

# **A Guide to Leaving Care and the Financial Support Paid to Care Leavers within Wigan**

<b>Contents</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>
<b>2. Who Will Receive a Service?</b>
<b>3. The Role of your support Worker (PA)</b>
<b>4. Support from your Support Worker (PA)</b>
<b>5. Pathway Plans</b>
<b>6. How Long Will I Receive an Aftercare Service for?</b>
<b>7. Where Will I Live After I Leave Care?</b>
<b>8. Staying Put Placements</b>
<b>9. Jobs, Careers and Training Opportunities</b>
<b>10. A Guide To Financial Support That Care Leavers will Receive</b>
<b>11. Help with going to college and the 16 plus Bursary</b>
<b>12. Help with the Cost of Going to University</b>
<b>13 Leaving Care Grants</b>
<b>14 Crisis Payments</b>
<b>15 Bank Accounts</b>
<b>16. Spending Plans</b>

<b>17. Requests to Support Higher Education after Age 21</b>
<b>18. How to access your Social Care records</b>
<b>19. Your Rights: What the Government say you are entitled to as a Looked after Child</b>
<b>20. Care Leavers becoming Parents</b>
<b>21. How To Make a Complaint</b>
<b>22. Wigan's Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers</b>
<b>23. Useful Contacts, Resources and Support</b>

## 1. Introduction

This guide provides an introduction to the services that you will receive from Wigan's Transition and Leaving Care Team. The process of leaving care can be a challenging and confusing time. The aim of this guide is to describe the type of support that you will receive to enable you to make a successful transition to independence.

## 2. Who Will Receive a Service?

In order to understand the type of support that you will receive from the Transition and Leaving Care Team you will need to understand some key words which are used to describe each category of care leaver. These key words and their definitions are described below: If when you have read the key words you still need help to explain them then you should discuss these with your Personal Advisor.

## 3. The Role of your Personal Advisor (PA)

As an **Eligible** Care Leaver you will be allocated a **Social Worker from Wigan's Transition and Leaving Care Team**. Your Social Worker will hold case responsibility and will be responsible for the preparation of your **Pathway Plan**. If you are an eligible care leaver you will remain allocated to your Social Worker until you are 18 years old when you become **Former Relevant**. Some **Eligible** and **Former Relevant** young people who have very complex needs will be supported by a social worker beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

If you are a child in care who is supported by the Children with Disability Service your current Social Worker will continue to support you as a Care Leaver until your transition to Adult Services. The Transition and Leaving Care Team will allocate a **Personal advisor (PA)** to work alongside your existing Social Worker who will be available to support your transition to Adult Services. Your **Personal Advisor (PA)** will take over responsibility for reviewing your Pathway Plan when you reach 18 and achieve Former Relevant status.

## 4. Support from your Personal Advisor (PA)

All eligible, relevant and former relevant care leavers will be allocated either a Social Worker or a Personal Advisor (**PA**) when they reach the age of 16 ½ years old. Your worker will support you to develop skills that will assist you to live independently at time when you are ready to do so. A key role is to provide and coordinate the support that you will need to live in your own accommodation.

Learning the necessary skills to live independently does not begin after you have left care, it begins when you are still in care and young people will be encouraged to develop skills relating to such things as cooking, budgeting, and cleaning and self-care skills whilst they are living in care.

This work will assist you to explore and develop important skills that will help prepare you for the transition to living independently.

Your worker will provide you with support and advice on a range of issues relating to leaving care including:

- ☐ Access to training and employment opportunities
- ☐ The development of independence skills
- ☐ Finding and managing suitable accommodation
- ☐ Managing your finances and claiming benefits

Your worker can also help you to access specialist support when you need it, including counselling and advice on issues such as drugs and alcohol, sexual health and benefits, such as job seekers allowance and housing benefits. Your worker will work with you to enable you put into place the things in your life that will enable you to live independently in your own accommodation.

