



Luton Transition to Adulthood for Independence



Pathway Planning
Checklist 2019-2020

Assessment and Pathway Planning Checklist

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Aims of this Assessment and Pathway Planning Checklist

Introduction

This checklist has been produced to aid discussion, planning and assessment in relation to preparation for independence and planning the transition to adulthood. It has been developed in conjunction with young people, foster carers, supported lodgings carers, supervising social workers, residential key workers, social workers, leaving care personal advisers, and participation workers. It is intended that the checklist will prove useful to all of these groups and those supporting young people to make the transition from care to independent living and adulthood. The checklist has been arranged into a number of broad categories for ease of use, but also recognises that many topics cross these categories. The importance of some topics will change over time and new topics will arise. It is important that the checklist is worked on as a joint project between young people, their foster carers, residential key workers, social workers, leaving care personal advisers and where possible family and friends.

For Young People:

It is hoped that this checklist will help you to identify knowledge, skills and types of support you may have already, plus skills and goals you may need to think about, as you move towards independence and adulthood. There are no set ways to undertake tasks, or right or wrong answers to many of the questions. The questions have been set as a guide to aid, and promote discussion and to help you think about issues that all young people need to be aware of, regardless of whether they are in care. If you have difficulty answering some of the questions, or have not had experience of some of the tasks, don't worry; it takes everyone a long time to become independent. Talk to someone about this, and begin to think about tasks you can work on and which ones are important to you.

For Carers, Providers and Workers:

It is hoped that this assessment tool and checklist will complement the Leaving Care Assessment of Need document and will act as an aid to your work with young people around independence issues, by bringing them more into focus. The dialogue and discussion produced by the topics set out in this checklist should help to identify independence tasks and types of support young people will need as they move towards independence and adulthood. It should also help to identify ways to undertake these tasks and broaden young persons' support networks. It is a fundamental prerequisite that carers, providers and workers supporting young people will need to build a positive working relationship in order to explore what is often a difficult period of transition and will need to work at the young person's pace.

Glossary

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2010 and the Planning Transition to Adulthood Guidance which includes the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 define four different groups of young people (care leavers) who will receive support from Children's Services.

Eligible Young People - 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 Young People - Young people who have left care (ceased to be looked after) and are aged 16 or 17, and were previously Eligible Young People.

Former Relevant Young People - Young people aged between 18 and 21, or over 21 if they started a designated education course before the age of 21 and were previously either Eligible and/or Relevant Young People (until the end of the course being undertaken on their 21st birthday). Young people can return to the local authority at any point between their 21st and 25th birthday to resume education or training and recommence being a Former Relevant Young Person.

Qualifying Young People Over 16 – 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 Qualifying.

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The Responsible Authority

This term comes from the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 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 he/she moves 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

'Accommodated' 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' this term 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.

Care Plan

All young people in 'Care' should have a Care Plan which should set out the needs of each young person and how Children's Services proposes to meet these needs. The Care Plan should be reviewed and up-dated every six

months or, whenever a significant change takes place in the plan for the young person.

Leaving Care Assessment of Need

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Guidance and Regulations 2010 and the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 requires Children's Services to explore the leaving care needs of all young people in 'Care' by the age of sixteen and three months or within three months of becoming an Eligible or Relevant child.

Pathway Plan

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Guidance and Regulations 2010 requires Children's Services to provide each young person in 'Care' with a Pathway Plan by the age of sixteen and three months ('Eligible'). The Plan should be reviewed and updated at least every six months. The Pathway Plan should highlight what needs to be done to help the young person become independent; 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 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 and emotional skills and 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'.

Leaving Care Social Worker

A social worker in the 16 Plus Team who will help and support the child/young person and 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.

Leaving Care Personal Adviser

A worker in the 16 Plus Team who will help the young person to prepare for leaving care and then support the young person when they are living independently (from age 18).

Semi-independent Accommodation

This describes the term for a variety of types of accommodation that provide a stepping stone between foster care or a children's home and independent living. Semi-independent accommodation ranges from supported lodgings to private provider hostels and Registered Social Landlord hostels. This type of accommodation is generally not registered under the Care Standards Act 2000 and is not inspected by Ofsted. Generally, this accommodation is regulated through the 'Other Arrangements' framework.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

These benefits are administered by the local district or borough council and help people on a low income to meet their housing 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. These levels will then be widely publicised. Luton has one LHA rate.

