



Your local care leaver offer

rochdale.gov.uk



ROCHDALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

How we will support you

Just because you are leaving care, or have already left care, does not mean we've stopped caring about you. We want to make sure that you feel safe and supported and know where and who to go to for advice and help.

This leaflet gives you a snap shot of what support is available as you transition into adulthood. Further detailed information is available in the “**What is the Local Care Leaver offer**” booklet available via your Personal Advisor, your Social Worker, online at [website], or you can email Childreancesservices1@rochdale.gov.uk to request a copy. In addition to this your social worker or personal advisor will be able to discuss the contents of this leaflet in more detail with you.

To be able to get the support set out in this leaflet, you must have been in care for a period of at least 13 weeks (or periods amounting to 13 weeks) which began after your 14th birthday and included some time after your 16th birthday. If you are not sure whether you qualify for support, then ask your social worker or personal advisor.

Your Personal Advisor

A personal advisor is someone who is there to support you and work with you. They are people who really like working with young people and are trained to help and support you in every way possible. If they don't know something, they will find someone who does!

The Step Ahead Service will allocate you a personal advisor after your 16th birthday and they will be able to support you up to the age of 25.

Your personal advisor will stay in touch with you and will be there to help plan your future with you and help you prepare for living independently. This will include developing a 'Pathway plan' with you which is a clear plan for your future, looking at how we can support you to get where you want to be.

You have a right to be involved in all decisions about your plans for leaving care. You are also entitled to support from an independent advocate if you want to challenge decisions about the support we give you.



Accommodation

Where you live will be an important decision as you become more independent. Your social worker and personal advisor will be able to support you to explore the most appropriate place where you will feel safe. This might include:

- **Staying put with your carers**

- **Supported Lodgings**

This is where you will live with someone in their home and get support with practical tasks until you are confident to live on your own

- **Supported accommodation**

This is a 'stepping stone' to renting your own flat where you will receive support with day to day tasks if you are not ready for your own tenancy

- **Trainer/taster flat**

This is a home to 'test' and develop your living skills whilst receiving a high level of support from your Personal Adviser

- **House project**

This will be your own tenancy while accessing ongoing support to gain essential skills for independent living

- **Independent living**

- **Living with friends or family**

We will also:

- Support you to spend your Setting Up Home Allowance of up to £3000 to furnish your first home
- Support you to claim your council tax exemption, if you are living in Rochdale, until you are 25 years of age. If you are living out of Rochdale Borough, we will support you to contact the Local Authority area you live in to request an assessment to determine if you have to pay
- Provide you with a weekly allowance equivalent to the benefit rate for young people under 18, if you are 16 or 17 and living either independently or semi independently
- Provide you with a weekly allowance (equivalent to the benefit rate) when you turn 18, until you receive your first benefit payment.



Education, Training and Employment

We will always aim high for you and will ensure that you receive Positive Steps careers advice from Year 9 to help you in planning for leaving school.

There are several options available (your social worker or personal advisor will be able to discuss these, and the support available in more detail with you) including:

- **Traineeships** • **Apprenticeships** • **College/ sixth form**
- **Work experience** • **Employment** • **University**

We want to help you achieve your goals! We will do this by:

- Providing a laptop to all young people who are cared for in Year 10
- Providing £15 per month towards internet access for young people aged 16-25 who are actively engaged in education, training or employment
- Supporting you to access the GM digital poverty offer, if you are aged 16-25 and are not actively engaged in education, training or employment
- Providing up to £75 towards interview, job clothes or equipment for work
- Providing financial support to cover the cost of public transport to get you to your interview
- Providing you with financial reward for your achievements:

GCSE results/ Level 1/level 2 NVQ:

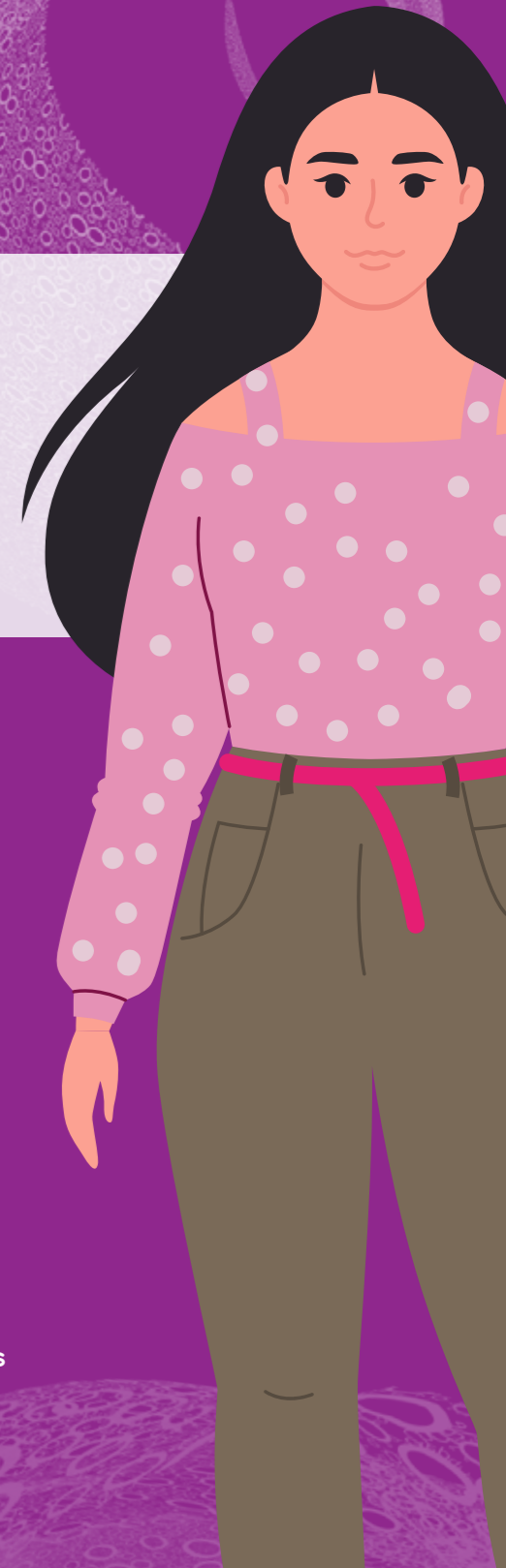
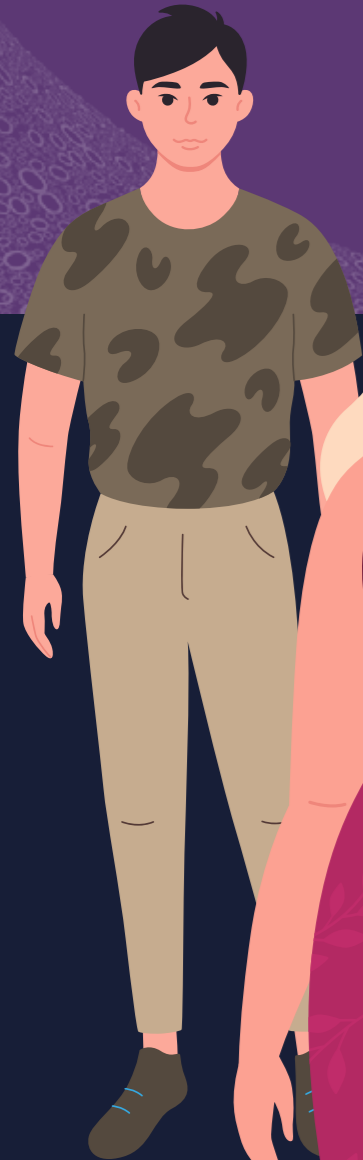
1-2 passes	£30 payment
3-5 passes	£40 payment
6+ passes	£50 payment

A Level passes/ NVQ level 3 BTEC:

£10 per unit passed

In addition to the above if you decide to attend university we will:

- Support you to apply for all the appropriate tuition fee and maintenance loans
- Support you with travel costs at the start and end of term
- Provide funding towards your housing costs equivalent to the basic halls of accommodation for 52 weeks of the year
- Provide you with a weekly allowance equivalent to DWP benefit for your age.
 - Provide you with a laptop and printer up to the value of £300
 - Provide you with £15 per month towards internet access
 - Ensure you are supported to access a Higher education bursary, to which you are eligible, with a payment of up to £2000, paid in instalments, to fund additional costs associated with the course.