### **Contacting Your Social worker or your Personal Advisor (PA)**

Your worker will provide you with telephone and email contact details or you can visit your worker at 110 Ridyard Street, Wigan, WN59RD.

If you need to contact your worker and he or she is not available you can contact their workplace on 01942 487150 and a duty worker will provide you with assistance. If the duty worker is also busy when you telephone then we promise that they will return your call as soon as possible and that they will contact you on the same day. If the matter is really urgent you can ask to speak to either Lynne Bennett (Service Manager), Steve Swinhoe (Practice Manager) or Sharon Axon (Senior Personal Advisor) they can be contacted on 01942 487150 or by email at [leavingcareteam@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:leavingcareteam@wigan.gov.uk)

## **5. Pathway Plans**

A Pathway Plan will be completed for all Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Young People. Your pathway plan will replace your care plan from the age of 16. Your Pathway Plan is about your needs and what we all need to do to ensure you have a successful transition to adult life.

### **How will I be involved?**

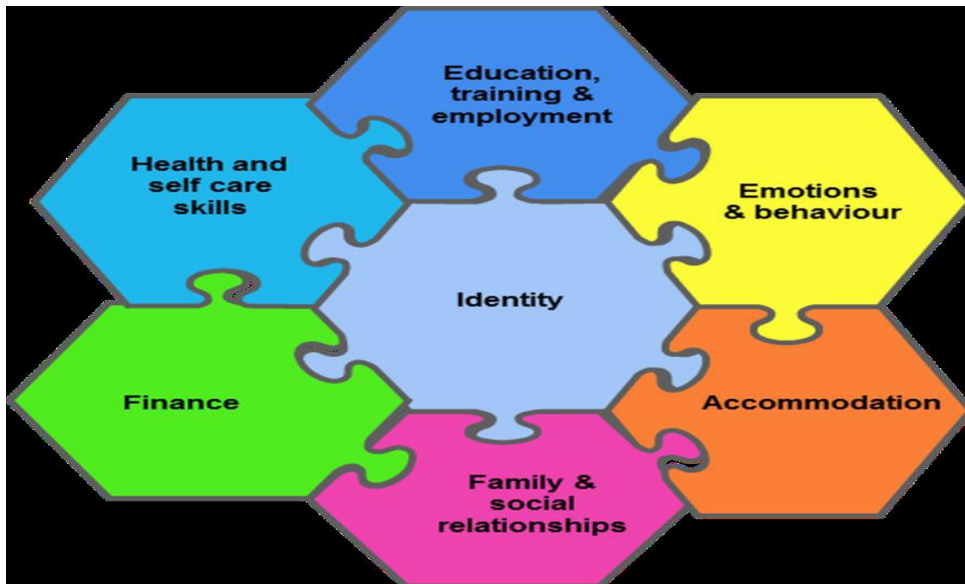
For your Pathway Plan to be effective it will be based on an up to date needs assessment; setting out the support that will be offered to you to achieve your aspirations. We aim to fully involve you in the development of your Pathway Plan.

### **Who else will be involved?**

With your agreement, we will seek the views of our partner agencies when completing your Pathway Plan. This may include Housing, Education, Training and

Employment providers, Benefits, Health Services, The Youth Offending Service and Youth Services to ensure we all work together to provide you with clear and consistent advice and support.

**The following diagram sets out some of the areas covered in your plan:**



### **When will my plan be completed?**

Your initial Pathway Plan will be completed before you are 16 years and 3 months old. If you are over 16 when first accommodated then this will be within 3 months of the date of you being accommodated.

### **What about changes to my plan?**

Your Pathway Plan will then be updated and reviewed within every 6 months or within 28 working days of any significant change to your plan such as a change of address.

As an Eligible Care Leaver your Pathway Plan will be written and available at your statutory review which will be chaired by your Independent Reviewing Officer. A review must take place before making a decision to confirm that a young person is ready to leave care.