Single Room Rent Restriction

Young people under the age of 35 are limited in the type of accommodation that they can rent and receive Local Housing Allowance 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 22nd birthday.

Tenancy Agreement

This is a legal document that a young person receives when he/she moves 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 he/she moved in, how much rent he/she must pay, how much notice he/she has to give when leaving etc.

License Agreement

This is a type of Tenancy Agreement which covers the accommodation arrangements where 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 one month's rent and 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 will be checked on 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. For example, bills for gas, electricity, water and sewage, telephone etc.

National Insurance Number

Everybody is given a National Insurance Number just before their sixteenth birthday. The number is required when working and is used to record and track the Income Tax and National Insurance paid and any benefits received.

P45

A form that is 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 the finish of the job.

P60

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

Her Majesties Revenue and Customs (HMRC) (Inland Revenue)

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

Curriculum Vitae (C.V.)

A Curriculum Vitae is a document that sets out skills, qualifications and work and life experience. A C.V. is often required when showing an 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 have to apply for support from the fund and are not guaranteed of receiving financial help.

Citizens Advice Bureau

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

Independent Living Assessment and Pathway Plan Checklist

Background Information

Name _____

D.O.B _____ Age _____

Address _____

Type of placement _____

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 _____

Connexions Personal Advisor _____

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 _____

1. Education, Training and Employment

Which of the following are you currently undertaking? Are they full or part time?

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a) School?

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.....

b) College?

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.....

c) University?

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.....

d) Traineeship, Modern Apprenticeship, General National Vocational Qualification (G.N.V.Q)?

.....
.....

e) Employment?

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.....

f) Unemployment?

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.....

g) Other?

.....
.....

What school/college/university qualifications do you have or expect to get?

.....
.....

What career path do you wish to follow?

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.....

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

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.....

Have you any experience of courses such as first aid that may help when you apply for jobs?

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.....

Have you thought about going to college or university in the future?

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.....

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

.....
.....

Where is your local Connexions/Careers Office?

.....
.....

What sort of help do you think the Careers Service or Connexions Service can provide?

.....
.....

Who would you visit the Careers Office with?

.....
.....

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Have you got a Curriculum Vitae (C.V.)?

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.....

Who could help you create or produce a C.V?

.....
.....

Can you list some of the positive things you have achieved?

.....
.....

What other language do you speak besides English?

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.....

Is English your first Language?

.....
.....

Do you speak a second Language?

.....
.....



What do you understand by the following:

Dyslexia?

Literacy difficulties?

Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disability (S.E.N.D)?

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.....

Do you know if there are any groups or organisations in your area that can provide help and support with these issues?

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Who would you ask to help you to complete forms?

.....
.....

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

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.....

If you had a careers appointment or job interview what ways would you use to remember it?

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.....

If you have children do you know where to go for information about childcare if you continue to study?

.....
.....

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

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.....

What is the New Bursary Scheme for Care Leavers? How can it help you if you want to continue studying at sixth-form or college?

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.....

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

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.....

What is your National Insurance Number? And why is it important?

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.....

When would you receive a P45?

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.....

When would you receive a P60?

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.....

Where is your local (HMRC) Inland Revenue office?

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.....

➤ **Jobs & Training**

Have you attended any job interviews including work experience?

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What questions do you think you might be asked at an interview? What questions would you ask?

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What opportunities have you had to practice interview questions?

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Have you been offered a job or place on a training scheme?

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.....

How many hours per week can you work at age?

- Thirteen.....
- Fourteen.....
- Fifteen.....
- Sixteen.....
- Seventeen.....

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.....

What is the minimum wage for the following groups?

- Young people aged 16 to 18.....
- Young people aged 18 to 21.....
- Adults 21 and older.....

Have you had any casual jobs, such as a paper round?

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What work experience placements have you undertaken?

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

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.....

Where would you go to claim benefits if you needed them?

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.....

➤ **Education**

If you go to college or university do you know what sort of benefits, grants, learner support funds, bursaries, loans and Children's Services allowances you may be entitled to?

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How and where would you claim them?

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What information can the student support service provide?

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.....

2. Immigration and Asylum

What is your immigration status:

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

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When does your leave to remain expire?

