	Now that you are over the age of 18 it is called an arrangement
You will have a ‘placement plan/ care plan’ that sets out all of the things that are expected to happen	You will have a Living Together Agreement which you will write with the help of your PA and the Foster Carer
You will have started to learn some of the skills that you need to live independently	You will be expected to be learning and practicing the skills that you need to live on your own
Blackpool Council will have been making a payment to your Foster Carer to help with things like food and clothes	You are now expected to make a payment towards your ‘keep’. This is the same for lots of other young people and will help you to prepare for living independently
You are not able to claim any benefits	It is possible that you will be able to claim Universal Credit. The Housing element of this will pay for your rent and the Personal Allowance element will allow you to make a contribution towards ‘board’.
You do not need to have a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS)	You will have a DBS check if there are going to be other children in the address as you are not classed as an adult. This will show if there any offences that you have committed. Any issues will be discussed with your Social Worker and IRO
You had a Social Worker	Now you will have a Personal Advisor who is there to help and support you

REMEMBER

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK.

Communication is key and it is important that you let your thoughts and feelings known. If Staying Put is not for you then there are alternatives your Social Worker will explore with you

Get involved! This is your life and your future! Make sure you use your voice to say what you want.

Embrace the opportunity, develop and practice your independent living skills. Make sure you know what will happen and when.

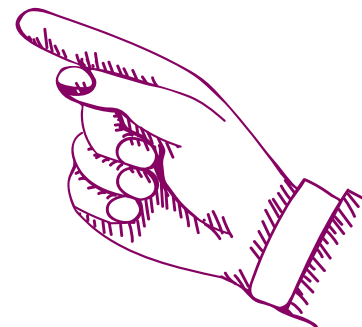
THIS IS YOUR LIFE AND YOUR JOURNEY, MAKE SURE YOU OWN IT!!



THE STAYING PUT CHECKLIST

Task	Complete/Signature
I have a copy of my Birth Certificate	
I have a copy of my NHS Number	
I have a copy of my National Insurance Number	
I have a Bank Account	
I have a provisional/driving licence (if applicable)	
I have a proof of age card	
Education/Training and Employment discussed and plan in place. Recorded	
I know what health support there is and where I can go to get this	
I am aware of what my benefit entitlement is and understand what this means for me	
I have made a benefit claim to support me with rent and board in the Staying Put Arrangement	
I have been part of the Pathway Planning Process and I have shaped my plan for my future.	
I have completed My Goals	
Financial Entitlement incorporating Legal Status – Provided and recorded (Setting Up Home Grant)	
I have a copy of The Offer so I know what support is available to me	
I have a copy of Money Matters so I know my entitlements	

**Please make sure that you
keep in touch with your
Personal Advisor and let them
know if there are any issues in
relation to your
Staying Put Arrangement.**



MY PERSONAL ADVISOR IS:.....

I CAN CONTACT THEM ON:.....

OFFICE NUMBER:.....

MOBILE:.....

EMAIL:.....