If you are a Relevant or Former Relevant Care Leaver your Pathway Plan review meeting will be chaired by IRO Advanced Practitioner Jenny Stewart can be contacted via the following e mail address [J.Stewart@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:J.Stewart@wigan.gov.uk)

### **Emergency Assistance**

Staff only work day time office hours between 8.45 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday. If you need to speak to someone urgently outside of these hours you should contact the Wigan Emergency Duty Team on 01942 828777

## **6. How Long Will I Receive an Aftercare Service for?**

You will receive a Leaving Care service until your 21st birthday, however if you feel you would like to still remain open this is something you can discuss in your pathway plan. Young people can request a service until their 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday. If you are in full-time education or training you will remain open until you have completed the training or until your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **7. Where Will I Live After I Leave Care?**

This depends on your individual circumstances and needs. There are a range of accommodation options that are available to meet the individual needs of care leavers. The Transitions and Leaving Care Service works in close partnership with Wigan and Leigh Homes and your worker will assist you in registering for social housing if appropriate.

Some care leavers live in individual flats or houses, totally independently and require only very limited support from their workers. Many young people, however, in the early stages of leaving care, require additional support to live in their own tenancies.

Some young people live in Supported Lodgings placements. In Supported Lodgings placement you would live in someone's home and the home owner would provide you with individual support.

## **8. Staying Put Placements**

Once you have reached the age of 18 years you will not technically be in care but in some cases, especially where you are living in a foster placement, it may be possible for you to remain in your care placement for a period of time after your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If you want to remain in your current placement for a period after your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday you should discuss this with your worker. The Transition Leaving Care team has a dedicated Worker that supports young people to explore this option with their current foster carers. Kath Levens is the Staying Put coordinator and she can be contacted on 01942 487150

## **9. Jobs, Careers and Training Opportunities**

Working or training to work is an important part of both becoming an adult and living successfully in your own home. Working or training to work not only gives you more money in your pocket, but it enables you to meet people and to live a full and rounded life. Your worker will advise you about employment and training opportunities and you can also speak to a specialist worker who is based within the Transitions and Leaving Care Team. Your worker can arrange for you to meet with them or you can contact them directly on 01942 487150

## **10. A Guide to the Financial Support That Care Leavers Will Receive**

## **Who will be eligible for Financial Support?**

Relevant and Former relevant young people will be entitled to financial support from the Transitions and Leaving Care Team. Qualifying young people will be eligible for financial support subject to an individual assessment.

Where a young person has been looked after or supported briefly, or where they return successfully to their families, it is expected that the families themselves resume financial responsibility for their welfare and support. This is in line with the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

## **What Kind of Financial Support is Available?**

The amount of financial support that you will receive will in part be affected by whether you are a relevant or former relevant Care Leaver.

### **Financial Support to Relevant Young People/Care leavers aged 16-17years Old**

Relevant young people (16/17 year-olds), in many cases, will not be entitled to claim the major means-tested benefits income such as Universal Credit, therefore if you are 16 or 17yrs old and a relevant care leaver (i.e. you have left care) you will receive the equivalent of Job Seekers allowance which is currently £ 57.90 per week. You will also be entitled to a Birthday allowance until you 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday the rate is currently £175.00 per year and a clothing grant of £150.00 per year, Clothing grants are based on an assessment of need.

The Transition and Leaving Care Team will also cover the cost of your rent until you reach 18 years old. You may also be entitled to claim an Education Bursary through your education provider. Your worker will assist you to claim the bursary from the college provider. We may also pay the cost of special clothes or expenses associated in maintaining your education, employment or training.

Your worker will provide you with a copy of your Pathway Plan which will include in it a description of the financial support you will receive from the Transition and Leaving Care team. Your worker will provide you with advice on how to manage your money and you will be encouraged to complete an individual budget plan which will help you to ensure that you manage your money effectively and do not get into debt. The Pathway Plan will be reviewed regularly so it can be adapted to any change of circumstance you experience.