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.....

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

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.....

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

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.....

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Who is your solicitor and what are his or her contact details?

.....
.....

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

.....
.....

What support can you receive from the Refugee Council?

.....
.....

With your leaving care personal adviser, asylum worker, foster carer, or residential key-worker make a list of organisations that can provide advice and support with your cultural needs, such as a support group from your cultural background?

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.....

How will your immigration status affect your entitlement to welfare benefits when you reach the age of eighteen?

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.....



How will your immigration status affect your education, training and employment opportunities?

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.....

To be able to claim welfare benefits at the age of eighteen you must be able to prove that the Home Office (UK, BA) received your application to extend your leave to remain (or you are appealing an adverse decision) before it expired; how would you prove this?

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.....

What support can the Voluntary Assisted Returns Programme provide?

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.....

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

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.....

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

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3. Practical Life and Independence Skills, Key Identity and Citizenship Documents

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

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

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.....

What does the term independence mean to you?

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.....

What opportunities have you had to:

- shop for food you like?
- prepare and cook food you like?
- wash and iron your own clothes?
- use a launderette?
- sew buttons and repair clothes?
- change a fuse/light bulb?
- discuss keeping your home safe and secure?
- develop a budget plan and plan your expenditure?

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.....
.....

Which of the following shops represent good value for money and why? Rank them in the order which you think they represent good value?

- Marks and Spencer
- Lidl
- Iceland
- Tesco
- Waitrose
- Netto
- Sainsbury
- Morrisons
- Asda

What opportunities have you had to use a bus or train timetable to plan a journey?

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As a resident in Luton what discounts can you get on bus and train journeys? For example, what discounts are available on Centebus, Arriva or Grant Palmer (If you live outside of Luton what travel discounts are available in your area)?

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What would a Luton Student Saver Card provide? What are the rules about using the card and where would you get one from?

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When travelling 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?

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What age do you have to be before you can hold a provisional driving licence?

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What are the age rules regarding a) driving a motor car? b) driving a motor bike? c) driving a moped?

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

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What experience do you have of using maps and planning journeys? Have you used an A-Z to plan a journey in Luton, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, London or your local area? Have you used a Sat-Nav or GPS finder?

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Can you think of possible difficulties which you may experience when you move into your new home setting such as:

- what you do about friends coming round to your new place, who you may not want there and about asking them to leave?

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.....

- what you do if you have noisy neighbours?

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.....

➤ what you do if your neighbours feel you are being noisy?

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.....
.....

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

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What do you understand by the term assertiveness?

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On a scale of one to ten how confident do you feel about being assertive? (Ten being very confident; One being unconfident)

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Do you have a copy of your birth certificate or passport?

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Where would you go to get a passport application form?

.....
.....

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

.....
.....

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

This should contain:

Education certificates;

Passport;

Nationality/Immigration documents;

Tenancy agreement;

National Insurance number;

National Health number;

Immunisation card;

Birth certificate;

Benefit details;

Bank details;

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC);

Important addresses;

Important dates.

How would you keep your important documents safe?

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.....



How would you organise your important documents?

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Do you keep photocopies of important forms and documents?

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.....

How long should you keep important documents, such as bank statements, wage slips etc?

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When you move to semi-independence, independence or reach the age of eighteen, you should have the following information about you and your care history, health history and family history that includes 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 your family health issues and hereditary illnesses;
- Comprehensive information about your family history;
- Comprehensive information about your care and leaving care history, which includes all of your placements, addresses including dates and details;
- Comprehensive information about why you came into care
- A detailed eco-map, genogram or information about significant family and important people and their contact information.

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Do you have all of the above information? If not who would you like to help you co-ordinate the gathering of the information?

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.....

Do you have a trusted person you could leave your important documents with?

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4. Finances, Money Management and Budgeting

Have you had the opportunity to discuss money management and budgeting with your Foster Carer/s, Keyworker, Social Worker or Leaving Care Personal Adviser?

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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 be 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 practise buying food for yourself or others?

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Where can you buy the food you enjoy and how much does it costs?

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

- Rent
- Gas bills
- Electricity bills
- Water rates
- Telephone charges
- Television licence
- Service charges
- Council Tax
- Household insurance

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How often do you think you would have to pay these bills?

