



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

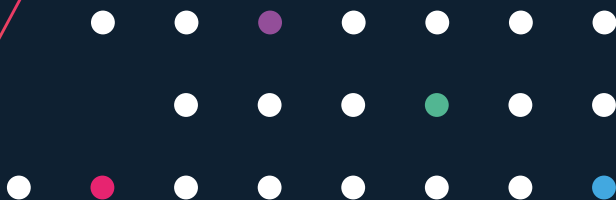


Telford & Wrekin Council's

HOME SKILLS AND LIFE SKILLS

workbook and
checklists

pathway planning
toolkit



July 2025



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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

From the Children in Care Council

Hey, my name is Jess. I'm a care experienced adult, who is now employed by Telford & Wrekin Council, our 'Corporate Parents', as a Participation Apprentice and Care Leaver Champion.

I have already walked my path through care, and I know how scary the thought of becoming an adult can be. I can also reassure you, that there is plenty of support available to prepare you for this.

This manual may look like a lot of work, but it's full of helpful and useful information and tools to help you on your journey. It's a friendly guide rather than something more to worry about. It's broken down into manageable sections, which you can choose to do in any order, so it fits your needs and circumstances. Don't worry, it's not designed for you to complete on your own. Your social worker, personal adviser, carer, or support worker will help you through it and help you understand any areas you may find confusing.

It will stay with you throughout your care experience and beyond and will help your independence grow. It will help explain the jargon and help teach you skills that will increase your confidence. It will help explain your rights and what you are entitled to, just as it helped me. I hope it helps you too.

I wish you all the very best of health and happiness on your journey and hope to meet you someday.

Best wishes,
Jessica

AIMS OF THE HOME SKILLS AND LIFE SKILLS WORKBOOK AND CHECKLIST - PATHWAY PLANNING TOOLKIT

Introduction


This is designed to help care leavers with the transition to adulthood. This toolkit will aid discussion, planning and assessment in preparation for independence.

It will help identify any potential issues and life skills work required. This is developed in conjunction with young people, foster carers, fostering social workers and residential key workers. We have engaged with housing providers and children's social workers and involved leaving care personal advisers, participation workers, and advocates too. It is intended to be a useful guide for all these groups. The toolkit will also help others supporting young people to make the transition from care to independent living and adulthood.

For ease of use, we have arranged topics into several broad categories with some crossover between them. The importance of topics will change over time and new ones will inevitably arise.

It is essential to undertake the toolkit as a joint project with young people including community organisations and where possible family members and friends as well.





For young people

This toolkit will help you identify your knowledge and abilities including the life and home skills you have now and those you need to learn. It will also help identify the type of support you have in place now and the support you will need.

We want the workbook to help you think about your goals for independence and adulthood. You should consider what skills you need to gain to achieve them. There isn't a set way to undertake the tasks and there are no right or wrong answers to many of the questions as they are a guide. We want them to be used to help you think about some of the situations you will face, how to deal with them, and encourage discussions.

These are the life skills that all young people need regardless of whether they are in care or not. If you have difficulty answering some of the questions, don't worry. It doesn't matter if you have not had experience of some of the tasks yet.

It takes everyone a long time to adjust to living an independent adult life. We want this guide to help you prepare for yours. Talk to someone about this and begin to think about the tasks you can work on, and which ones are important to you.

For carers and workers

This is designed to complement the leaving care assessment of need document (pathway plan part 1) and the checklist will aid planning. By focusing on preparation for independence, the toolkit will help identify tasks. The conversations it raises will help identify the support a young person will need. It will help you identify ways to undertake tasks and broaden a young person's support network. It is important to build a positive working relationship and to explore what is often a difficult period of transition for a young person.

You will need to work at the young person's pace.

There are many ways to explore independence work. Think about ways that suit you and be creative. There are diagrams in this booklet to help you visualise tasks and plan.

PART ONE

YOUNG PERSON'S

INFORMATION

SHEET

Name:

Date of birth: Age:

Address:

Type of care accommodation:

Legal status:

Immigration status:

Date young person was first 'looked after':

Date young person will become 'eligible':

Residential Keyworker or Foster Carer:

Social Worker:

Leaving Care Personal Adviser:

Virtual School Advisor:

Job Centre Work Coach:

School or College attended:

Traineeship/training course attended:

Work/Full time or Part time:

National Insurance Number:

National Health number:

People who will help with this checklist:

SECTION ONE


EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

About me

Which of the following are you currently undertaking?

| | | Yes | No | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|---|-----|----|-----------|-----------|
| A | School | | | | |
| B | College | | | | |
| C | University | | | | |
| D | Traineeship or study programme | | | | |
| E | Apprenticeship, General National Vocational Qualification | | | | |
| F | In employment | | | | |
| G | Unemployed | | | | |
| H | Work experience, preparing for education or training? | | | | |
| I | Voluntary work | | | | |
| J | Other | | | | |

Write down some additional details about what you are doing now. What do you consider the positive or negative aspects?



Write down some additional details about what you are doing now. What do you consider the positive or negative aspects?



Qualifications

What School/College/University qualifications do you have or expect to get?

What sports, hobby awards or general certificates do you have or expect to get?

What experience of courses such as First Aid, National Citizenship Service, Duke of Edinburgh, AQA Unit Awards, Art Awards do you have that are likely to help you when you apply for jobs?

Further Education

Have you thought about going to college or university in the future? **Yes/No**

If you wanted to go to college or university, where would you go to find out more information?

What support could the Virtual School provide? Have you met any of the workers?

Career Connect

Where is your local Career Connect office or centre?

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What sort of help and services do you think Career Connect provide?

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Have you thought about visiting your local Career Connect office or centre? **Yes/No**

Who would you visit your local Career Connect office or centre with?

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Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Have you got a Curriculum Vitae (CV)? **Yes / No**

Who could help you create or produce a CV? (i.e. your social worker, virtual school adviser, leaving care personal adviser, foster carer, staying put carer, residential worker, Careers Connect office or centre or Jobcentre Plus)

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List some of the positive things you have achieved that you feel good about.

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Language

Is English your first language? Yes/No

If English is not your first language, what is your first language?

Are you undertaking an ESOL Course?

(English for Speakers of Other Languages) Yes/No

What other languages do you speak besides English?

What do you understand by the following?

| | |
|---|--|
| Dyslexia | |
| Literacy difficulties | |
| EHCP - Education, Health and Care Plan (SEND) | |

What groups or organisations, if any do you know about in your area that can provide help for young people with the above types of issues and support needs?



Support

Who would you ask to help you complete official forms and tasks?

What strategies do you have in place to assist you with remembering and keeping appointments?

If you had a careers appointment, interview, or job interview how would you remember it and ensure you got there on time?

Childcare

If you have children, where would you go for information about childcare if you continued to study?

Funding

How can the 'Care to Learn' fund help you? Where would you go to find information about this initiative?

What is the 16 – 19 Bursary Scheme? How can it help you if you wanted to continue studying at a sixth form or college?

What is the Discretionary Learner Support Funding? How can it help you if you wanted to continue studying at college?

What is the Apprenticeship Bursary and what would it provide if you are a care leaver starting an apprenticeship?

Work details

What is your National Insurance Number? Why is it important?

When would you receive a P45?

When would you receive a P60?

What is the function of the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)?

What is Universal Credit and how can it help you if you are studying?

Jobs and training

What career path do you wish to follow? What has led you to this choice?

What skills or academic qualifications would you need for this work or career?

What skills or experience would be useful or helpful with this work or career?

What work experience placements have you undertaken? What skills did you gain?

Have you attended any job interviews (including for work experience)?

What questions do you think you might be asked in an interview?

What questions would you ask during or at the end of an interview?

What opportunities have you had to practice interview questions?

Have you been offered a job or place on a training programme? **Yes/No**

What, if any, casual or part-time jobs have you done (i.e. such as in a shop or a paper round)?

How many hours per week can you work at the following ages?

| Age | Hours per week |
|----------|----------------|
| 13 years | |
| 14 years | |
| 15 years | |
| 16 years | |
| 17 years | |

What is the minimum wage for the following groups?

| Age | Minimum wage |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Young people 16 – 18 years | £ |
| Young people 18 – 21 years | £ |
| Adults 21 years and older | £ |
| First year of an apprenticeship | £ |

What is the living wage?

What is the difference between the minimum wage and the living wage?

What skills and strengths do you have which may help you find and keep a job?

Where would you go to claim benefits (Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support) if you needed them due to having a low wage?

Education

If you remain at sixth form, go to college, or go to university, what do you know about the financial support you could claim? What may you be entitled too such as benefits, grants, and learner support funds, bursaries, loans and/or children's services allowances?

How and where would you claim these?

What information can the University Student Support Service provide to you?

Do you know what the 'Fair Access Offer' is for students going to university? **Yes/ No**

What help could the 'Fair Access Offer' provide?

What is 'Propel' (<https://propel.org.uk/UK/>) and what information could it help with if you are thinking about going to university?

If you are considering going to university, do you know what support Telford Leaving Care Team can provide?

SECTION TWO

IMMIGRATION AND

ASYLUM

What is your immigration status?

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|---|--|
| Applying for Asylum | |
| Granted Asylum/Accepted as a Refugee (with Indefinite Leave to Remain) | |
| Humanitarian Protection | |
| Discretionary Leave to Remain | |
| Applying to extend Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave to Remain | |
| Appealing a decision | |

When does your leave to remain expire?

How long before your limited 'leave to remain' expires can you apply to extend your limited 'leave to remain'?

Who will assist you to apply to extend your limited 'leave to remain', or appeal an adverse asylum decision?

Who is your solicitor and what are the contact details?

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Do you have a Biometric Card? **Yes/No**

What do they provide and why are they needed? Where do you keep your Biometric Card?

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Where do you keep your immigration documents, and do you have copies of these documents?

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Make a list of organisations that can provide advice and support with your cultural or religious needs (i.e. a support group from your cultural background).

(You can do this with your social worker/leaving care personal adviser, asylum worker, foster carer/staying put carer, supported lodgings carer or semi-independent keyworker).

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What support can you receive from the Refugee Council?

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How might your immigration status affect your education, training, employment opportunities and entitlements when you reach 18?

To be able to claim welfare benefits at the age of 18 you must be able to prove that the Home Office received your application to extend 'your leave to remain' (or you are appealing an adverse decision) before it expired. How would you prove this?

What support can the Voluntary Assisted Returns Programme provide?

Where would you go to find out information about the Voluntary Assisted Returns Programme?



What do you understand by the term 'All Rights Exhausted'?

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If you receive 'Removal Directions' and decide to 'go underground,' what dangers could you face?

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SECTION THREE

PRACTICAL LIFE AND INDEPENDENCE SKILLS, KEY IDENTITY, AND CITIZENSHIP DOCUMENTS

Make a list of the positive things you feel you will gain from being independent.

Make a list of the practical skills and life skills you feel you will need in the future, especially when you are independent.

Make a list of the practical skills and life skills you feel you have.

What does the term independence mean to you?