### **Financial Support to Former Relevant Young People (Care Leavers aged 18-25 years old)**

Former relevant young people who are aged 18 to 21 and have left care (or up to 25 if in full-time further or higher education) are entitled to claim benefits. Where a young person is not in education or employment then they are expected to maximise the take up of these benefits. If you are a former relevant care leaver and you are in education or training you will be eligible to apply for universal Credit, which is currently paid at a rate of £57.90 per week. You will also be entitled to apply for Housing Benefit to cover your rent.

## **Additional Help with Rent and Housing Support Costs**



Under certain Circumstance the Transition and Leaving Care service can pay for –

- ☐ Additional costs associated with the individual staffing support provided to care leavers who live in semi supported living accommodation.
- ☐ The start up costs of a tenancy such as the costs of deposits and retainers for privately let tenancies.

Your worker will assess your need for such additional costs and will provide you with further advice about support with housing costs.

### **Benefits**

Care leavers may be able to apply for a range of state benefits and allowances. Some benefits, but not all of them such as DLA, will be taken into account when calculating the level of financial support that you receive from the Leaving Care service. Your worker will help you to claim any benefits and allowances that you are entitled to receive.

Additional Information about the benefits that care leavers can claim whilst at university and the support that workers can provide to care leavers can be found at:

[www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/assets/documents/CareLeavers.pdf](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/assets/documents/CareLeavers.pdf)

## **11. Help with going to college and the 16 plus Bursary**

If you are a looked after child or have left care and are above school age and you are completing a further period of study, then you will be entitled to claim from your place of study, e.g. the college that you attend, a 16+ Bursary. The 16+ Bursar is administered by the college to support you in your studies.

Young people should get in touch with their education provider (e.g. school or college) to find out how to claim the bursary. For further advice about the bursary you can speak to your worker, student support services or your tutor. Your worker will also assist in claiming the Bursary.

The Department for Education have produced a 16 to 19 guide to Bursaries which can be found by clicking on the link below –

[www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/1619%20Bursary%20Fund%202012-13%20Guide.pdf](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/1619%20Bursary%20Fund%202012-13%20Guide.pdf)

## **12. Help with the Cost of Going to University**

Going to university provides an exciting but challenging opportunity to improve your future career prospects. Your worker can help and advise you about your decision to go to university. If you are a relevant or former relevant care leaver and you enter a higher education or university degree course, then the Transition and leaving care may provide you with the following support:

- ☐ A bursary of £2000 per academic course This may be used to fund your term time accommodation costs

- ☐ Help and support with vacation accommodation
- ☐ Liaise with Nominated support worker at the University to ensure all necessary support is accessed.

Care Leavers for a Maintenance Loan (which does have to be paid back). The application for this is made on the same form to Student Finance. Care Leavers will also have to apply for a Tuition Fee Loan. Again, this can be done on the same form. The application forms, PN1 (New Students) and PR1 (Continuing Students) are downloadable, however they recommend applying on line. An application for finance has to be made each year.

The Student Finance website can be accessed through [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk). This has lots of information as well as being the place to apply. There are downloadable guides that are very good and are easy to understand. Applications for grants can usually be made from mid-March. The website will advise you of the date and also the date the application has to be submitted by. If a student changes course they will need to inform Student Finance. Grant Payments are made in three instalments - one at the start of each term.

The Maintenance Loan amount a student can apply for is up to £8,200. A student does not have to apply for the loan initially if they are unsure. They can wait until they have started the course and see how they are managing financially.

The amount a student will receive for their Tuition Fee Loan will cover their fees and will be paid directly to the university (there are a few exceptions but the university website would say if a course has higher than usual fees). A student will receive a financial notification letter and can keep track of their application online. A student should also usually get some sort of bursary (a one off payment) from the university - this varies depending on what university they are at. They will get details of this from the university once they are enrolled there. Some universities also have a support worker for care leavers to go to if they need any advice or support.