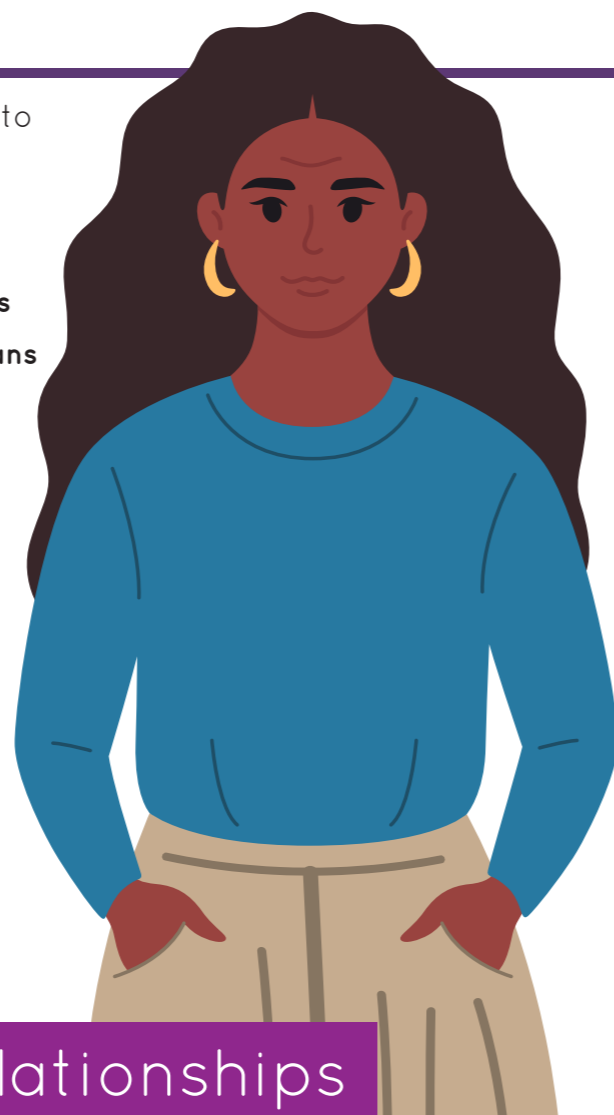


Health and Wellbeing

Your health and wellbeing is important and we want to ensure that you have access to services to help you.

We can:

- Provide you with a 12 monthly gym pass for Rochdale leisure centres to access the gym or swimming facilities
- Support you to register with a doctor, dentist or opticians
- Support you to access sexual health and family planning services
- Ensure you understand your full health history via the a health passport
- Ensure that you have access to specialist services when needed, such as drug and alcohol services
- Help you access support to pay for prescriptions or support you to access financial support to fund these up to 25 years of age if you are not eligible.



Relationships

As well as support from your social worker and personal advisor we can offer you additional practical and emotional support by:

- Providing you with a mentor via Rochdale Connections Trust; someone just for you to listen, give encouragement and support
- Help you to maintain, or regain contact, with people special to you. This could be with friends and family or someone that cared for you in the past like former foster carers, social workers or independent visitors.



Finances

We understand that one of your biggest concerns will be money. Your personal advisor will support you to manage your money and understand where this goes.

By the time you are 18 years of age we will ensure that:

- You have a bank account,
- We have funded your first passport/ travel document
- You have your national insurance number.

We will also provide the ongoing financial support below and we may be able to help in emergencies.

If you are under 18 and living independently we will provide you with:

- A weekly allowance of £67.41
- A clothing allowance of up to £240 per year
 - A birthday allowance of £233 for your 17th birthday
 - A festival allowance of £233 per year
- A contribution of up to £125 for your final year prom outfit and up to £100 contribution towards transport
- Job interview / work clothes and equipment up to a maximum of £75. We will also support in funding public transport cost to get you to your interview
- An allowance of £10 per week, if you are in custody.