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What opportunities have you had to:

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|---|--|
| Shop for the food you like | |
| Prepare and cook the food you like | |
| Wash and iron your own clothes | |
| Use a launderette | |
| Sew buttons and repair clothes | |
| Change or reset a fuse or change a light bulb | |
| Discuss keeping your home safe and secure | |
| Develop a budget plan and plan your expenditure | |
| Complete forms and official documents | |

Which of the following shops represent good value for money and why?
Rank them in the order of what you think represents good value. (1 is best value, 10 is least value for money)

| Shops | Best value ranking |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Marks & Spencer | |
| Lidl | |
| Aldi | |
| Iceland | |
| Tesco | |
| Waitrose | |
| Co-op | |
| Sainsbury's | |
| Morrison's | |
| Asda | |

What opportunities have you had to use a bus or train timetable to plan a journey?
Have you ever used the 'Travel Telford' website to plan journey?

What would a Telford Teen Travel Card provide? What are the rules about using the card and how much discount would a card provide? Where would you get one?

If you travelled to London what would an Oyster Card provide? What are the age rules about using an Oyster Card and where would you get an Oyster Card from?

Have you ever used a contactless payment card to travel in London? **Yes/No**

What are the advantages of an Oyster Card over a contactless payment card when traveling on the London Underground?

What experience do you have of using maps and planning journeys? Have you used an A-Z to plan a journey in Telford, Birmingham, or your local area? Have you used a Sat-Nav, GPS finder or a (map) app on your phone to plan a journey?

What age must you be before you can hold a provisional driving licence?

How would you apply for a provisional driving licence?

What are the age rules regarding:

a) Driving a motor car

b) Driving a motor bike

c) Driving a moped

What documents must you have to legally own and drive a motor vehicle?

What possible difficulties may you experience when you move into your new home?

What would you do about friends visiting your new place? Who may you not want there and how would you ask them to leave?

What would you do if you had noisy neighbours?

What would you do if your neighbours feel you are being noisy?

How easy do you find it to say no to people when they want you to do things you don't like or don't want to do?

What do you understand by the term 'assertiveness'?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel about being assertive? (10 being very confident, 1 being unconfident)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|---|---|----|
| Unconfident | | | | | Very confident | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Do you have a copy of your birth certificate or passport? Yes/No

Where would you go to get a passport application form?

Do you have a folder containing copies/originals of all your important documents?

Who would help you create a folder if you do not have one?

This folder should contain the following:

- Education certificates
- Passport
- Nationality and/or Immigration documents
- Tenancy agreement
- National Insurance Number
- National Health Number
- Immunisation card
- Birth certificate
- Benefit details
- Bank details
- HC1 Exemption Certificate
- Important addresses
- Important dates

How would you keep your important documents safe?

How would you organise your important documents?

Do you keep photocopies of important forms and documents? **Yes/No**

How long should you keep important documents (i.e. bank statements and wage) and why?

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When a young person ceases to be looked after, leaves care, or reaches the age of 18, they should have background information about the following areas:

- 1. Care history
- 2. Health history
- 3. Family history and family health history
- 4. A detailed chronology of significant events with dates:
 - A comprehensive health history and family health history, including a record of immunisations, significant illnesses and accidents, allergies etc., the information should include information about their family health issues and any hereditary illnesses or health risks.
 - Comprehensive information about their family history.
 - Comprehensive information about their care and leaving care history which includes all their placements, placement addresses and details and dates.
 - Comprehensive information about why they came into care.
 - A detailed eco-map, genogram or information about significant family and important people and their contact information and details.

Do you have all the above information? If not, who could help you gather the information?

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Do you have a trusted person you could leave your important documents with? (i.e. previous foster carer, staying put carer, supported lodgings carer) **Yes/No**

What do you understand by the term cyber bullying and e-safety?

What are some of the risks associated with social networking sites and the internet?

Why is it important to limit the information you post online and what are some of the dangers of posting too much information online?

What steps can you take to keep your identity safe, avoid identity theft or fraud and keep your bank details and access pin safe?

What do you understand by the term 'child sexual exploitation'?

What do you understand by the term 'grooming'?

If you felt you were being sexually exploited or groomed, who would you talk to and how could it be stopped or prevented?

If you felt that your friend was being groomed or sexually exploited, how could you try to stop or prevent it?

What do you understand by the term ‘identity theft’?

What do you understand by the term ‘Prevent’? Why is it an important issue?

Why do social workers, foster carers, staying put carers, residential keyworkers and staff that work with young people get worried if young people and those in care are thought to be missing?

SECTION FOUR

FINANCES, MONEY MANAGEMENT AND BUDGETING

Have you had the opportunity to discuss money management and budgeting?

Yes/No

Can you make a list of what you are currently spending your money on?

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How do you think this list will differ when you live independently?

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What items will become more or less important?

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What opportunities have you had to practice buying food for yourself or others?

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When you have your own home which of the following bills do you think you will have to pay?

| Bill | Yes/No | How often? |
|---------------------|--------|------------|
| Rent | | |
| Gas bills | | |
| Electricity bills | | |
| Water rates | | |
| Telephone charges | | |
| Television licence | | |
| Service charges | | |
| Council tax | | |
| Household insurance | | |

Can you make a list of the different methods of paying bills?

What is the difference between a standing charge and a direct debit?

On average how much do you think you would spend on electricity per week if it was your only form of heating and cooking in a:

| Type of accommodation | Weekly cost of electricity |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Bedsit | £ |
| Flat | £ |
| Shared house | £ |
| House | £ |

Which methods do you use to save money currently?

How would you open a post office, bank or building society savings account?

Who would help you to open a bank or building society savings account?

Do you have a Junior ISA? **Yes/No**

Do you know how much money is in your Junior ISA? **Yes/No**

All young people who have been in care for more than a year are given a Junior ISA with an opening balance of £200.



What is a 'Credit Union' and what could they provide?

What is the difference between a current account and a deposit account?

What is the difference between a debit card and credit card?

What information and proof of identification would be required when opening an account?

How much does a television licence cost and where would you buy one?

How much is the fine you receive if you do not have a television licence?

Where would you go to get help with debt and credit difficulties?

How would you manage your money and bills when you are working?

What benefits are available to people on low wages?

Where would you go to claim benefits that you may be entitled to?

Make a list of all your local Jobcentre Plus or benefits offices.

What benefits are available to you at the age of 18?

How much savings are you entitled to have before your benefits are affected?

Have you had the opportunity to discuss any of the following?

| Topic | Yes/No |
|---|--------|
| Universal Credit | |
| Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance | |
| Housing Element of Universal Credit | |
| Universal Credit – Alternative Payment Arrangements (APAs) | |
| Disability Living Allowance | |
| Personal Independence Payment | |
| Tax Credits | |
| Allowances and Benefits for Mothers & Babies | |
| Income Tax | |
| Council Tax, Council Tax support, possible exemptions, and benefits | |
| National Insurance | |
| Universal Credit Advances | |
| Salaries and Wages | |
| Leaving Care Allowances | |

Which organisations and individuals could provide you with information about any issues related to the above?

What is a Universal Credit - Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA)? Why is it helpful to set up an APA?

What assistance can the Citizens Advice provide?

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What is a credit rating?

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How would you build a credit rating?

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How could you check your credit rating?

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What is your understanding of the term APR?

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What are some of the risks associated with loan sharks, pay day lenders, debt, and high interest rates?

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What is the Live Well Telford – Food Share Project and how could it help you?

What is the Community Grocery Telford and how could it help you? How much does it cost to shop there and how many times could you use the service in a week?

SECTION FIVE

FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND SUPPORT NETWORKS

Can you make a list or use a diagram to set out all the people who help you, who are important to you and how they support you?

How will these people assist you when you are living independently?

Do you feel you have enough contact with them?

What type of contact and support do you have with them now (i.e. telephone calls and visits)? How will this change when you are living independently?

How often could you visit them and what support could they give you?

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Do you have a base (your own family, foster family, former children’s home, staying put home, supported lodgings home) where you feel welcome and where you can:

| | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| Drop in without an invitation if you are bored or lonely. | |
| Expect help if some crisis occurs. | |
| Expect to go for major holiday or festival, such as Christmas, Eid, Holi, Rosh Hashanah. | |
| Be sure of a bed if necessary. | |

How do you feel about spending time on your own?

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Do you think you would feel isolated or lonely when you live independently? **Yes/No**

What would you do to cope with and overcome loneliness?

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Where could you go to, and which organisations could assist you if you do feel lonely?

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Make a list of the people and organisations in your area that you could get support from when you are living independently?

(You can do this with your foster carer/s, staying put carer/s, residential keyworker, supported lodgings carer, social worker or leaving care personal adviser).

How useful would it be for you to visit some of these organisations and be introduced to them?

How do you spend your spare time currently?

Which youth, sports or hobby clubs do you attend or are a member of?

Does your local council have a passport to leisure or similar discount scheme? **Yes/No**

What do you think a passport to leisure provides?

What do you know about the Telford Loyalty Card (TLC) and what it can provide?

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List the leisure facilities you know in your area (i.e. swimming pools, leisure centres, gyms, libraries, youth, and community centres).

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What do you understand by the term 'identity'?

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Who do you talk to about issues such as your identity?

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When you meet new people who ask about your background, do you tell them you are in care? **Yes/No**

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What stereotypes does society have of children in care and care leavers?

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How do these stereotypes impact the experience of leaving care and living independently?

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Who would you talk to about your identity in care or leaving care and portraying this in a positive way?

When you meet new people how would you explain who your foster carer/s, leaving care personal adviser, keyworker or social worker are?

Would you tell people you have a care background? If not, why not? How do you think this may affect you in the long term?

Where would you go for support and help in cases of racial discrimination or sexual harassment?

What do you understand by the terms 'abusive relationships' and 'healthy relationships'?

If you felt you were in an abusive relationship, who could you turn to for support (both individuals and organisations)?

What is domestic violence or abuse (DV) and why do you think it is often very difficult to end relationships that involve domestic violence or abuse?

What assistance can the Citizens Advice provide in these situations?

What is the address and phone number for Citizens Advice?

What assistance can the Youth Service provide?

Where is your local youth centre and what is their address and phone number?

What religious faith do you belong to, if any?

Who would you talk to about your cultural and/or religious beliefs?

If you do belong to a religious faith, do you know where to go to practice your faith?

If you or your partner were pregnant, who could you turn to for official advice?


What financial help could you get? What emotional help could you get?

If you have children, do you know where to go for information about childcare?

Do you know what Healthy Start vouchers are if you have children?

How can the 'Care to Learn' fund help you? Where would you go to find information about this initiative?

What groups in your area can provide support when you have children?



Where are the 'young mothers' support groups in your area?

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Where are the 'young fathers' support groups in your area?

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What support can Sure Start Centres provide for young parents?

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Where would you go to find information about your local children's centre?

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What is the name and address of your local children in care group? How would you contact them?

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What is a 'mentor' and how could they support you?

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| |

What is the 'Bee U' and 'Beam' counselling service? How would you make contact them if you needed their service?

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| |

SECTION SIX

HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

What is the name of your doctor or general practitioner (GP) and what are their contact details?

What is the name of your dentist and what are their contact details?

What is the name of your optician and what are their contact details?

How would you register with a new doctor, dentist, or optician when you move to a new house or area?

What is the name of the looked after Children's Nurse, or Leaving Care Nurse in your area? What support could they provide?

Do you have your National Health Number?

If you do not have a National Health Number, how would you get one?