If the student is a parent with a dependent child they may be able to apply for additional help for childcare costs. The website and guides will let them know what they can apply for.

All universities have an Access to Learning Fund. Whether students are given anything from this is the decision of the university itself. They can give money as either a grant or a loan and in a lump sum or in instalments. Students need to apply for an access to learning grant to the Student Services Dept when they have started their course.

Disabled students can claim additional allowances. These are to cover such things as special equipment or a helper. These are known as Disabled Student Allowances (DSAs) and an assessment has to be undertaken before any money is awarded.

These allowances are grants not loans.

In addition to the above many universities provide additional bursaries to care leavers. More information about bursary payments can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/extra-money-pay-university>

### **13. Leaving Care Grants**

All Relevant and Former relevant young people who are eligible for a Leaving Care service will receive a Leaving Care Grant which is currently £2000 per year. The Leaving Care Grant is issued so that you can purchase furniture and equipment associated with setting up your own home.

The grant can be spent whilst you are still in care, in preparation for when you move to your own accommodation. The grant is usually provided in instalments, so that it can be spent as and when you need it.

Your worker will work with you to help you decide the best way to spend the grant and together you should develop a plan for the use of the grant.

Setting up a new home is an expensive business. Your worker will advise you and support you to spend your money carefully and appropriately.

Buying used furniture and equipment can not be a good idea due to issues around guarantee, you should speak to your Personal Advisor (PA) about this especially if you are considering buying second-hand electrical equipment. Electrical equipment must be tested by a qualified engineer before your PA can give consent for you to purchase it.

All individual spends from your grant expenditures must be approved by your Personal Advisor.

#### **14. Crisis Payments**

Living independently can at times be challenging and sometimes things do go wrong. If you require financial support in a crisis then, under certain circumstances, the leaving care team can make emergency financial payments to all care leavers up to the age of 25 years. Each individual request for a crisis payment will be assessed by a P.A. and will be subject to approval by a Manager from the Transition and Leaving Care Team

**Other areas where financial support can be considered include payments for:**

- Additional needs relating to such things as cultural events, Counselling, Preparation for interviews, emergency payments.
- Contact with family or other significant relationships
- Incentive payments for participating in training or employment programmes
- Christmas/religious festival allowance
- Special circumstance where you may need additional funds which will be paid subject to an individual assessment

#### **15. Bank Accounts**

Where ever possible payments made to care leavers will be paid directly into your bank accounts. If you do not already have a bank account your P.A. will help you to open an account.

In exceptional circumstances where a young person is assessed as not being able to maintain a bank account, direct payments can be made on an agreed basis

#### **16. Spending Plans**

Making ends meet on a limited budget is a challenging task. Spending plans are a useful way of making sure that you budget carefully and don't overspend. Your P.A. will help you to produce a spending plan which can be used to balance your incoming funds with your outgoing costs. Making a spending plan can help you to ensure that you have enough money left over to pay fuel bills and food costs. Completing the spending plan with your P.A. is a useful way of discussing and planning how you will budget, and how to save money.

## **17. Requests to Support Higher Education after Age 21**

If a former relevant care leaver contacts the service post 21 to discuss support to attend a further education course a P.A. will be appointed to assess this request. They will also ask the young person what activities they have been involved in since their case closure. An assessment and plan will then be formulated from the meeting which will then be presented to the team manager. The Practice Manager and Service Manager will consider the request taking into account the following:

- ☐ Assessment/Plan
- ☐ Young person's commitment and understanding of the course
- ☐ Past involvement in EET
- ☐ Length of course
- ☐ Financial implications
- ☐ Overall support needs of the young person

They will make a decision and will ensure that this is explained to the young person and that the decision is confirmed in writing. Should a decision be made not to support the request, the young person will be given details of the complaints process and offered assistance to access this.

The extent of practical and financial assistance provided will depend on the assessment of the young person's needs and will reflect the type of course, whether it is full or part-time and the young person's existing income.