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

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

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

- Bedsit;
- Flat;
- Shared house
- House.

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Which methods do you use to save money?

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

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

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Who would help you to open an account?

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.....

How much does a television licence cost and where would you buy one?
Where would you go to get help with debt and credit difficulties?

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

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

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Make a list of all your local benefit offices.

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

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

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

- Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Support
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Community Care Grants (and Social Fund)
- Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits
- Allowances and Benefits for Mothers & Babies
- Income Tax
- Council Tax and possible exemptions and benefits
- National Insurance
- Salaries & Wages
- Leaving Care Allowances

Which organisations and individuals could provide you with information about the issues set out above?

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What assistance can the Citizens Advice Bureau provide?

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What is a credit rating?

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How do you build a credit rating?

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5. Family, Friends and Support Networks

Can you make a list of, or diagram setting out the people who help you and are important to you?

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

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Do you feel you have enough contact with them?

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What type of contact do you have with them now? i.e. telephone, visits etc.
How will this change when you are living independently?

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How often could you visit them and what support could you get from them?

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Do you have a home base (your own family, foster family or former children's home) where you feel welcome and where you can
drop in without an invitation if you are bored or lonely;
expect help if some crisis occurs;
expect to go for major holidays, such as Christmas;
be sure of a bed if necessary.

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How do you feel about spending time on your own?

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Do you think you would be isolated or lonely when you live independently?

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What would you do to cope with, and overcome loneliness?
Where could you go to, and which organisations could assist you if you do feel lonely?

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With your Foster Carer/s, Residential Key-worker, Social Worker or Leaving Care Personal Adviser make a list of the people and organisations in your area that you could get support from when you are independent?

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Would you find it useful to visit some of these organisations and be introduced to them by your Residential Key-worker, Foster Carer, Social Worker or Leaving Care Personal Adviser?

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How do you use your spare time?

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Do you attend or belong to a youth, sports or hobby club?

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What does the go4less card which is part of the Active Luton scheme provide? Where and how would you apply for one?

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If you live outside of Luton does your local council have a passport to leisure or similar discount scheme?

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Can you make a list of leisure facilities in your area such as?

- Swimming pools;
- Leisure centres;
- Libraries;
- Youth & 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?

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

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.....

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

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

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.....

What assistance can the Citizens Advice Bureau provide in these situations?

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.....

What is their address and phone number?

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.....

What religious faith do you belong to, if any?

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.....

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

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.....

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

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.....

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

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

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

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Can you make a list of the 'young mums' support groups in your area?

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Can you make a list of 'young fathers' support groups in your area?

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What support can the Sure Start initiative provide for young parents? Where would you go to find information about this initiative?

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What support can Children's Centres provide for young parents? 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 Advocacy Project/Children's Rights Officer? How would you contact them?

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6. Health and Development

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

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

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

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.....

How would you register with a new Doctor, Dentist or Optician when you move house or area?

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.....

Do you have your National Health Number?

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.....

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

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.....

Where would you go to get information on the following?

a) Contraception

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.....

b) Counselling

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.....

c) Drug & Alcohol issues

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.....

d) Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)

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.....

e) Pregnancy and Parenting Support

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.....

f) Terminations

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.....

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

a) Family planning clinic

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.....

b) Sexual health clinic

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.....

c) 'Looked After' young people's health worker/nurse.

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.....

Have you had your annual health assessment which is available up until your 18th birthday?

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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?

.....
.....

c) How to practice safer sex?

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.....

d) How you feel about having children?

.....
.....

Have you got a record of your immunisations?

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.....

Who looks after your immunisation card/record?

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.....

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

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If you have to pay prescription charges how much are they?

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.....

Which groups of people are exempt from prescription costs?

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What will NHS form HC1 (SC) and HC1 provide?

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Do you have a first aid kit in your home?

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

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Do you have any extra health needs you require specific help with (such as 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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Where is your nearest casualty/accident and emergency (A & E) department located?

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What is the NHS Direct Phone Number?

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7. Accommodation and Living Independently

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

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What type of accommodation may be available when you leave care?

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What type of accommodation would you prefer when you leave care?

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

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If you have a pet, for example a cat or dog, do you think it may affect the type of accommodation you could live in?