Where would you go to get information on the following issues (i.e. youth centres, local advice services, NHS drop-in services)?

| Issue | Agencies |
|--|----------|
| Contraception | |
| Counselling | |
| Drug and alcohol issues | |
| Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) | |
| Pregnancy and parenting support | |
| Terminations | |

Can you make a list below of local useful health related agencies and telephone numbers?

a) Family planning clinic

b) Sexual health clinic

c) Looked after young people's health worker/nurse

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d) On Track Youth Counselling Service

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Who do you feel comfortable discussing the following issues with?

a) Sexual relationships and responsibilities

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| |

b) Your sexuality

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|--|
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| |

c) How to practice safer sex

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

d) How you feel about having children

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

Have you had your annual health assessment which is available up until your 18th birthday? **Yes/No**

Have you got a record of your immunisations/health passport? **Yes/No**

Who looks after your immunisation record/health passport?

If you haven't got a record of your immunisations/health passport, how would you go about getting one?

If you must pay prescription charges, how much are they?

Which groups of people are exempt from prescription costs?

What will form HC1 (SC) provide?

Do you have a first aid kit in your home? **Yes/No**



What items do you feel it is useful to include in a first aid kit?

| |
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| |
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| |

Do you have any extra health needs that you require specific help with (i.e. adapted accommodation or a special diet)?

| |
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Where is your nearest NHS local walk-in medical centre located?

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|--|
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| |

Where is your nearest casualty/accident and emergency (A&E) department located?

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|--|
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| |

In what type of situation should you use/phone the NHS 111 helpline?

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|--|
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| |
| |

SECTION SEVEN

HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

What type of accommodation/home do you currently live in?

What type of accommodation may be available when you leave care/reach age 18?

What type of accommodation would you prefer when you leave care or reach age 18?

What do you understand by the term 'Staying Put'?

What do you understand by the term 'Supported Lodgings'?

What do you understand by the term ‘Shared Lives’?

When you have your own accommodation how will you decorate it? Who will help you decorate?

If you have a pet (i.e. cat or dog), how do you think it may affect the type of accommodation you could live in?

On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel about managing your own accommodation?

(10 being very confident; 1 being not confident at all)

| Unconfident | | | | | Very confident | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Can you make a list of the different types of accommodation (i.e. hostel, flats, and bedsits) and list their advantages and disadvantages?

How old do you expect to be when you leave care?

What do you think your main reason for moving away from your current home will be?

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| To leave care | |
| To go to college | |
| To get a job | |
| To live with family or friends | |
| To live with a partner | |

How long do you expect to stay in your first home?

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| 6 months | |
| 1 year | |
| 2- 3 years | |
| Longer than 3 years | |

Who do you think you will live with when you become independent?

| | |
|----------------|--|
| On your own | |
| With friends | |
| With a partner | |
| With relatives | |

What supported accommodation hostels are in your area?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

When you first leave care, how easy do you think it will be to find a place to live?

| |
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| |

Who will help you find a place to live and where will you look?

Can you make a list of organisations in your area, which provide, or help to find accommodation?

At what age can you complete a housing application form with your Local Housing Department or where you are living?

How much do you think it costs to rent a bedsit or flat in your area from the following?

| Type of housing organisation | Per week | Per month |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Private landlord | | |
| Housing department | | |
| Housing association | | |

Who will help you to fill in a housing department housing application form (Housing Needs Register)?

Where can you apply for Local Authority housing (Council and Housing Association accommodation)?

What do you understand by the term 'Local Connection Housing Authority'?

What safety equipment should you have in your home (i.e. fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors and fire blankets)?

How would you ensure you and your home are as safe as possible? Do you have a safety chain on your door? Do you check who your visitors are before opening the door? Do you know how to turn the gas/electric/water off? Do you have a list of emergency numbers at hand?

At what age do you become responsible for paying your rent?

What is the Local Housing Allowance?

If you have difficulties with your neighbours, who would you complain to?

What are the main reasons young people get evicted from their accommodation?

Can you list all the attributes of a responsible tenant?

How would you ensure you are a responsible tenant?

What are the main differences between private sector and local authority tenancies?

Can you make a list of items you would need for setting up your home?

How much is the living care 'Setting up Home Allowance'?

What items do you already have that could help furnish your future home?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

Where is your local community furniture store?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

What furniture and items could they provide?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

Which of the following items would be your priority when you are setting up your home?

| | |
|---|--|
| Bed | |
| Chest of drawers/wardrobe | |
| Duvet, covers and pillows | |
| Towels | |
| Bedside table and lamp | |
| Curtains/blinds | |
| Cooker/microwave | |
| Fridge/freezer | |
| Washing machine | |
| Kettle, pans, plates, mugs, cutlery, storage containers, plate rack | |
| Mop, dustpan and brush, vacuum cleaner | |
| Iron and ironing board, clothes airer | |
| Smoke detector, fire blanket, door chain, first aid kit | |
| Television, music player | |
| Settee, table and chairs | |

Lots of people who live on their own leave lights on, or the radio on at night to feel comfortable and safe. What would make you feel at ease?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

Can you name a hostel in your area where you could stay in an emergency?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

Most care leavers mistakenly think they will automatically get a council flat when they leave care. Where do you think this misconception comes from?

If someone moves into your accommodation, how will it affect your tenancy, benefits, and Council Tax?

What makes a good tenant and neighbour?

Can you make a list of all the skills, knowledge and behaviours that make a good tenant and neighbour?

Useful websites and contacts

The following websites provide useful information about benefits, education and general support.

| Information on | Website links |
|--|---|
| Telford Youth Services | www.telford.gov.uk/info/20071/youth_support |
| Telford Community Supermarket | https://communitygrocery.org.uk/telford/ |
| Live Well Telford -Food Parcels | Food Parcels Live Well Telford |
| Attending university | https://propel.org.uk/Search/ Information about support for care leavers attending university |
| The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers | http://nnecl.org/ Provides information about the support available to improve access to further and higher education |
| Higher education | www.gov.uk/higher-education-courses-find-and-apply Information on all aspects of higher education |
| Applying for courses | www.ucas.com/ |
| Student loans | www.gov.uk/student-finance |
| Sure Start | www.gov.uk/find-sure-start-childrens-centre |
| Sure Start maternity grants | www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant |
| Care to Learn initiative | www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/overview |
| Help with health-related costs on Universal Credit | www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/help-with-health-costs-for-people-getting-universal-credit/ Information about for those on Universal Credit |

| | |
|--|--|
| HC1 (SC) and HC1 Form. | www.nhs.uk www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Documents/2016/HC1-April-2016.pdf Information line 0345 850 1166 |
| Citizens Advice | www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/ |
| Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) | www.gov.uk/browse/benefits Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) - useful A-Z guide to benefits DWP – Universal Credit |

Benefits information/advice/campaigning organisations

| | |
|--|---|
| Debt issues | www.nationaldebtline.org/ |
| Debt issues | www.stepchange.org/ |
| Debt and benefits advice | www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en |
| Advice Services Alliance | www.advicenow.org.uk/ Including information on benefits |
| Disability benefits and services | www.disabilityrightsuk.org/ With links to separate websites for Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland |
| Benefits and services for lone parents | www.gingerbread.org.uk/ |
| National careers service | https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/ |

Health Advice

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| NHS – health advice and information | www.nhs.uk/ |
|-------------------------------------|--|

Diagrams

The diagrams below have arisen from work undertaken with and by young people, carers and workers. The diagrams have proven useful to visualise topics. They can help you set out independence issues raised in discussions produced by this booklet.

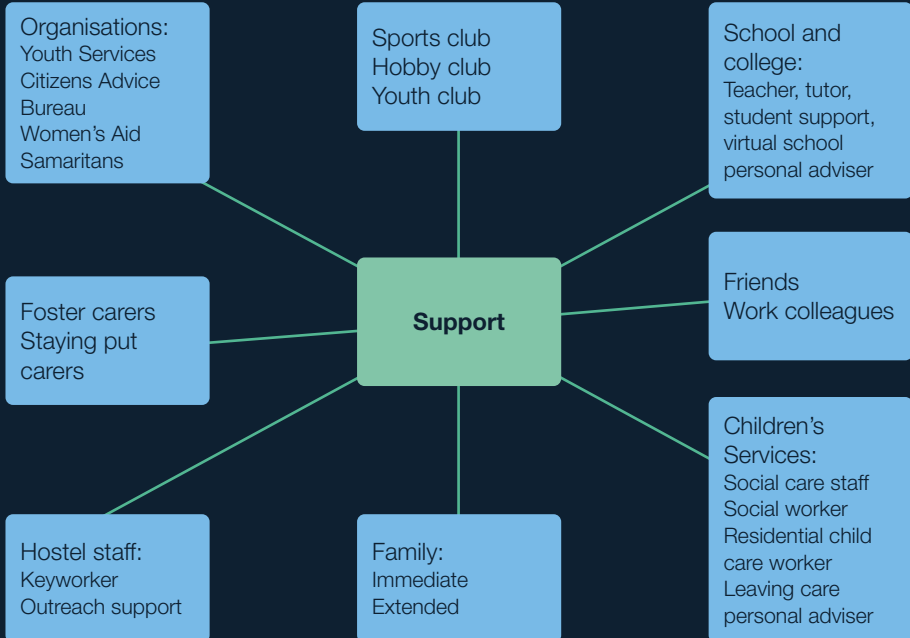
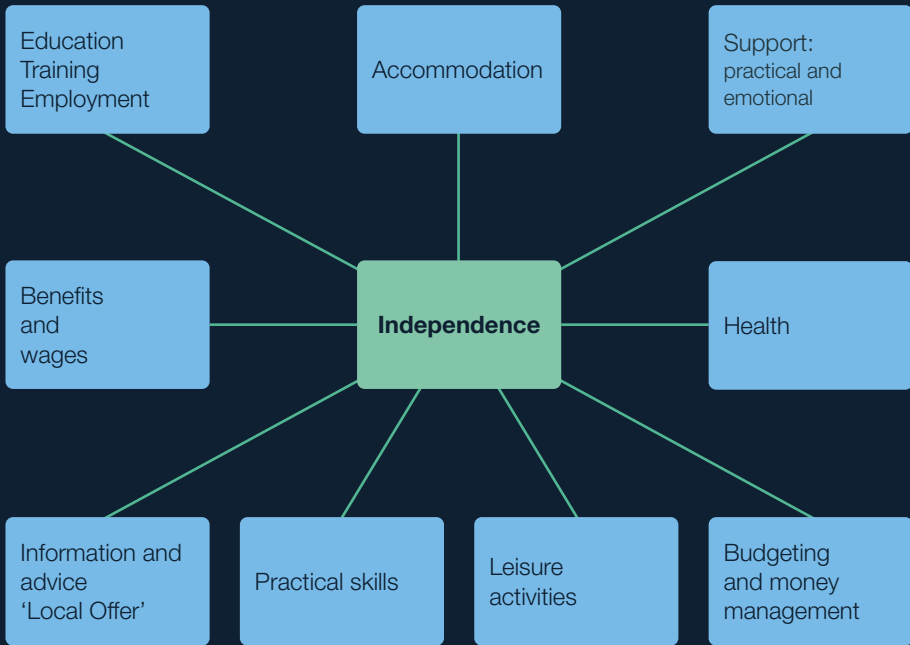
You can produce the diagrams for topics covered during a single session. You can sub-divide topics to explore in depth in later sessions. For example, you might create an individual support diagram for each person. Showing what support, they will contribute and under what circumstances.