## **18. Access to Your Social Care Records. Viewing your Care File** **Why do we keep records about you?**

Your worker needs to keep a record of your health, education, family members, placements etc. so that in future they can look back and see what has happened to you and have a record of your time in care. If there is a change of worker your new worker can look on your file and find out about you. The worker also keeps notes of visits with you and of meetings about you. We also collect information about how we work with you so we can see where we need to improve. In Wigan all of your records are kept on an electronic case file. Access to these records is restricted to a limited number of professionals. Only professionals who have been given a secure password can access your files and this means that your records are kept confidential and secure.

### **Can I see my file?**

Yes, the law says you have a right to see personal information held about you unless we think it would be emotionally harmful to you. If we decide you cannot see your

records then your worker will explain why to you. When you are 18 you will be able to see all of the records kept on your file, and your worker will talk to you about what support you will need to read and understand the papers.

### **How can I get to see my file?**

If you would like to see your social care file records you must submit a written and signed request saying that you are requesting access to your records under the Data Protection Act 1998. This request can be given or posted to your Worker

Your P.A. can help you to complete this written request

You should be given access to your file within 40 calendar days although it can sometimes take a longer time to organise this. If it takes longer than 40 calendar days we will contact you and provide you and inform you of the delay.

### **Who else can see my file?**

Other people who believe there may be information about them in your file may ask to see anything on the file that relates specifically to them, for example sometimes parents want to see information that is contained on files about them. If your parents ask to see your file, if you are old enough we will ask you whether you agree to this and we will take your views into account. We may allow them to see parts of your file if we believe it is in your best interests. If there is information on your file which is just about them then the law says they are allowed to see it

### **Can I see my file after I have left care?**

Yes if you have been looked after by us we have to keep our records about you until you are 75 years old! You have the right to see your records even if you are no longer under a Care Order or if you are no longer receiving a service from the after care team.

This link provides information and a useful guide to your rights relating to viewing your social care records – <http://www.careleavers.com/cla-lcg>

## **19. Your Rights: What the Government say you are entitled to as a Looked after Child**

The Department of Education are responsible for developing plans and policies for services to children in care and care leavers. They recently published a guide for children in care which describes the services that children in care are entitled to receive.

A copy of this document is provided below or you can find the document by visiting the DfE website by clicking on the following link –

[http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/e/20120514\\_lac%20entitlements%20leaving.pdf](http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/e/20120514_lac%20entitlements%20leaving.pdf)

## **20. Care Leavers becoming Parents**

When a young person informs their Personal Advisor that they are going to be a parent, the planning to support the young parent should commence as soon as possible. This

will include looking at their accommodation, clarifying benefits and also discussing with the young person the level of support needed. Your Personal Advisor will also discuss services available from their local authority to support their pregnancy.

If you are a first time parent a discussion with you around referring you to the early intervention teams may be necessary, at this point a discussion will also take place as to whether an early help assessment should be initiated.

If appropriate a referral to the Family Nurse Partnership could be made to support your pregnancy.

Your Personal advisors may undertake an assessment of your ability to meet your child's needs. This may then result in a referral being made to CDT again this is to enable you to gain the skills necessary to look after your child once she/he is born.

The personal advisor will support the young person to apply for the Sure Start maternity Grant for your first child, and any benefits you may be entitled to.

If there are clear safeguarding issues, a referral will be made to the CDT team, this will of course be discussed with you in full. Where there are no concerns this may be dealt with through the early help assessment process.

Your Pathway plan should identify any issues and the support needed throughout your pregnancy and beyond.