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30

On a scale of one to ten how confident do you feel about managing your own accommodation? (Ten being very confident; One being unconfident)

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Can you make a list of the different types of accommodation and their advantages/disadvantages?

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.....

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

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.....

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

- to leave care/and or;
- to go to college;
- to get a job;
- to live with family or friends;
- to live with a partner.

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

- 6 months;
- 1 year;
- 2-3 years;
- longer.

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

- on your own;
- with friends;
- with a partner;
- with relatives.

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What do you understand by the term supported lodgings?

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What supported accommodation hostels are there in your area?

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

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

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

- private landlord?
- housing department?
- housing association?

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At what age can you complete a housing application form with your local housing department?

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.....

Who will help you to fill in a housing department application form?

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.....

Where can you apply for local authority housing (council and housing association accommodation)?

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.....

What do you understand by the term 'Originating' housing authority?

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What safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors and fire blankets should you have in your home?

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

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.....

What is the Local Housing Allowance?

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32

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

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

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.....

How would you ensure you are a responsible tenant?

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.....

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

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

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How much is the Leaving Care 'Setting Up Home Allowance'?

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

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.....

Where is your local community furniture store?

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.....

What furniture and items could they provide when you are setting up home?

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.....

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

- Bed
- Chest of Drawers/Wardrobe
- Duvet, Covers and Pillows
- Towels
- Bedside Table and Lamp
- Curtains/Blinds
- Cooker/Microwave
- Fridge/Freezer
- Washing Machine
- Kettle, Cooking Pans, Plates, Mugs, Cutlery, Storage Containers, Washing-Up Rack
- Mop, Dustpan and Brush, Vacuum Cleaner
- Iron and Ironing Board, Clothes Airier
- 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 in order to feel comfortable and safe; what would make you feel at ease?

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.....

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

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.....

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

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.....

If someone moves into your accommodation how do you think it will effect your benefits and council tax?

Useful Websites And Contacts

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

<http://www.support4learning.org.uk>

Information about education grants, loans and student support

<http://www.lsda.org.uk/programmes/e2e/index.asp>

E2E Training

<http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk/home/index.cfm>

Information on all aspects of Higher Education

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/MoneyTaxAndBenefits>

Information on Tax and Benefits

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk>

Information on Benefits

<http://www.hertsdirect.org>

Hertfordshire's Benefits Website provides advice on benefit rates, general benefits information and benefits advice regarding looked after young people. Use the search section to access the above information and fact sheets on benefits

<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/>

Information about the Sure Start initiative

<http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/overview>

Information about the Care to Learn initiative

<http://www.nhs.uk>

Information about the HC1(SC) and HC1 form
Info line 0845 850 1166

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice.htm>

Citizens Advice Bureau

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk>

Department for Work and Pensions. Useful A-Z guide to benefits.





<https://www.taxcredits.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/HomeIR.aspx>

The Inland Revenue's guide to tax credits. Calculate and submit claims online.

Benefits information/advice/campaigning organisations

www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Information on debt issues.

www.direct.gov.uk/YoungPeople/Money/WhatBenefitsCanYouClaim/fs/en

Information on Benefits and education allowances for young people

www.advicenow.org.uk

Advice Services Alliance information including benefits.

<https://www.clsdirect.org.uk>

Community Legal Service. Find an adviser online or get advice direct over the telephone.

www.dialuk.info

Disability Information and Advice Line services. Information on disability benefits and services.

www.disabilityalliance.org

Information on disability benefits and services.

Information on benefits and other services for older people. Links to separate websites for Wales, Scotland and NI.

www.ace.org.uk/AgeConcern/locate.htm

Disability benefit's information

Information on benefits and services for lone parents.

www.oneparentfamilies.org.uk

Information on debt issues.

www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Health Advice

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/

The website of the **NHS Direct** health advice and information service.

Part Two

Leaving Care Task Checklist and Worksheets



Leaving Care Task Checklist

The aim of this leaving care checklist is to highlight key tasks that need to be completed as young people progress to independence.

The following information, leaflets, forms, agreements and tasks should be provided or undertaken as soon as leaving care personal advisers are allocated.

Tick as appropriate if the task has been completed, or record when the task will be started and the progress to date.