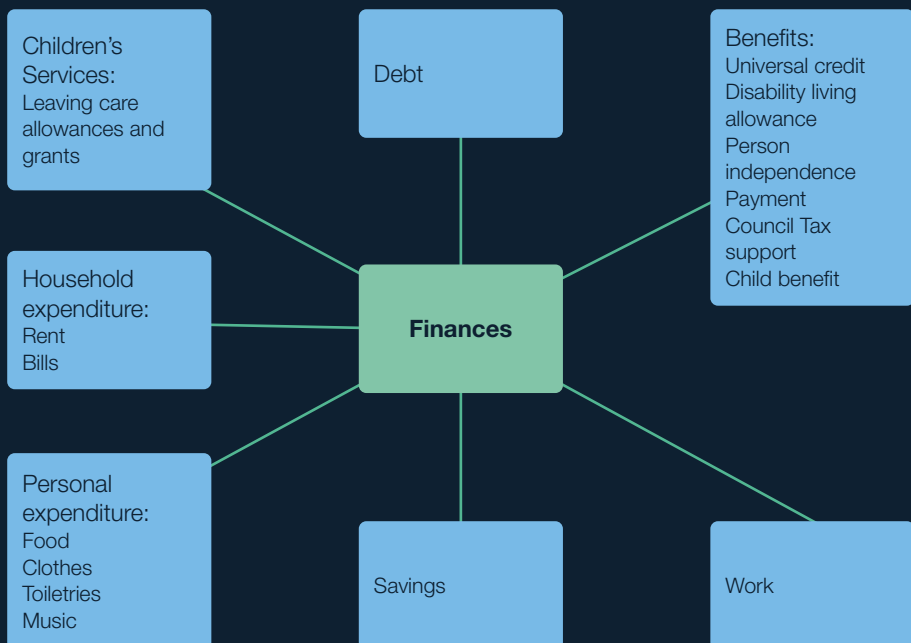
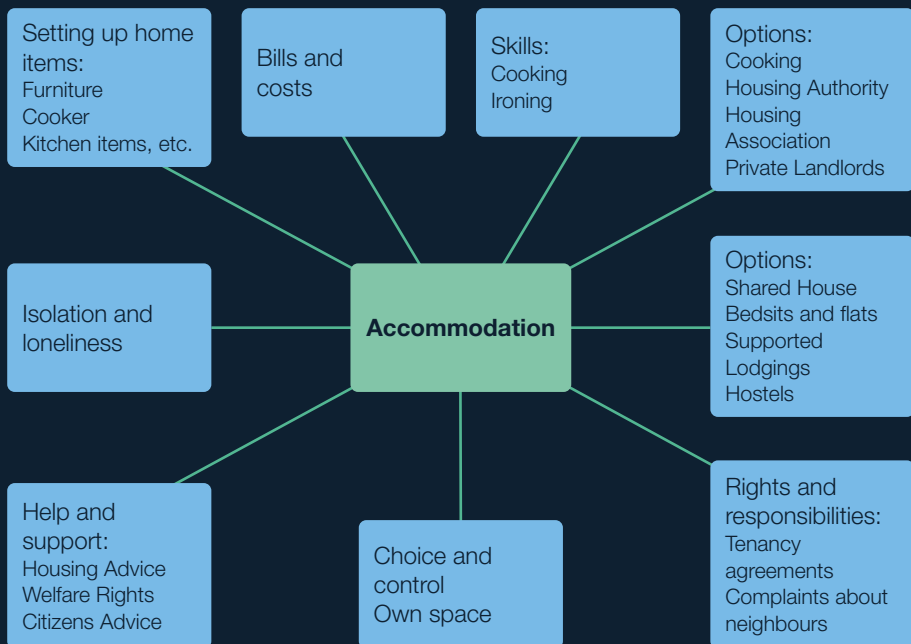
You can visit any identified organisations, such as housing advice or a youth counselling service. You can visit these as part of a key work session or invite representatives to attend an independence group session.

The following comprehensive list is from the leaving care assessment of need document. You can use this to produce a set of diagrams to assist with the assessment process:

- Independence Overview
- Support Networks
- Accommodation
- Education, Training and Employment
- Independent Living Skills
- Finances
- Health and Development
- Rights and Citizenship

There are many ways to explore independence work. Think about ways that suit you and be creative.





PART TWO

LEAVING CARE

LIFE SKILLS TASK

CHECKLISTS AND

WORKSHEETS

The aim of this leaving care checklist is to highlight what you need to complete. It should help identify key tasks and the documents required as you progress to independence.

You should share information and begin independence tasks from the age of 16 or as soon as a leaving care personal adviser is allocated.

Tick as you complete tasks or record when you will start the task and track progress to date.

Leaving care, identity and citizenship

| | |
|---|--|
| Does the young person have a National Insurance Number? (Page 51) | |
| Birth certificate | |
| Driving license | |
| Other forms of photographic identification | |
| A passport to leisure or similar discount leisure scheme pass | |
| A copy of the Comments and Complaints leaflet | |
| A completed Leaving Care Assessment (Pathway Plan part 1) | |
| An up-to-date Pathway Plan (Pathway plan part 2) | |

| | |
|--|--|
| A Life Story book that has been extended to include a leaving care record of significant people and events | |
| Information about the Participation service | |
| Information about the Children in Care Council | |
| The Data Protection leaflet | |
| Has signed the Permission to Share Information Agreement | |
| Access to records leaflet | |

When a young person ceases to be looked after, leaves care, or reaches the age of 18, they should have background information about the following areas:

- Care history
- Health history

Family history and family health history

A detailed chronology of significant events with dates:

- A comprehensive health history and family health history, including a record of immunisations, significant illnesses and accidents, allergies etc. The information should include information about their family health issues and any hereditary illnesses or health risks.
- Comprehensive information about their family history.
- Comprehensive information about their care and leaving care history which includes all placements, placement addresses and details and dates.
- Comprehensive information about why they came into care.
- A detailed eco-map, genogram or information about significant family members and important people along with their contact information and details.

Education, training and employment

| | |
|--|--|
| A CV | |
| A folder containing relevant education, training and employment certificates and records | |
| Has a Personal Education Plan | |
| Has a Careers Connect Action Plan | |
| Has a regular meeting with Careers Connect | |
| Has visited the local Youth Services Centre | |
| Understands the 16 – 19 Bursary system | |
| Understands the Care Leavers Apprenticeship Bursary system | |
| Understands the Further Education Allowance system | |
| Understands the Higher Education Allowance system | |
| Understands the education support system for care leavers | |

Finance

| | |
|---|--|
| Has a copy of the Telford Leaving Care Financial Policy Leaflet and Local Offer information | |
| Has opened a bank account, savings account and a Junior ISA | |
| Information about the Department for Work and Pensions and where the local Jobcentre is located | |
| Information about benefit entitlement | |
| The location and contact details of local benefit offices including housing benefit offices | |
| Information on household bills, household insurance and the need for a television license | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Understands the function of the Citizens Advice | |
| Understands what a Credit Rating is | |
| The need to retain wage slips, P45s and P60s | |
| Does the young person have a Junior ISA? How much does it contain? | |
| Does the young person receive Disability Living Allowance or a Personal Independence Payment? If so, does it get paid to the young person or to a benefit appointee? How is it used? | |
| Has an application been made for a Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority Award? If an Award has been made, how is it going to be managed and will it be placed in a Discretionary Trust Fund? | |

Accommodation

| | |
|--|--|
| Is the young person registered on the Telford Housing Authority 'Housing Needs Register' (HNR) – housing waiting list? | |
| For young people living outside of the Telford area; young people should also be registered on their local housing needs register list | |
| Is there an accommodation plan in place for both semi-independent living and independent living? | |
| Aware of local semi-independent housing options | |
| Aware of local emergency accommodation options | |
| Aware that care leavers are exempt from the Single Room Rent Restriction until the age of 25 | |
| Aware of Local Housing Allowance issues | |
| Aware of Housing Benefit issues | |
| Understands the difference between housing authority, housing association and private tenancies | |

Health

| | |
|--|--|
| National Health Number | |
| Immunisation record | |
| Location of local A&E department, family planning clinic and an NHS drop-in centre | |
| Registered with doctor – date last attended the doctor | |
| Registered with dentist – date last attended the dentist | |
| Registered with optician – date last attended the optician | |
| NHS - HC1 (SC) Form (16- & 17-year-olds) and HC1 Form (18 year olds) | |

For young people who are additionally Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children the following tasks should be completed:

| | |
|--|--|
| Registered with a solicitor | |
| Liaison with Refugee Council | |
| Liaison with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate | |
| Does the young person have an Application for Registration Card (A.R.C.)? | |
| Does the young person have a biometric card? | |
| Copies made of immigration status and home office documents | |
| Ensure young people meet with their Solicitor at least two months prior to any change, or expiry of their immigration status | |
| Clarity regarding immigration status and its implications | |
| Open a bank account - for USAC, Nat West/HSBC/Co-op banks can provide accounts | |
| Information about the Voluntary Assisted Returns Programme | |
| What are the implications of 'Removal Directions'? | |

Young people must apply to extend their leave to remain approximately 2 months before their immigration leave status expires. If this task is completed by a young person's 18th birthday (or at 17 and a half if expiring at that time) and they have proof that the Home Office has received their application, the young person is eligible to apply for benefits at 18. Personal advisers should obtain a letter from the young person's solicitor that includes details of the young person's immigration status and the date of the application to extend the leave to remain was submitted. The solicitor submits the renewal/extension by recorded post. The recorded post item will have a tracking number that can be used to verify that the Home Office received the application. The letter from the solicitor and a printout of the Post Office tracking statement should be submitted with the young person's benefit claim.

National Insurance Numbers

Does the Young Person have a National Insurance Number?

If the young person does not receive their National Insurance Number by the age of 15 and 10 months, the New Registrations Department of the Department of Work and Pensions would need to be contacted regarding obtaining a number. All young people should automatically receive a National Insurance Number at the age of 15 and 9 months. The National Insurance Number is sent to the address where Child Benefit is being claimed for that young person. As children looked after do not have a Child Benefit claim, National Insurance Numbers do not automatically get issued. At the age of 15 and 10 months the social worker for the young person needs to contact the New Registrations Section of the National Insurance Number Office – HMRC.

For detailed guidance see:

www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/nimmanual/NIM39310.htm

Finding a home

Listed below are the main kinds of housing/accommodation available. The type of accommodation you prefer may not be easy to obtain or keep hold of. However, by planning, persistence, and using the support of others, you can find it.

Which accommodation types do you think are the most positive and which types may make some people vulnerable or at risk?

- Owning your own home
- Private renting
- Housing association flat
- Council tenancy
- Lodging in someone else's home
- Bed and breakfast
- Squatting
- Night shelter
- Housing co-operative
- Mobile home
- Going home/staying at home
- Staying in your foster home (Staying Put)
- Supported lodgings
- Accommodation tied to a job, for example armed services, nurse's quarters, live-in hotel work
- Sleeping rough
- Hostel
- Staying with friends
- Rent deposit guarantee or bond scheme

Ways of finding private accommodation

- Word of mouth
- Housing aid centres
- Housing agencies
- College and other notice boards
- Shop windows, especially newsagents, community centres and your workplace, college.
- Newspapers and magazines

- Local daily and free papers
- Accommodation agencies

Understanding housing adverts

- Shared house: Usually means own bedroom, plus a living room, kitchen and bathroom shared with others.
- Studio flat: Own living room/bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom (i.e. self-contained and not shared with others).
- Bedsit: One room which contains living, sleeping and kitchen facilities but a shared bathroom.
- PCM: Per calendar month.
- PW: Per week.
- DEP: Deposit.
- FF: Fully furnished.
- SC: Self-contained.
- CH: Central heating.
- No DSS: No Dept Social Security (i.e. they don't want people who are dependent on benefits).
- CBL: Choice Based Lettings.
- Bidding: The system of selecting housing authority accommodation.