## **21. How do I make a complaint?**

If you have a complaint you can telephone, write or email the manager of your allocated P.A. and explain why you want to make a complaint. Your worker will provide you with the contact details of the relevant manager. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive or you want the complaint to be investigated by an independent person you should send your complaint to the link below:

[http://rylands.wiganmbc.gov.uk/mandofoms/servlet/com.mandofoms.server.MandofomsServer?MF\\_XML=ce\\_complaint](http://rylands.wiganmbc.gov.uk/mandofoms/servlet/com.mandofoms.server.MandofomsServer?MF_XML=ce_complaint)

Ofsted have also produced a guide about how to register concerns and complaints which can be found by clicking on the following link –

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/concerns-and-complaints-about-social-careproviders](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/concerns-and-complaints-about-social-careproviders)

## **22. Wigan's Commitment to Children in Care and Care Leavers**

### **Wigan Borough's Pledge to Children in Care**

Wigan Council consulted it's Children in Care Council, Wigan Care Leavers Council and Corporate Parenting Board and worked in partnership with young people to compile a set of principles/promises to Children in Care and Care Leavers. As your corporate parents, we pledge:

## We will listen to you about the services we offer:

We will keep information about you confidential and only share it when it is very important to do so. If we need to tell someone any important information about you, we will explain this to you first.

We will, if possible, offer you choices about where you live and who you live with.

We will listen to you about spending time with your family and friends, this you want contact.

If it is the right thing to do then we will make sure brothers and sisters live together.

We will provide you with a social worker, their name and contact details. We will also give you a backup telephone number so you can talk to someone else if they are not around when you need them.

We will make sure that you have a regular health check and see a nurse who will provide information and advice about your health until you're 18.

## We will make sure that you have your say

We will involve you and ask for your views about decisions that affect your life.

We will listen to you about who should attend any meetings and when it should be.

If you wish to make a complaint we will support you to do this. We will also provide an independent advocate (someone who will speak on your behalf if you want them to).

We will ask you for help in how we influence change in children in care and leaving care services, we will encourage you to attend the care leavers council to participate/contribute in conversations on how you feel services can be improved.

## We will help you achieve success in life

We will let you know about education, training and employment opportunities whilst you are at school and when you leave.

We will make sure that if you want to go to university we will do all we can to make this happen.



We will make sure that there is one teacher in every school who will understand your situation and will offer extra support if you need it.

We will make sure that, where appropriate and in accordance with the law you will get assistance to ensure that you are able to manage your accommodation and living expenses when you leave care.

We will help you get the budget skills you need to manage your money well.

We will help you to find the right place to live when you leave care.

You will get a personal advisor to help you get the skills you need to live independently.

## We will listen to you about the services we offer:

We may need to look after some of your personal possessions and keep them safe for you. If we do this, we will explain this to you, and we promise to return them to you when you leave care.

We will encourage and help you to get involved in social, cultural and leisure activities.

We will do all we can to help you gather and build positive memories and experiences, we will support you with life work and make sure you have a record of to help you get the skills you need to live independently.

## **23. Useful Contacts, Resources and Sources of Support**

The list below provides the contact details of organisations that you might want to contact for support or advice.

### **The Rights4me**

The Rights4me website provides a range of useful advice and information for children in care and care leavers

<https://www.rights4me.org/home/library/reports/report-young-peoples-views-on-complaints-and-advocacy.aspx>

### **ChildLine**

Childline is the free national 24 hour telephone help line for any child in trouble or danger. It is a confidential counselling service which offers information and help to children and young people. You can email Childline, go on-line and chat and also text them,

Telephone: 0800 1111 (24 hour Freephone)

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **The rights4me.org young Persons Guide to care planning Placement and case reviews regulations**

This guide is supported by the Department of Education and provides additional information about your rights whilst in care

<https://www.rights4me.org/~//media/Library%20Documents/Guides/GUIDE%20The%20Young%20Persons%20Guide%20to%20the%20Care%20Planning%20Placement%20and%20Case%20Review%20England%20Regulations%202010.pdf>

### **The National Care Advisory Service NCAS**

The National Care Advisory Service (NCAS) is a national body which provides a range of useful resources and information materials to care leavers. To visit the National Leaving Care Organisation click on the link below –

[http://leavingcare.org/about\\_care\\_and\\_leaving\\_care](http://leavingcare.org/about_care_and_leaving_care)

### **NSPCC (National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children)**

The NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000 is a service for anyone concerned about the safety or welfare of a child. You can contact the helpline 24 hours a day, seven days a week by phone, email or online.