Leaving Care, Identity and Citizenship

- Does the young person have a National Insurance Number? (Page 4)
- Birth Certificate
- Passport
- Driving license
- Other forms of Photographic Identification
- A Go4Less - passport to leisure scheme discount 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's Rights and Advocacy Service
- The Data Protection Leaflet
- Has signed the Permission to Share Information Agreement
- Access to Records Leaflet

- By the age of eighteen young people should have the following information about their care history, health history and family history that includes 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 any family health issues and hereditary illnesses;
- Comprehensive information about the young person's family history;
- Comprehensive information about the young person's care and leaving care history which includes all of their placements, addresses including dates and details;
- Comprehensive information about why the young person came into care
A detailed eco-map, genogram or information about significant family and important people and their contact information.

Education, Training and Employment

- A record of achievement
- A folder containing relevant education, training and employment certificates and records
- Has a Personal Education Plan
- Has a Connexions/Careers Action Plan
- Has a regular meeting with a Connexions Careers Adviser
- Understands the Vulnerable Young Person's Bursary system
- Understands the Further Education Allowance system
- Understands the Higher Education Allowance system
- Understands the types of education support for Care Leavers

Finance

- Has a copy of the Leaving Care Financial Policy
- Has opened a Bank Account
- Information about the Department for Work and Pensions
- 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 Bureau
- Understands what a Credit Rating is
- The need to retain wage slips, P45s and P60s

Accommodation

- Registered on the council housing waiting lists
- For young people living outside of the Luton area young people should also be registered on their local housing waiting list
- 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 22
- 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, N.H.S. 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
- The Transitions Pack (Young People with a Statement of Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability)
- 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 (A.R.C.) Application for Registration 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'?

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Young people must apply to extend their leave to remain approximately two months before their immigration leave status expires. If this task is completed by a young person's eighteenth birthday (or at seventeen and a half if expiring at that time) and they have proof that the Home Office (UK, BA) has received their application the young person is eligible to apply for benefits at eighteen. Personal Advisers should obtain a letter from the young person's solicitor that includes details of the young person's immigration status; 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 print out of the Post Office tracking statement should be submitted with the young person's benefit claim.

National Insurance Numbers

If the young person does not receive their N.I. Number by the age of 15 and 10 months the New Registrations Department of the Department of Work and Pensions needs 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 the 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: <http://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, but by planning, persistence, and using the support of others, even these days, you can find it. Which 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
- Squat
- 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, nurses 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 work place.
- 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 (self-contained i.e. not shared with others).
- Bedsit – One room which contains living, sleeping and kitchen facilities but having to share a bathroom with others.
- 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.

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 (gas, electric etc)?
- Security and access to the property (how safe is it?)
- What furnishings and equipment (cooker, fridge etc) 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?

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Viewing council and housing association accommodation

Always take your personal adviser with you when you are viewing council or housing association 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 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 is to assist young people, foster carers and personal advisers to check the condition and safety of accommodation that they are viewing.

Does the property have good door locks? Yes No

Does the property have both a Mortise lock and Yale lock? Yes No

Does the property have a door security chain? Yes No

Does the property have window locks? Yes No

How many keys will you be given?.....

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

Are you allowed to get spare keys cut? Yes No

Does the property have smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors?
Yes No

Does the hot water work? Yes No

Does the heating work? Yes No

Does the toilet flush? Yes No

How many electric sockets does the property have, do they work? Yes No

What type of heating does the property have, gas or electric?.....

What type of gas, electric and water meters/payment systems does the property have?.....

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 charge?.....

Does the property have a service charge? If so, what is the level of the charge and what is it for?.....

Is the property in good decorative order? Yes No

If it is private accommodation will the landlord let to people on benefits?
Yes No

Is the level of the rent within the Local Housing Allowance for the size and location of the accommodation?
Yes No

Do you have to provide a deposit? If so, how much is it? Yes No

Do you have to provide rent in advance? If so, how much is it? Yes No

Do you need references? Yes No

Will you be given a license agreement or tenancy agreement and how long will it last?.....

What furnishings and equipment (cooker, fridge etc) does the accommodation have?.....

Is there an inventory of all the items and equipment in the accommodation?
Yes No

Would you be permitted to decorate and/or hang pictures on the walls?
Yes No

When does the tenancy begin (do you have any rent free weeks)?.....

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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.

Date Tenancy Started.....

If the accommodation requires work to be undertaken and/or decorating who will do this work?.....