Viewing private accommodation

If possible, take your personal adviser, foster carer/s or a friend to view a property with you.

Check the following:

- The cost of the rent and what it covers.
- Will the landlord let to people on benefits?
- Ensure that the rent level is within the Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance rate for the type of property and the area.
- Do you have to provide a deposit? If so, how much is it?
- Do you need references?
- Will you be given a License Agreement or Tenancy Agreement and how long will it last?
- What services does the accommodation have (i.e. gas, electric etc)?
- Security and access to the property (how safe is it?)
- What furnishings and equipment (i.e. cooker, fridge) does the accommodation have?
- Is there an inventory of all the items and equipment in the accommodation?
- Would you be permitted to decorate and/or hang pictures on the walls?
- Will you still be able to get to college or work?

Viewing council and housing association accommodation

Always take your social worker or personal adviser or carer with you when you are viewing Council, Housing Association or private accommodation and completing a tenancy agreement.

Check the following:

- When does the tenancy begin (do you have any rent-free weeks)?
- Will you be given an Introductory Tenancy and how long will it last?
- Does the housing department use Choice Based Lettings (CBL)?
- Are the electrics, plumbing etc in good working order? (Always try the taps and flush the toilets to see if they are working).
- Is it secure?
- Make sure you get a Tenancy Agreement and/or rent book showing rent and other charges payable and the date in writing of when your tenancy starts.
- If the accommodation requires work to be undertaken and/or decorating, who will do this work?
- Who will be your area Housing Officer/Tenancy Support Worker?

If there are problems with the accommodation and you do not want to accept the offer, talk it over with your personal adviser. Check if you are entitled to a further offer. If your grounds for refusing are reasonable, it is possible that you may be offered something more suitable.

Accommodation viewing checklist

The aim of this worksheet and checklist is to assist young people, foster carers, social workers, and personal advisers to check the condition and safety of any accommodation that young people are viewing (particularly private sector accommodation).

It is recommended that when a young person views or moves into privately rented accommodation, the person viewing the property with them should take pictures on their phone or portable device that show the condition of the property and any items that are included in the rent/inventory. The pictures should be sent to the young person and landlord and should be stored on LCS/Livelink. This will assist with any negotiations with the landlord if there are problems regarding the condition of the property and the return of the deposit when the young person ends their tenancy.

The questions have been split into two sections covering:

1. 'Critical' issues to check when viewing the property and/or signing the tenancy
2. 'Information' to check when viewing the property

Checklist - Section 1:

| | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| Does the property have good working door locks? | |
| (i.e. Mortise locks and Yale locks) | |
| Does the property have a door security chain? | |
| Does the property have window locks? | |
| Does the property have working smoke detectors? | |
| Does the property have working carbon monoxide detectors? | |
| Does the hot water work? | |
| Does the heating work? | |
| Does the toilet flush? | |
| Are there sufficient electrical sockets in the property? | |
| (Minimum of 2 per room, do they all work?) | |
| Has the Gas Safety Certificate been viewed (copy at the property)? | |
| Has the Electrical Inspection information been viewed (NICEIC)? | |
| If it is private accommodation, will the landlord let to people on benefits? | |
| Will you be given a License Agreement or Tenancy Agreement? | |
| How long will the Agreement last (is there a break clause after 6 months)? | |

Please list

What furnishings and equipment (i.e. cooker, fridge) does the accommodation have and do they work?

If the accommodation requires work to be undertaken and/or decorating before moving in, who will do this work and when will it be completed?

Is there an inventory of all the items and equipment in the accommodation?

Checklist - Section 2:

| Please list |
|--|
| What type of heating does the property have (gas or electric)? |
| |
| What type of meters/payment systems does the property have (i.e. for water/ sewerage, gas and electric)? |
| |
| What is the level of the rent? |
| |
| What is the level of the Council Tax? |
| |

| | |
|---|--|
| What utilities does the property have? | |
| | |
| How much is the water/sewerage charge? | |
| | |
| Does the property have a service charge? If so, what is the level of the charge and what is it for? | |
| | |
| Yes/No | |
| Is the property in good decorative order? | |

Would you be permitted to decorate and/or hang pictures on the walls?

Please list

How many keys will you be given?

If you lose your keys how much will it cost to obtain another key?

Yes/No

Are you allowed to get spare keys cut?

Please list

Do you have to provide a deposit? If so, how much is it?

Which Rent Deposit Protection Scheme will the deposit be lodged with?

Do you have to provide rent in advance? If so, how much is it?

| | Yes/No |
|---|--------|
| Is the level of the rent within the Local Housing Allowance for the size and location of the accommodation? | |
| Do you need references? | |
| Does your tenancy have any rent-free weeks? | |
| Please list | |
| What date is the tenancy due to start or started (i.e. date moved-in)? | |
| | |
| | Yes/No |
| Are you allowed to sub-let your accommodation? | |

Make sure you get a tenancy agreement and/or rent book showing rent and other charges payable and the date in writing of when your tenancy starts

Useful numbers and information

| | |
|--|--|
| Name of Landlord/Letting Agent | |
| Emergency (Landlord) call out number | |
| Name of Housing Department/ Association | |
| Name of Housing Officer/Keyworker | |
| Name of Housing Maintenance Worker | |
| Address of local Job Centre and Housing Benefit office | |
| Name of gas supplier | |
| Name of electricity supplier | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of water supplier | |
| Gas meter reading at move in date | |
| Electric meter reading at move in date | |
| Water meter reading at move in date | |
| Name of phone/internet provider | |
| Address of local hospital and emergency drop-in centre | |
| Address of local library | |
| Address of local Police Station | |
| Name of Leaving Care Personal Adviser | |
| Locksmith | |
| Location of: | |
| Fuse box and electrical shut off switch | |
| Gas shut off switch | |
| Stop cock (water valve) | |
| Spare key | |
| Tenancy Agreement | |
| Television licence, utility payment cards or utility keys | |
| Inventory | |

It is a legal requirement that private sector landlords provide a copy of the 'How to Rent' leaflet to all prospective tenants and tenants. Have you received a copy, and have you read it? It can be accessed via the link below
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent>

Useful contacts and addresses

With your foster carer, staying put carer, social worker/personal adviser, or anyone who can assist you, build up a list of useful organisations and their contact details.

The following list is a helpful start.

Think about organisations that may be useful to you now and in the future and where you would find out about them. The internet, yellow pages, the library, foster carer/s and personal advisers are useful sources of information.

- Citizens Advice
- Jobcentre Plus
- Youth Services Centre
- The Housing Benefit Office
- The local housing department
- Police Station
- Library
- Community Alcohol Service and Drug Support Service
- Local NHS drop-in centre
- Local hospital
- Doctor
- Dentist
- Opticians
- Water supplier
- Gas supplier
- Electricity supplier
- Sexual health clinic
- Commission for Racial Equality
- Family planning clinic
- Gay and lesbian youth groups

Useful and Important Addresses

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Moving home checklist

The aim of this worksheet is to help young people think about and prepare for moving into a new home. It is also intended for use by foster carers, support workers, social workers and personal advisers who are assisting with the move.

Start by making a list of the items you think you will need in your new home. The list below provides some ideas on what you may need:

| Furniture | Priority (1 to 3) | Estimated Cost |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Bed | | |
| Chest of drawers | | |
| Coffee table | | |
| Sofa | | |
| Shelving | | |
| Stereo system | | |
| Table and chairs | | |
| Television and Television License | | |
| Wardrobe | | |
| Bed | | |
| Kitchen and household | | |
| Alarm clock | | |
| Cleaning equipment (i.e. mop, bucket etc.) and cleaning products | | |
| Cooker | | |
| Crockery | | |
| Cutlery | | |
| Fridge | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Iron and ironing board | | |
| Kettle | | |
| Kitchen equipment (i.e. bowl, drainer etc) | | |
| Pots and pans | | |
| Toaster | | |
| Vacuum cleaner | | |
| Washing machine | | |
| Contents insurance | | |
| First aid kit | | |
| Linen and soft furnishing | | |
| Carpets | | |
| Curtain tracks | | |
| Curtains | | |
| Duvet | | |
| Duvet covers x 2 | | |
| Lamp shades | | |
| Pillows | | |
| Sheets x 2 | | |
| Towels | | |

Where do I get it from and how much will it cost?

Think about where to get the things you need and how much they will cost. Plan and ask family members, friends, foster carers and staying put carers if they have any items they no longer need that they would be willing to give you when you get your own place.

Children's Services

Children's Services has an allowance to help you set up your new home. Ask your social worker/leaving care personal adviser about the 'Setting Up Home Allowance'.

Second-hand/charity shops and car boot sales

These can be great for bargains, and you can often find things that have never been used. Be careful about buying anything electrical and check that all electrical items have been tested.

Furniture schemes

Some towns have schemes run by local charities or the Council where people donate unwanted furniture and electrical goods that are tested and approved.

Finding a home

Use the 'Finding a Home' worksheet to think about where to look for a home and what you need to be aware of when viewing places to live.

Think about some of the following issues:

- Could I afford it?
- What bills would I have to pay?
- How long could I live there?
- Is the building/home secure?
- What are the rules, and could I stick to them?
- How would I get to work or college and visit family and friends?
- Could I bring a pet?
- Where would I go for shopping?

How will I cook?

When you have decided that you have found the home you want, it is important to prepare and plan for your move.

With your social worker/personal adviser take some digital pictures that show the condition of the property and any items that are included in the rent/inventory. Store the pictures on a CD and leave a copy of the CD with your personal adviser. This will help you if there are problems about the condition of your home and the return of your deposit when you move out.

It is also important to check with the Local Housing Benefit department/Jobcentre that the rent is within the Local Housing Allowance levels. It is also important to know that care leavers are exempt from the Single Room Rent Restriction until their 25th birthday and may also have an exemption from age 25 to 35.

This means that care leavers are eligible to claim housing element benefits on independent accommodation. The rules are complex, and you should check with the Housing Benefit office or the Jobcentre if you're getting Universal Credit.

Check that the rent level is within the Local Housing Allowance rate for your area. This is particularly important if you move into private sector accommodation at the age of 16 and 17 and the Leaving Care Team are paying your rent.

It is important to check that the Local Housing Allowance rate will cover all your rent when you reach the age of 18 and become responsible for your rent.

Budgeting worksheet:

| Item | Cost Per Bill | How Much Per Week |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Deposit | | |
| Rent | | |
| Connection charges | | |
| Council Tax | | |
| Electricity | | |
| Gas | | |
| Water | | |
| TV licence | | |
| Phone | | |
| Mobile phone | | |
| Household insurance | | |
| Total | | Weekly cost |
| | | |

Moving in

On the day that you move into your new home you will need to change the utility accounts (bills) into your name. You will also need to take readings from your gas, electricity and water meters and tell the relevant supplier these readings so that you only pay for services you have used.