### **National Youth Advocacy Service**

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) is a UK charity providing children's rights and socio-legal services. NYAS offer information, advocacy, legal

representation and advice to children and young people up to the age of **25** through a network of advocates throughout England and Wales.

If you are a child, young person or ringing on behalf of a child, young person or vulnerable adult and need help, information or advice, please contact the freephone helpline on 0300 330 3131 or send an email to [help@nyas.net](mailto:help@nyas.net)

If you would like to speak with someone about a legal matter relating to an individual please call our legal team on 0151 649 8700 or email [legal@nyas.net](mailto:legal@nyas.net)

### **Direct Gov.Uk**

Provides a range of useful information about your rights and entitlements as a care leaver. DirectGov.Uk can be found by clicking on the link below

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/Housing/DG\\_181382](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/Housing/DG_181382)

### **The Care leavers Association.**

The care leavers association provides advice and information and a range of useful information about leaving care and your rights and entitlements.

<http://www.careleavers.com/leavingcare>

### **Young Minds**

Young Minds is committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and empowering their parents and carers.

Website: [www.youngminds.org.uk/](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/)

### **Catch 22**

Catch 22 works with young people who are in or leaving custody, involved in or on the fringes of crime, out of work, struggling at school, homeless or facing young parenthood without the safety net of a supportive family. Catch 22 offer practical support services which are flexible, highly personalised and often intensive. This enables young people to reach their full potential and achieve lasting change.

Website: [www.catch-22.org.uk](http://www.catch-22.org.uk)

### **Need2know**

Need2know provide information on:

- Health
- Money
- Work and leisure
- Sex and relationships
- Housing and much more

Email: [www.need2know.co.uk/need2know/contactus.html](mailto:www.need2know.co.uk/need2know/contactus.html)

Website: [www.need2know.co.uk](http://www.need2know.co.uk)

### **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)**

The CAB helps people to resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice and influencing policy makers. Some branches can provide legal advice on immigration and asylum cases.

Telephone: 08708 408 0808

Email: [enquiry@cabline.org](mailto:enquiry@cabline.org)

Advice visit: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

Website: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Citizen advice website for under25s:**

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/advice4me.html](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/advice4me.html)

### **Runaways**

This is a free phone confidential service for anyone who has run away from home or care, or been forced to leave home.

Freephone: 0800 800 7070

Text: 80234

Email: [runaways@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:runaways@missingpeople.org.uk)

Website: [www.missingpeople.org.uk/runaways/](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk/runaways/)

### **Missing people**

Missing People is a charity that works with young people runaways, missing and unidentified people, their families and other people who care for them.

Address: Missing people, Roebuck House, 284 Upper Richmond Road West, London, SW14 7JE

Telephone: 0208 392 4521

Email: [supporters@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:supporters@missingpeople.org.uk)

Website: [www.missingpeople.org.uk/](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk/)

### **Howard League**

Free, independent and confidential advice, assistance and representation on a wide range of issues to young people under 21 in custody.

Telephone: 020 7249 7373

Email: [info@howardleague.org](mailto:info@howardleague.org)

Website: <http://www.howardleague.org/>

### **Community Legal Advice line**

Community Legal Advice (CLA) is a free and confidential advice service in England and Wales paid for by legal aid. If you are living on a low income or benefits, you may be eligible for free specialist advice from legal advisers on issues including:

- Benefits and tax credits
- Debt
- Education
- Housing
- Employment
- Family problems

The advice is independent and confidential. Community Legal Advice will ask you questions about your problem and find out what help you need. You will be asked a number of questions about your finances to see if you are eligible for legal aid. Community Legal Advice has a free translation service available in 170 languages.