

# The Wordinary:

a language guide for  
professionals working  
with young people.

The Deal



# Why use it?

The Wordinary is based on the 'Language That Cares' document – a national project led by the fostering and adoption charity, TACT, to look at the language that professionals use about children in care.

We know that many of our staff are comfortable and confident working directly with children and young people and often consider the language you use.

This Wordinary is intended as a local guide for professionals who may not regularly work with young people and as a reminder for those who do, to help strengthen the positive and empowering conversations with our children, young people and their families.

The Wordinary is a guide. Language used by professionals should always be guided by the young people you are working with.

The Wordinary has been created with colleagues from the Children and Families directorate, the Deal Ambassadors and our own young people.

The aims of this document are:

- To embed The Deal Principles
- To remove barriers for understanding
- To empower our children and young people
- To help everyone have more positive conversations

The Wordinary is not intended to explain all the words used across children's services like a dictionary, but to generate discussion about the way we communicate and to help us engage more meaningfully with our children and young people.

There will always be a need for professionals to use legislative and correct terms in your professional dialogue with each other but The Wordinary is intended to remind all professionals to talk to children and young people in a clear and accessible way.

"I didn't notice the words when I was younger. But when you get to 12 or 13, they start to use different language with you."

13 year old, Wigan

"You say you want to treat people in care the same as people who aren't in care. Well you wouldn't call a home a placement."

15 year old, Hindley

"I was 11 and I was told I was going into a short-term foster placement in Bickershaw. I didn't know what this meant so I didn't understand what was going to happen to me. This is important for people who are like me and might not understand."

14 year old, Leigh

"To be fair I don't really have a problem with the words but I've been in care for over 10 years so I think I've just got used to it all."

17 year old, Golborne

"Nice and easy words are best for me."

8 year old, Shevington

# A

## **Abscond**

**We prefer:** Run away; Go missing.

## **Agencies**

**We prefer:** Service.

## **Asylum seeker**

**We prefer:** Asylum seeking young person;  
Young person who needs our protection.

## **Attachment**

**We prefer:** Relationship.

## **Attainment**

**We prefer:** Grades, how well you have done.

# B

## **Birth/Biological Parents**

**We prefer:** Parents, Family, Mum or Dad.

# C

## **Care leaver**

**We prefer:** Young adult.

## **Care plan**

**We prefer:** Future plans, My life plan, My plan.

## **Challenging Behaviour**

**We prefer:** Struggling, Having a bad time, Having difficulties.

## **Close the case**

**We prefer:** Given the child or young person the help that they needed.

## **Contact**

**We prefer:** Making plans to see our family, Family meet up time, Family time, Seeing Dad, Mum, Grandma, Family etc.

## **Contact centre**

**We prefer:** Family centre.

## **Corporate Parent**

**We prefer:** Responsible for you.

# D

## **Designated Teacher**

**We prefer:** Teacher.

## **Difficult to place**

**We prefer:** Can't find a home good enough for them.

## **Direct Work**

**We prefer:** Working together, spend some quality time together.

## **Drop out**

**We prefer:** Early school leaver.

# E

## **Emotional Warmth**

**We prefer:** Loving, caring.

## **Engage**

**We prefer:** Get involved.



# F

## **Fell pregnant**

**We prefer:** Became pregnant.

## **Foster carers**

**We prefer:** My family, Foster Mum, Foster Dad, People who care about me, My new family, The family that chose us, Aunty/Uncle, Their name.

## **Full potential**

**We prefer:** Make sure I have every chance to reach my dreams.

# G

## **Giving or served notice change to notice**

**We prefer:** Home situation will change, Moving house.

## **Guidance and boundaries**

**We prefer:** Rules.

# H

## **High aspirations**

**We prefer:** Good choices, Wanting the best for our children, Wanting a good future.

# I

## **In care**

**We prefer:** Living with a different family in a different home, Living with different family members.

## **Isolation**

**We prefer:** Reflection time, Thinking time.

# L

## **LAC review**

**We prefer:** My review meeting.

## **LAC visit**

**We prefer:** Home visit, [Child's name] visit, Catch up.

## **LAC/Foster child**

**We prefer:** Call children by their names, or say 'our children'.

## **Leaving care**

**We prefer:** Moving on.

## **Liaise**

**We prefer:** Talk to.

# M

## **Moving placements**

**We prefer:** Moving to a new house, A new chapter or fresh start.

# N

## **NEET**

**We prefer:** Unemployed or not in training or in education.

## **Network**

**We prefer:** Groups.

# O

## **Outcomes**

**We prefer:** Achievements, how well I have done.

# P

## **PA**

**We prefer:** Advisor, Personal Advisor, Guidance Advisor.

## **Pathway plan**

**We prefer:** Future planning for 16+, Plan for when you leave care, Path to independence.

## **Peers**

**We prefer:** Other young people in school or in your groups outside of school.

## **PEP**

**We prefer:** School review, Education meeting, Education plan.

## **Permanence**

**We prefer:** My home without disruptions.

## **Placement**

**We prefer:** Your home, the house where you live.

## **Protective Factors**

**We prefer:** Strengths, What's working well.

## **Provision**

**We prefer:** Support.

## **Putative father**

**We prefer:** Possible father.

# R

## **Receiving services**

**We prefer:** Getting help and support.

## **Reparation**

**We prefer:** Help to put things right.

## **Reside**

**We prefer:** Home, Current living situation.

## **Respite**

**We prefer:** A break for children (not carers), Day out, Home away from home, Stay over, Sleepover, Time off for everyone.

## **Restrained**

**We prefer:** Physical help to stay safe.

## **Reunification**

**We prefer:** Going back to live with my family, Going back home.

## **Risk**

**We prefer:** What the worries are, Concerns, The likelihood of future child maltreatment.

# S

## **School readiness**

**We prefer:** Having the skills you need to start school.

## **Service user / client**

**We prefer:** Person's name.

## **Short term breaks**

**We prefer:** Mini break, Holiday.

## **Siblings**

**We prefer:** Our brothers and sisters, People who are related to me, Family.

## **Sick**

**We prefer:** Unwell.

## **Social worker**

**We prefer:** One to one worker, Someone who understands your family background and knows what you have been through.

## **Special needs**

**We prefer:** Additionally supported, The name of the disability, Extra support.

## **Staff, Support worker, Unit manager**

**We prefer:** Their name.

## **Stat visit/Statutory visit**

**We prefer:** Coming to visit to see how we're doing.

## **Step Up / Step Down**

**We prefer:** Step across.

## **Struggled**

**We prefer:** Can't yet.

## **Support**

**We prefer:** Help.

# **T**

## **Therapy**

**We prefer:** Talking things through sessions,  
Trying to make sense sessions,  
Help to work things out.

## **Threshold**

**We prefer:** Needs.

## **Transition**

**We prefer:** Moving on, Preparing for change,  
Next steps.



# Abbreviations

For example;

**CLA** – Child Looked After

**GLD** – Good Level Development

**PSP** – Pastoral Development Plan

**RDP** – Review, Development and Planning meeting

**SDF** – Service Delivery Footprint

**SGO** – Special Guardianship Order

**TAC** – Team Around the Child

We prefer:

**To use the  
full explanation.**

Thank you for using  
**The Wordinary!**