Find out the telephone number of your local utility supplier and record your meter reading:

| Supplier | Telephone number | Date | Meter reading |
|----------|------------------|------|---------------|
| Gas | | | |
| Electric | | | |
| Water | | | |

It might be useful to ask the suppliers about changing to an electricity key meter, gas quantum card and water payment system to help with budgeting.

Find out the location of your stopcock (water valve), gas tap and electricity fuse box. Make sure you have a Tenancy Agreement and/or a rent book.

Keep the contact details of your landlord in case of emergency.

Ensure you have a valid TV license and/or change the address on your existing licence.

Register with a new NHS doctor, dentist and optician.

Leave a spare key with someone you trust i.e. your foster carer or personal adviser.

If you are claiming benefits, change your address details with the Job Centre Plus.

Change your address on your bank account, driver's license, library card etc.

Keep all your key documents in a safe place and leave a photocopied set with someone you trust i.e. your foster carer or personal adviser.

The list below highlights some of the important documents you may have.


| Document | Yes/No | Document | Yes/No |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| Education certificates | | Doctor | |
| Passport | | Dentist | |
| Nationality/immigration documents | | Optician | |
| Biometric card | | Important addresses | |
| Tenancy Agreement | | Important dates | |
| National Insurance Number | | | |
| National Health number | | | |
| Immunisation card | | | |
| Birth certificate | | | |
| Benefit details | | | |
| Bank details | | | |
| Gas supplier | | | |
| Electric supplier | | | |
| Water supplier | | | |

Now that you have moved into your house you can make it a home by arranging it how you want and by having your own things around you. It takes a while to get used to living on your own and managing independent living. Talk to your foster carer, support worker, social worker, and personal adviser if you are unsure about what tasks you may need to do, or if there is something you don't understand.

Making a place home

When you get your own place, you can make it a home with your own belongings and personal touches.

Lodgings, a private flat, or a room in a shared house may already be furnished and decorated. However, you could add some personal touches with pictures, cushions or just your own duvet cover. If it is a council flat with your own tenancy, it would likely be empty.



Finding everything from a fridge to the curtains might seem scary, but there are all sorts of people and places you could get items from.

Remember, if you are renting privately, check with your landlord first before redecorating. You should set your priorities and consider what you need.

Use the chart below to make a list of the things you think you will need when you have your own place. Write 1 for essential items (i.e. those things you need immediately such as a bed, cooker or a fridge). Write 3 for items you could do without for a while. Write 2 for items that are in between. If you apply for grants and leaving care allowances to help you buy things, the money may arrive at different times, so you need to sort out the real necessities first.

Where do I get it from and how much will it cost?

Use the chart below to help you think about where to get the things you need and how much they cost.

Family, friends, foster carers and staying put carers

Plan and ask your family, friends and foster carers/staying put carers if they have any items they no longer require, and if you could have them when you get your own place.

Children's Services

Children's Services has an allowance to help you set up your new home. Ask your after care social worker/leaving care personal adviser about the 'Setting Up Home Allowance'.

Second-hand/charity shops and car boot sales

These can be great for bargains, and you can often find things that have never been used. Be careful about buying anything electrical and check that all electrical items have been tested.

Furniture schemes

Some towns have schemes run by local charities or the Council where people donate unwanted furniture and electrical goods that are tested and approved.

Whatever you are given, or you buy or make and whatever condition it's in, remember it is yours. These things make up your home, whether you live in a room, a flat or a house.














Setting up home - chart/worksheet:

| Item | Priority (1 to 3) | Source/Where from | Cost |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------|
| Bed | | | |
| Chest of drawers | | | |
| Cleaning materials | | | |
| Cooker/microwave | | | |
| Curtains | | | |
| Cutlery and crockery | | | |
| Decorating materials | | | |
| Duvet and bedding | | | |
| Floor coverings | | | |
| Fridge/freezer | | | |
| Iron and ironing board | | | |
| Kettle | | | |
| Pots and pans | | | |
| Radio | | | |
| Smoke detectors | | | |
| Settee and chairs | | | |
| Table | | | |
| Towels | | | |
| Television | | | |
| Wardrobe | | | |
| Washing machine | | | |
| Vacuum cleaner | | | |

Important documents, location, and renewal dates

| Document | Document/ Certificate Number | Location | Renewal date |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|--------------|
| Passport | | | |
| National Insurance Number | | | |
| Birth Certificate | | | |
| Driving License | | | |
| National Health Number | | | |
| HC1 Exemption Certificate | | | |
| Immigration Documentation | | | |
| Biometric Card | | | |
| Certificates of achievement | | | |
| G.C.S.E. certificates | | | |
| GCSE and A Level | | | |
| certificates | | | |
| Current CV | | | |
| LCS case number | | | |
| Other | | | |
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What do these clothing washing symbols mean?

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Setting up home financial planning sheet

| Date | Equipment/Household goods | Amount | Accumulated Total |
|------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|
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Assertiveness

Assertiveness is an important skill that young people learn to develop in their teens. It is about being confident in understanding your own needs and having a positive sense of self-worth. Assertiveness is linked to self-respect, respect for others, good communication and ensuring that we meet our needs, but not at the expense of others. The following list provides a summary of assertiveness skills:

- Being true to ourselves
- Knowing our likes and dislikes
- Being able to make choices
- The ability to communicate and listen
- Being able to clearly state our wishes and intentions
- Staying calm in the face of different views and opinions
- The ability to negotiate acceptable outcomes
- Being positive and looking to create opportunities
- Being willing, and when necessary, ask for help without embarrassment

Being assertive will help young people with making a successful transition to adult life. Assertiveness will assist in the following areas:

- Managing physical boundaries such as accommodation
- Managing emotional boundaries and saying no to exploitative relationships
- Accessing resources such as money, accommodation, education, leisure, training, and work opportunities
- Managing day-to-day relationships and interactions

Some people naturally develop the necessary assertiveness skills but, for many, there is a need to learn how to be assertive.

Discuss the following situations and examples and consider how you would be assertive

You have just moved into a new flat and your friends visit to celebrate with you. It is getting late, and you need to get up early for work. Your friends don't have to work tomorrow. What would you do and say?

You don't like drinking alcohol, but at a party some friends keep trying to get you to drink and calling you names for not wanting to get drunk. What would you do and say?

You bought a jumper last week that has a hole in it. When you take it back to the shop the assistant tells you it is your fault. What would you do and say?

Your Leaving Care Personal Adviser visits you 2 hours late causing you to be late for college. What would you do and say?

Your brother who is in debt asks you to lend him £50.00 which is the amount you have saved for Christmas. What would you do and say?

Your neighbour complains about your music which she says is very loud. What would you do and say?

Your boyfriend wants you to text naked pictures of yourself to him. What would you do and say? What risks could these pictures pose in the future?

The transition from childhood to adulthood involves, among other things, accepting increased responsibility for yourself, your decisions, and the consequences of those decisions.

Discuss the above scenarios with your foster carer, social worker, residential keyworker, leaving care personal adviser, and people you know and trust. Everybody will have slightly different views. Think about the different approaches each person takes and why.

Managing risk

Discuss the following situations and examples with your foster carer, supported lodgings carer, residential keyworker or leaving care worker and consider how you would manage the different risks involved

You are waiting for a bus at a bus stop at 11pm when some old friends you haven't seen for a long-time screech to a halt in a car and offer to give you a lift. What are the risks involved with this situation? What would you do and say?

You smell gas coming from behind your cooker. Your electricity has been cut off and you only have candles for light. What would you do?

You are working in a job you don't like and decide to leave and claim benefits. What are the risks involved with this situation? What would you do?

You decide to visit your ex-foster carers in Shrewsbury (about 15 miles away), but you only have the bus fare for a single journey. You decide to get the bus there and hitch hike back if they are not in. What are the risks involved with this situation? What would you do?

You have met some interesting older friends through a social network site. They understand how difficult it is living in care and as a result give you presents to try to make things better. What would you suggest and what would you do?

You have a new girlfriend who lives in Blackpool. You decide to give up your council flat and your permanent job at Homebase in Telford to move to Blackpool. You have been told it is easy to pick up work in Blackpool. What are the risks involved with this situation? What would you do?

You lose the key to your flat and don't have the £15 the landlord charges to get a new key cut. You decide to keep the door on the latch until you can afford a new key. What are the risks involved with this situation? What could the consequences be?

You live in a housing association flat, and you are still on a probationary tenancy as you have lived there for less than 6 months. A friend comes to see you and asks to stay for a few months as he has nowhere else to go. What are the risks involved with this situation? What could the consequences be?

Independent living checklist - scale assessment

Self-Assessment Guide A

Scale 1 should help you decide how much knowledge you have or how good you are at completing independence tasks. Scale 2 should help you decide how easy or difficult you would find it to obtain new information or develop new skills.

Assess yourself on the questions below. 1 being very good and 10 being less confident.

On a scale of 1 to 10 how good do you think you are at managing independent living?

Scale 1

| Good | | | | | Less confident | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Scale 2

On a scale of 1 to 10 how able do you think you are at learning to managing independent living?

| Good | | | | | Difficult | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|-----------|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Assess yourself on the questions on the previous pages.
1 being very able to learn, 10 being difficult to learn.

Self-assessment guide B

When you read the questions think about the statements in each box below and see which one applies to you.

Information sources

| A | B | C | D | E |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| A little knowledge | Lots of knowledge | Have tried to use the information | Have no experience of using the information | Have practiced lots of times – very able |

Practical skills and knowledge

| A | B | C | D | E | F |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Asked to do this all the time | Asked to do this occasionally | Never asked to do this | Do this all the time – very able | Do this occasionally need more practice | Never done this at all |

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Children Looked After system and framework – background information

The purpose of this section is to provide information to young people, foster carers, staying put carers, supported lodgings carers, residential childcare workers and semi-independent supported accommodation providers about the children looked after system.

The majority of the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations were updated in 2010/2011 and came into effect in April 2011. This has been updated again in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2021.

The Children Act 1989 is set out into several volumes of Guidance as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Volume 1: | Court Orders |
| Volume 2: | Care Planning, Placement and Case Review – Regulations and Guidance 2010 (revised 2015 and 2021) |
| Volume 3: | Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers – Guidance 2010 (including The Care Leavers England Regulations 2010) (revised 2015 and 2022) |
| Volume 4: | Fostering Services – Regulations 2011/2013 Fostering - National Minimum Standards 2011 |
| Volume 5: | Children's Homes – Regulations 2015 Children's Homes – A Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards – April 2015 |
| Short Breaks | Statutory guidance on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children using short breaks |
| Children in custody | Local authority responsibilities towards former looked after children in custody 2011 |
| Care Leavers | The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Local Offer, Corporate parenting, PA to 25) |
| Care Leavers | Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (Local Connection) |

The Care Standards Act 2000 also provides part of the regulatory framework for children's homes and foster care placements.

"Looked After" is the legal term for children who are in care, sometimes termed 'Public Care'.

Children are looked after:

1. As a result of being subject to a Section 31 Care Order, the Children Act 1989. The Care Order is made by the family court and results in parental responsibility being shared between those with parental responsibility and the local authority (ICO).
2. As a result of being 'Accommodated' under Section 20, the Children Act 1989. Being 'Accommodated' means that parental responsibility remains with parents. Being 'Accommodated' is often termed voluntary care and is deemed as a 'voluntary' agreement between the child's parents and the local authority.
3. As a result of being remanded into custody under Section 21, the Children Act 1989.