From 18 years of age we will help you financially by:

- Supporting you to make a claim for benefits. During the claim period, assuming you don't request an advanced payment, the Step Ahead Service will provide you with a weekly allowance, providing you are maintain your claim requirements
- Providing a birthday allowance of £233 on your 18th birthday
- Providing you with a birthday allowance of £75 on you 19th, 20th and 21st birthday
- Providing you with a setting up home allowance of up to £3000 to help you buy essential things when moving to your own home
- Providing you with an additional one off payment of up to £250 if you are the parent of a child under one years of age and they are living with you
- Funding up to 20 driving lessons once you have funded the first 10. We will also fund a provisional licence, 1 theory test and 1 practical test- please speak to your personal advisor for criteria to access this.

Getting involved

We want our care experienced young people to be active members of society and to have all the chances in life that other young adults have. We want to help you be an active member of society and will help you by:

- Providing information on groups and clubs you may wish to join
- Informing you about relevant awards, schemes and competitions you can enter in line with your talents
- Encourage and help you to enrol on the electoral register
- Giving advice to help you challenge any discrimination you may face as a care experienced young person.
- Ensuring that your views about how we support you are included in our service development. You could join the 'The zone' which is facilitated by the Youth Service, become a care experienced champion and represent young people at Corporate parenting events or attend the Care Experienced participation group held monthly or the weekly breakfast club
- Ensuring you are represented on the interview panel when recruiting new members of staff to the Step Ahead service
- Celebrating your achievements at 'Our Big day' and 'Our Big Night events events'.

Useful contacts

Step Ahead service:

Floor 3, Fashion Corner
57-59 Drake Street,
Rochdale OL16 1XL

Contact number (office hours):
☎ 0300 303 0440

Emergency duty number (out of hours):
☎ 0300 303 8875

✉ Childrensservices1@rochdale.gov.uk

www.direct.gov.uk

The latest news and information on benefits will be available on this national website. You can search for individual benefits and use the 'benefits adviser' interactive tool that can help you find out what benefits and tax credits you may be entitled to.

www.leavingcare.org

The latest news and information on all issues relating to transitions from care and care leavers are available on NCAS website.

www.getreadyforadulthood.org

This webpage for young people in or leaving care gives you information and advice to help prepare you for adult life.

Benefits Agency:

Information and advice about making a claim for benefits with Job Centre Plus:

☎ 0800 055 6688

☎ Textphone: 0800 023 4888

Housing Benefit:

To make an appointment to claim housing benefits

☎ 0844 556 9342

Link4Life:

Support to access leisure activities:

☎ 01706 926 000



Early Break:

Helps support people with alcohol and substance misuse

☎ 0161 723 3880

Citizens Advice Bureau:

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free advice.

☎ 0808 278 7803

✉ enquiry@cabline.org

🌐 www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Shelter housing advice helpline:

Shelter provides a free, national telephone advice line staffed by trained housing advisers.

☎ 0161 820 7589

✉ info@shelter.org.uk

🌐 www.shelter.org.uk

Turn2us:

Helps people access the money available to them - through welfare benefits, grants and other help.

☎ 0808 802 2000 (Free phone)

🌐 www.turn2us.org.uk

Mind:

This is an information and signposting service for young people struggling with their mental health line

☎ 0300 123 3393

Shout:

Is a 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis. Get free confidential mental health support at any time or anywhere.

☎ Text shout to 85258 (24/7 service)

Samaritans:

Provides confidential non-judgmental support, 24 hours a day, for people experiencing feelings of

distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide.

☎ 116 123 (24/7 service)

Young Minds:

Young Minds provides support and tools for young people to look after their mental health

☎ text YM to 85258 (24/7 service)

CALM:

Support for young people who are feeling suicidal.

☎ 0800 58 58 (helpline for men)

Papyrus:

Support for young people who are feeling suicidal.

☎ 0800 068 4141

Sanctuary:

Support for young people in a crisis every night 8pm- 6am

☎ 0300 003 702

Listening works:

This is a specialist service for care experienced young people. It's an emotional support helpline, which opens after most services close (6pm to midnight, 7 days a week) for anyone who identifies as care experienced aged 18-30.

☎ 0808 802 0222

☎ Text: 07860 065 169

Live web chat: Listening Works - Family Action
family-action.org.uk





rochdale.gov.uk