What is the name of your area housing officer/tenancy support worker or landlord?.....



My Useful Housing Numbers and Information

- Landlord/letting agent.....
- Housing department/association.....
- Housing officer/keyworker.....
- Housing maintenance worker.....
- Benefit/housing benefit office.....
- Gas supplier.....
- Electricity supplier.....
- Water supplier.....
- Phone company.....
- Hospital.....
- Library.....
- Police station.....
- Leaving care personal adviser.....
- Locksmith.....
- Location of:*
- Stop cock (water valve).....
- Who has a spare key?.....
- Tenancy agreement.....
- Television licence.....
- Utility payment cards or keys.....
- Inventory.....

Useful Contacts and Addresses

With your foster carer, 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 your foster carer/s and your personal adviser are useful sources of information.

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Job Centre Plus
- Connexions and the Careers Service
- The Housing Benefit Office
- The local housing department office
- Police station
- Library
- Community Alcohol Service
- Drugscope
- Youth Information Service
- 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



Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....	Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....
Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....	Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....
Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....	Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....
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Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....	Name/Organisation Address..... Tel..... E-mail.....



MOVING HOME CHECKLIST

The aim of this worksheet is to help young people to think about and prepare for moving into a new home. It is also intended for use by foster carers, residential key-workers, 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		
Settee		
Shelving		
Stereo System		
Table and Chairs		
Television and Television License		
Wardrobe		
Bed		
KITCHEN AND HOUSEHOLD		
Alarm Clock		
Cleaning Equipment (mop, bucket etc)		
Cooker		
Crockery		
Cutlery		
Fridge		
Iron and Ironing Board		
Kettle		
Kitchen Equipment (bowl, drainer etc)		
Pots and pans		
Toaster		
Vacuum Cleaner		
Washing Machine		
Contents Insurance		
LINEN AND SOFT FURNISHINGS		
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.

Family, friends and foster carers

Plan in advance and ask your family, friends and foster carers if they have any items they no longer need and you could have when you get your own place.

Children's Services

The 16 Plus Team has an allowance to help you set up your new home; ask your 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; 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:

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Can I afford it? What bills will I have to pay? How long can I live there? Is the building/home secure? What are the rules and can I stick to them? How will I get to work or college and visit family and friends? Can I bring a pet? Where will 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 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 Rom and leave a copy of the CD Rom 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 that the rent is within acceptable housing benefit (LHA) levels. It is also important to know that care leavers are exempt from the Single Room Rent Restriction until their 22nd birthday. This means that care leavers are eligible to claim benefit on independent accommodation; the rules are complex and you should check with the housing benefit office. Check that the rent level is within the Local Housing Allowance rate for your area. This is particularly important if you leave care and move into private accommodation at the age of 16 and 17 and the 16 Plus

Team are paying your rent. It is important to check that the Local Housing Allowance rate will cover all of 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 in to your new home you will need to change the utility accounts (your 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:

Gas Supplier.....Meter Reading.....

Electric Supplier.....Meter Reading.....

Water Supplier.....Meter Reading.....

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 stop-cock (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 television 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.

If you are claiming Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance you can apply for a Social Fund Community Care Grant (up to April 2013) which may provide a grant to help you purchase important items for your new home.

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.

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Document	Yes/No	Document	Yes/No
Education certificates		Doctor	
Passport		Dentist	
Nationality/Immigration documents		Optician	
Tenancy agreement		Important addresses	
National Insurance number		Important dates	
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 it and by having your own things around you. It takes quite a while to get used to living on your own and managing independent living. Talk to your foster carer, support workers, social worker and personal adviser if you are unsure what tasks you may need to do, or 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 things and personal touches.

Lodgings, a private flat or a room in a shared house may already be furnished and decorated but 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 is likely to 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.

What do I need and how much do I need it? Set your priorities

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 things that you could do without for a while, and write 2 for things that are in between. It is worth doing this because 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 and foster carers

Plan in advance and ask your family, friends and foster carers if they have any items they no longer need and you could have when you get your own place.

Children's Services

The 16 Plus Team has an allowance to help you set up your new home; ask your 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; 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, find, buy or make and whatever condition it's in, remember it's yours. These things make up your home, whether you live in a room, a flat or a house.