All children who become looked after should be allocated a qualified social worker who is responsible for planning the day-to-day care of the child/young person.


All children looked after should be allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who is responsible for reviewing the care arrangements for the child and ensuring decisions stemming from the care plan and subsequent reviews are implemented.

The primary task of the IRO is to ensure that the Care Plan for the child fully reflects the child's needs and that the actions and outcomes set out in the Care Plan are consistent with the local authority's legal responsibilities towards the child. As corporate parents, each local authority must act for the children they look after as a responsible and conscientious parent would act.

All children looked after should have a Care Plan which is the overarching document setting out the comprehensive needs of the child and how these needs would be met.

Where the local authority makes an application to the family court for a Care Order, a Care Plan must be in place prior to the child being made subject to a Care Order.

Where a child becomes 'Accommodated' it is expected that the Care Plan is developed in advance of the child becoming 'Accommodated.' Where this is not possible, the Care Plan should be developed within 10 days of the first placement being made.



All children looked after should have a Placement Plan drawn up before the child is placed. Where this is not possible, the Placement Plan should be drawn up within 5 working days of a child being placed.

The Placement Plan is intended to provide clarity for the child and the child's carer about how the day-to-day parenting tasks will be shared between the child's carer and the local authority. This includes clarity about the financial arrangements for the child's upbringing.

The overarching Care Plan encompasses the:

- Placement Plan (and Delegated Authority)
- Personal Education Plan
- Health Assessment and Health Action Plan

Care planning is identified as a core element of the 1) Assessment, 2) Planning, 3) Intervention, 4) Review cycle, which underpins social work with children and families.

Emphasis is placed on ascertaining the wishes and feelings of the child and the wishes and feelings of relevant people regarding the arrangements for the child.

A critical part of care planning is ensuring arrangements are in place for contact with siblings and other family members.

Additionally, the Guidance places an emphasis on permanence planning. Permanence is the framework of emotional permanence (attachment), physical permanence (stability) and legal permanence (the carer has a parental responsibility for the child) which gives a child a sense of security, continuity, commitment, and identity.

The IRO chairs Statutory Care Plan Reviews for all children looked after in accordance with the following maximum time scales:

- First Review within 20 days of the child becoming looked after
- Second Review within 3 months of the first review
- Third Review within 6 months of the second review
- Subsequent reviews should be at a maximum 6 monthly interval, or whenever a significant change takes place in the plan for the child

The Personal Education Plan should cover all the education and training arrangements as well as the needs of the child. This should be treated as a 'living document' and updated as necessary.

The Health Assessment should take place in accordance with the following timescales:

1. At least every 6 months in the case of a child aged under 5; and
2. At least once every 12 months in the case of a child aged 5 and over.

The Health Assessment should contribute to the update of the Health Plan which is a key part of the overarching Care Plan.

The Placement Plan should be updated in advance of a placement move, or where a move takes place at short notice as soon after the move as possible (within five working days).

The Placement Plan should set out information about how the carer or placement provider can contact all key individuals identified as contributing to meeting the child's needs. This should include details of out of office hours contacts, the social worker, family placement worker, IRO, residential social worker, leaving care and personal adviser (where applicable).


Many children looked after are placed with foster carers. Approximately, two thirds of all children looked after are living in fostering arrangements.

Foster carers tend to fit into 3 types:

1. 'Standard' Foster Carers - these are foster carers approved to take any looked after child.
2. 'Kinship' (family and friends) Foster Carers - these are foster carers who are assessed and approved for a specific child, who is related to, or known to the foster carer.
3. Independent Fostering Agency Foster Carers - these are foster carers who are approved and supported via an independent agency and provide foster care to children from a range of local authorities.

All foster carers are approved and regulated via the Fostering Service Regulations, Guidance and National Minimum Standards (2011/2013).

The remaining third of children looked after are living in children's homes, residential schools, specialist therapeutic provision, supported lodgings, semi-independent



provision and can be living at home.

Children's homes tend to fit in to three broad types:

1. Local authority children's homes which are generally divided into units that take disabled children and those that provide for non-disabled children.
2. Independent children's homes that take children from several different local authorities.
3. Specialist therapeutic residential units.

Residential schools will often provide placements for children looked after and other children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and who are not looked after.

All placements for children looked after under the age of 16 are regulated under the Care Standards Act 2000 and are inspected by Ofsted.

Children looked after that return home, should generally only do so as part of a planned reintegration process. A placement at home/with parents (Section 31) is governed by a detailed set of regulations.

Children who are subject to a Section 31 Care Order remain looked after until they reach the age of 18, or until the family court revoke the Care Order. For a Care Order to be revoked (discharged), a request and report needs to be submitted to the family court. In general, the request would need to be supported by all parties and set out why the circumstances that led to the Care Order being made have changed and are no longer applicable.

Children who are 'Accommodated' under Section 20 cease to be looked after at age 18 or when they return to their parents or someone with parental responsibility (after a statutory review and nominated officer or Director of Children's Services authorisation (Reg 39). This should be agreed by all parties and a plan should be drawn up setting out the support to be provided to the child and family. An IRO should hold a statutory review and agree the support and plan prior to the child ceasing to be 'Accommodated'. See section on 16 and 17-year-olds for additional requirements.

From April 2015 Regulation 39 of the Children Act 1989 requires the responsible local authority to undertake an assessment. They should review the suitability of the new arrangement where consideration is being given to a child/young person ceasing to be

looked after under Section 20.

Where a child/young person has been looked after under Section 20, the decision to cease the Section 20 period cannot be put into effect until it is agreed by:

1. The Nominated Officer – 0-to-16-year-olds
2. The Director of Children's Services 16- and 17-year-olds

See Regulation 39 for detailed requirements - Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulation 2015.

Children looked after do not automatically get sent a National Insurance Number at the age of 15 and 9 months, as most children do. National Insurance Numbers are allocated and sent to the address where a parent has a Child Benefit claim for the child. As children looked after do not qualify for child benefit their National Insurance Number does not automatically get issued and social workers would need to contact the National Insurance Section of HMRC to obtain the child's National Insurance Number.

Young people looked after aged 16 and 17 and care leavers aged 18+

Many of the children looked after systems continues to apply, when a child reaches the age of 16 with additional responsibilities in terms of preparing young people for the transition to adulthood (leaving care).

Local authorities are required to have policies in place regarding how the authority will prepare young people for the transition to adulthood and when they leave care or make the transition to an Adult Service. The policies should be set out in an easy-to-understand format and provide information about the 'Local Offer' for care leavers.

The 'Local Offer' for care leavers should set out the services and support that Children's Services and its partner organisations provide to care leavers along with how the young person can access the services and any conditions attached.

Young people who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks from the age of 14 and are looked after aged 16 or 17 are deemed 'Eligible' children under the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 (revised 2015 and 2021).

'Eligible' children (also called Eligible care leavers) should have a Pathway Plan that incorporates the Care Plan. The Pathway Plan which includes and covers the same dimensions as the Care Plan should set out all the arrangements to ensure the young person makes a successful transition from care to independent living, or to an Adult Service.

All 'Eligible', 'Relevant' and 'Former Relevant' children should have a named Personal Adviser and Pathway Plan. The Placement Plan ceases when a child ceases to be looked after. The Personal Education Plan ceases when a child reaches the end of school Year 13. When the Placement Plan and Personal Education Plan cease, the areas covered in these plans become a more integral part of the Pathway Plan.

The Pathway Plan and Pathway Plan Review system mirrors the Care Planning and Review system.

The social worker for an 'Eligible' child will generally also act as the young person's leaving care personal adviser unless they have a separate leaving care personal adviser.

Before a 16 or 17-year-old ceases to be looked after (Section 20) this decision must be agreed and authorised by the Director of Children's Services. An IRO should hold a statutory review and agree the support. They should plan prior to the child ceasing to be 'Accommodated' how any associated risks would be managed. The detailed plan should be set out in the Pathway Plan – Regulation 39.

'Eligible' children who cease to be looked after aged 16 and 17 become 'Relevant' children.

The local authority remains responsible for 'Eligible' and 'Relevant' children until they reach the age of 18 (both placement/accommodation and financial support).

From the age of 16 'Eligible' and 'Relevant' children can be placed in what is termed 'Other Arrangements.' These types of accommodation are not inspected by Ofsted. The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 (revised 2015 and 2021), sets

out a framework for the local authority to assess their suitability and the circumstances of children who can move to these arrangements. It is assessed that the young person would benefit from a setting that provides 'Accommodation and Support' rather than a setting that provides 'Accommodation and Care' (i.e., a stepping stone to independence).

The 'Responsible Authority' is a term used to denote which local authority is responsible for the child/young person's leaving care service. The 'Responsible Authority' is the local authority which looked after the child/young person regardless of where the child/young person is living or placed.

From the age of 18, 'Eligible' and 'Relevant' children become 'Former Relevant' children.

Young people remain 'Former Relevant' children until their 21st birthday, or until they complete the education or training program they are engaged in on their 21st birthday (Section 23C (1)).

Young people who cease to receive a service at age 21 (they can ask for the service to continue) or on the completion of a course of education/training, can request support to commence or resume a course of education/training up to the age 25. Where a young person is undertaking education or training on their 25th birthday the service continues until that course is completed (Section 23CA (1)).

Young people who cease to receive a service at age 21 (they can ask for the service to continue at 21) can request a resumption of the service at any point up to the age of 25 (Section CZB (1)).

The personal adviser for 'Former Relevant' children is generally an unqualified worker (not social work qualified).

Young people aged 16 and 17 have the right to request to be 'Accommodated' in their own right. The local authority must undertake an assessment of the young person to ascertain if 'their welfare would be seriously prejudiced' without the provision of services under Section 20 (3) of the Children Act 1989.

Homeless 16 and 17-year-olds are primarily the responsibility of Children's Service (see Southwark Judgement – Case Law). The local authority is required to undertake an assessment of the circumstances of the young person under Section 20 (1) the Children Act 1989.

The following groups of young people are deemed 'Qualifying':

- Children who are looked after for at least 24 hours aged 16 and 17 but less than 13 weeks
- Children who were looked after (at any age) prior to being made subject to a Special Guardianship Order
- Children privately fostered
- Children who were looked after for more than 13 weeks with at least 24 hours aged 16 and 17 under short breaks (all planned and no episode being more than 4 weeks each)


'Qualifying' children are entitled to a leaving care service based on an 'Assessment of Need' and can be provided with the same level of service as 'Eligible', 'Relevant' or 'Former Relevant' children depending on the assessment of need.

Many 'Eligible' and 'Relevant' children are not able to claim means tested benefits. The only groups (16 and 17-year-olds) that are able to claim benefits are young people who are deemed 'Sick and Disabled,' who can claim Universal Credit on Limited Capability for Work Grounds (if not undertaking education or if they ceased and have resuming education), and lone parents who can claim Universal Credit, Child Benefit, Healthy Start Vouchers and a Sure Start Maternity Grant (from the birth of their baby).

Legally, children become adults on their 18th birthday and as such they cease to be looked after. Fostering regulations and children's homes regulations cease to apply when the child reaches 18. In order for young people to remain in a children's home post 18, a move-on plan needs to be in place and the extension beyond 18 needs to be agreed by Ofsted. For young people to remain in a fostering arrangement post 18 (where children looked after are living) the young person will need to be deemed an adult member of the household and will be subject to several safeguarding checks and fostering requirements.

Local authorities are required to have a "Staying Put" policy which highlights how the local authority will support young people to remain in their former foster care placements post 18.

From the age of 18, the primary responsibility for accommodation switches from Children's Services to the housing authority. Care leavers aged 18 to 21 are a 'Priority Need' group in terms of housing authority's duties.



Children's Services continue to have a degree of responsibility to provide placements to 'Former Relevant' children post 18. This is particularly important for 'Former Relevant' children who have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - SEND), where a placement in a residential school may be provided until the end of the academic year when they reach the age of 19.

Young people who are a 'Former Relevant' child and are an Adult Services case have a right to both services. Depending on the young person's level of need, the primary responsibility will rest with Children's Services or Adult Services. When the young person ceases to be a 'Former Relevant' child, the entire responsibility becomes that of Adult Services.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 applies to anyone aged 16 and above. Consideration should always be given to a Capacity Assessment in situations where a young person aged 16 and above may lack capacity to make decisions.

From the age of 18, 'Former Relevant' children are expected to derive their income from employment, education allowances or welfare benefits in the same way that other young people should. The main financial support provided by Children's Services to 'Former Relevant' children relates to ensuring that they have key identity documents (i.e. passports, birth certificates), that they have household items to sustain independent accommodation, and that they are supported to undertake education and training opportunities.

Criminal Injuries Award Payments that some children looked after, and care leavers receive are disregarded when assessing the level of financial support that Children's Services provides. This is the same for those receiving Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments.

Appendix 2 - Life skills: Audit and evidence

The following section should be used to evidence the preparation for independence of the young person and the life skills they have achieved. This section will be particularly important in providing evidence to housing providers of the life skills and tenancy sustainment skills the young person has gained when they are making housing applications. The evidence should focus on the strengths and achievements of the young person, as well as highlight gaps in knowledge and how these will be addressed. Evidence could be gathered from participation in one-to-one work and group work. Completed sections of the toolkit, may itself provide the evidence or work undertaken and skills gained.

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| 1. Foster Carer/Staying Put Carer/Residential Keyworker/Semi-Independent Provider comments |
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| 2. Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser comments |
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| 3. Independent Reviewing Officer comments |
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4. Young Person's comments

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Appendix 3 - Glossary of terms

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2010 (revised 2021) and the Planning Transition to Adulthood Guidance which includes the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (revised 2015 and 2022) define 4 different groups of young people (care leavers) who should or can receive support from Children's Services.

Eligible children (young people)

Eligible children are young people who have been in care (looked after) for 13 weeks from the age of 14 and who are still in care and are aged 16 or 17.

Relevant children (young people)

This is young people who have left care (ceased to be looked after) and are aged 16 or 17, and in most instances were previously Eligible (looked after) young people.

Former Relevant children (young people)

Former Relevant children are young people aged 18 to 21, or until the education course being undertaken on the 21st birthday is complete. Where young people are not undertaking education or training at age 21, the leaving care service can continue up to age 25. However, if a young person wants the service to end at any point it can, and they can return to the authority at any point up to age of 25. Where a young person is undertaking education or training on their 25th birthday, the service continues until that course is completed.

Persons qualifying for advice and assistance (young people) over 16

This includes young people who have been in care (looked after) at some point after their 16th birthday (minimum 24 hours) but for less than 13 weeks since the age of 14. Young people who have been privately fostered and young people who were looked after prior to becoming subject to a Special Guardianship Order are also deemed as 'Qualifying'.

The responsible authority

This term comes from the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (revised 2015) and means that the Children's Services department that last 'looked after' the young person will remain responsible for supporting the young person (care leaver) even if they move to another area.

‘Looked after’

This is the legal term for being in care which can also be called ‘Public Care’.

‘Accommodated’ Section 20 - Children Act 1989

This term applies to young people who are in care with the agreement of their parents and where parents retain parental responsibility.

Care Order Section 31 – Children Act 1989

Care Order applies to young people who are in care following Children’s Services applying to the Family Court for a Section 31 Care Order. Children’s Services then shares parental responsibility and should try to work in partnership with the young person’s family.

‘Remands’ Section 21 - Children Act 1989

Where a young person is remanded by the courts into a young offender’s institute or similar, the young person becomes ‘Looked After’. After 24 hours of being looked after, the young person becomes ‘Qualifying’ and after 13 weeks they become ‘Eligible’.

Care Plan

All children/young people in care should have a Care Plan which should set out the needs of each child/young person and how Children’s Services proposes to meet these needs. The Care Plan should be reviewed and updated every 6 months or, whenever a significant change takes place in the plan for the child/young person.

Leaving Care Assessment of Need

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Guidance and Regulations 2010 (revised 2021) and the Planning Transition to Adulthood/Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (revised 2015) requires Children’s Services to explore the leaving care needs of all young people in care by the age of 16 and 3 months or within 3 months of becoming an ‘Eligible’, ‘Relevant’, or ‘Former Relevant’ child.

Pathway Plan

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Guidance and Regulations 2010 (revised 2021) requires Children’s Services to provide each young person in care with a Pathway Plan by the age of 16 and 3 months (‘Eligible’). The Plan should be reviewed and updated at least every 6 months. The Pathway Plan should highlight what needs to be done to help the young person become independent and it should also explore who will assist the young person. The Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers



including the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (revised 2015) sets out the Pathway Planning and Review framework for 'Relevant' and 'Former Relevant' care leavers.

Preparation for independence

This describes the process of assisting young people to become independent. It covers practical, emotional and relationship skills and identifying who is responsible for helping the young person. Preparation for independence should begin with small tasks from the day a young person comes into care.

Social Worker and Leaving Care Social Worker

This is a worker in the Children in Care Team/Permanence Team or Disabled Children's Teams who will help and support a child/young person manage their care planning and pathway planning needs.

From the young person's 16th birthday, the social worker will also be deemed the leaving care personal adviser and will help to focus the preparation for independence planning. Between the age of 16 and 16½ all young people case held within the Children in Care Team will be allocated a specialist Leaving Care Personal Adviser from the Leaving Care Team.

Leaving Care Personal Adviser

This is a worker in the Leaving Care Team or Disabled Children's Team who will help the young person to prepare for leaving care and then support the young person when they are living independently and/or from the age of 18. Young people will have a named leaving care personal adviser from around the age of 16¼ (Children in Care Team) or 17¾ (Disabled Children's Team). They will get to know them up to the age of 18 and then take on leaving care case responsibility.

Semi-independent accommodation/Supported accommodation

This is the term for different types of accommodation that provide a steppingstone between foster care or a children's home, and independent living. Semi-independent accommodation ranges from supported lodgings to private provider supported hostels and registered social landlord supported accommodation. This type of accommodation is not usually registered under the Care Standards Act 2000 and is not inspected by Ofsted. Generally, this accommodation is regulated through the 'Other Arrangements' framework set out in the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2010 (revised 2021).

Housing Benefit and Council Tax support

These benefits are administered by the local district, borough, or unitary authority council. This helps people on a low income to meet their housing costs and Council Tax costs.

Local Housing Allowance

This is a method of calculating the level of Housing Benefit paid to private sector tenants who rent from a private landlord. The Independent Rent Officer will set the level of the Local Housing Allowance for the different types of property in the area each year. These levels will then be widely publicised.

Universal Credit

This is a new benefit that has replaced Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Tax Credits, Housing Benefit, and certain other benefits. These are now called Legacy Benefits. It would be paid monthly by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and would usually include help with housing costs too. The first payment is usually made 5 weeks after the initial claim date.

Universal Credit – Housing Element

The Housing Element of Universal Credit has generally replaced Housing Benefit as the method of helping people pay rent. Housing Element of Universal Credit is used to help people pay rent in private, council or housing association accommodation. Housing Benefit is still used where support is also provided with the accommodation, such as a supported hostel.

Discretionary housing payments

Where a claimant's rent is above the Local Housing Allowance rates, the Housing Benefit Department can make discretionary payments. This is for a limited period to help the claimant cover the gap between the rent and any benefits for a temporarily period.

Single room rent restriction

Young people under the age of 35 are limited in the type of accommodation they can rent and receive Local Housing Allowance (Housing Element of Universal Credit) for, if the accommodation is privately rented. Generally, they can only rent 'a room in a shared house'. Care leavers are exempt from this restriction until their 25th birthday. If they have lived in certain types of supported hostels for 3 months between their 16th and 25th birthday, they may be exempt from the shared room limit between the ages of 25 and 35.

Tenancy Agreement

This is a legal document that a young person receives when they move into accommodation provided by the local Council, Housing Association, or a Private Landlord. The Tenancy Agreement should set out the rules and regulations covering where the young person lives (i.e., when they moved in, how much rent they must pay, how much notice they must give when leaving etc).

License Agreement

This is a type of Tenancy Agreement that covers the accommodation arrangements and rules/expectations when a young person lives in the same house as their landlord.

Deposit

A deposit is usually paid when renting private sector accommodation and is often the equivalent of 1 month's rent. This is used to cover any damage caused or non-payment of rent.

Inventory

This is a list of items (furniture, kitchen equipment etc) that is provided in privately rented accommodation. It would be checked when leaving the accommodation in case anything is damaged or missing.

Utilities

This is the term used for facilities and services that are needed to run a home (i.e. bills for gas, electricity, water and sewage, telephone etc).

P60

A P60 is a form that states how much Income Tax and National Insurance has been paid during the previous financial year.

P45

A P45 is a form received when finishing or leaving a job stating how much Income Tax and National Insurance has been paid from the beginning of the financial year until leaving the job.

National Insurance Number

Everybody is given a National Insurance Number just before their 16th birthday (there may be exemptions for some asylum-seeking children and young people). The number is required when working and is used to record and track the Income Tax and National

Insurance paid and any benefits owed or received.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) (Inland Revenue)

This is the Government Department that manages Income Tax and National Insurance contributions and payments.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A Curriculum Vitae is a document that sets out skills, qualifications, work, and life experience. A CV is often required when showing initial interest in a job.

Discretionary Learner Support Fund

This is a fund that all colleges and universities have that is used to assist young people who have financial difficulties. Students must apply for support from the fund and are not guaranteed to receive financial help.

Learners Agreement

This is an agreement used by colleges, universities, some training providers, and other education institutions to set out what the young person/learner needs to achieve to remain on the course.

16 to 19 Bursary

This is an allowance/bursary paid to all children looked after and care leavers who are attending sixth form or college and are aged up to 19. The allowance is £1200.00 per year paid by the education provider.

Apprenticeship Bursary

This is paid to all children looked after and care leavers who start an apprenticeship. The bursary is paid once, usually in the first 6 months of the apprenticeship and amounts to £1000.00 for the young person and £1000.00 for the apprenticeship provider. The bursary is paid by the apprenticeship provider.

Citizens Advice (previously called Citizens Advice Bureau)

The Citizens Advice provides free advice on benefit and legal matters. There are Citizens Advice offices in most large towns. It is best to ring to make an appointment rather than drop-in.

Staying Put

This is the name given to 'arrangements' where a young person continues to live with

their former foster carer when they reach the age of 18.

Local Offer

Each local authority Children's Service must publish a 'Local Offer' for care leavers. The Local Offer should explain the services and support the authority will provide to care leavers and how these will be made available.

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Telford & Wrekin Council's

HOME SKILLS AND LIFE SKILLS

workbook and
checklists

pathway planning
toolkit