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			
Immigration Documentation			
Certificates of Achievement			
G.C.S.E. Certificates			
A Level Certificates			
Current C V			
Children's Services Case Number			
Other			

What Do These Clothing Washing Symbols Mean?



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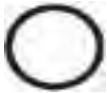
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Assertiveness

Assertiveness is an important skill that young people learn to develop in their teens. Assertiveness is about being confident understanding your own needs and having a positive sense of self-worth. Assertiveness is linked to self respect, respect for others, good communications 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, when necessary, to ask for help without embarrassment.

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Being assertive will help young people with making a successful transition to adult life. In particular, 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, training and work opportunities and leisure
- 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.

1. 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?

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2. 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?
 3. 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?
 4. Your leaving care personal adviser visits you two hours late causing you to be late for college. What would you do and say?
 5. Your brother who is in debt asks you to lend him £50.00, the amount you have saved for Christmas. What would you do and say?
 6. Your neighbour complains about your music which she says is very loud. What would you do and say?

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

Discuss the above scenarios with your foster carer, social worker, residential key-worker, 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 accommodation key-worker, social worker or leaving care personal adviser and consider how you would manage the different risks involved.

1. You are waiting for a bus at a bus stop at eleven o'clock at night when some old friends you haven't seen for a long time screech to a halt and offer to give you a lift. What are the risks involved with this situation? What would you do and say?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. You decide to visit your ex-foster carers in Bedford, 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?
5. You meet a new girl friend who lives in Norwich. You decide to give up your council flat and your permanent job at Homebase in Luton to move to Norfolk. You have been told you that it is easy to pick up work in Norfolk. What are the risks involved with this situation? What would you do?
6. It was your eighteenth birthday last week and your leaving care personal adviser has told you that you need to claim Income Support as your leaving care allowance should cease. You decide to ignore their advice because you think the 16 plus team will continue to pay your allowance. What are the risks involved with this situation and what do you think may be the consequences?
7. You lose the key to your flat and don't have the twenty pounds 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 and what do you think may be the consequences?
8. You live in a housing association flat and you are still on a probationary tenancy as you have lived there for less than six months. A friend comes to stay with you and asks to stay for a few months as he has nowhere else to go. What are the risks involved with this situation and what do you think may be the consequences?

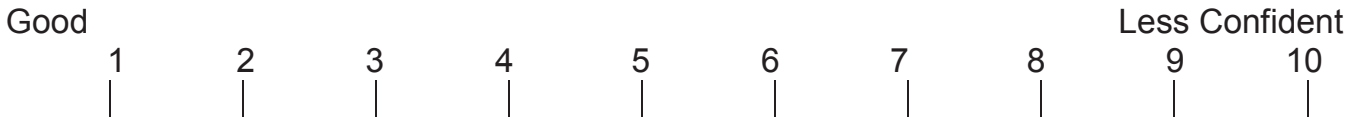
Independent Living Checklist - Scale Assessment

Self Assessment Guide A

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

On a scale of 1 to 10 how good do you think you are at managing independent living?
Assess yourself on the questions on the following pages. 1 being very good, 10 being less confident.

Scale One



Scale Two

On a scale of 1 to 10 how able do you think you are at learning to managing independent living?
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** A little Knowledge
- B** Lots of Knowledge
- C** Have tried to use the information
- D** Have no experience of using the information
- E** Have practiced lots of times – very able

Practical Skills and Knowledge

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

Children Looked After System and Framework

The purpose of this section is to provide information to young people, foster carers, supported lodgings carers, residential 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 or 2011 and came into effect in April 2011.

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
Volume 3:	Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers – Guidance 2010 (including; The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
Volume 4:	Fostering Services – Regulations 2011 Fostering - National Minimum Standards 2011
Volume 5:	Children’s Homes – Regulations 2011 Children’s Homes - National Minimum Standards 2011
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

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

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“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;
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 a ‘voluntary’ agreement between the child’s parents and the local authority.

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

All children looked after should be allocated to a 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 will 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 also have a Placement Plan which should be 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, including clarity about the financial arrangements for the child's upbringing.

The overarching Care Plan encompasses the:

- Placement Plan
- 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' about 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 and needs of the child and should be treated as a 'living document' and up-dated 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 up-date of the Health Plan which is a key part of the overarching Care Plan.

The Placement Plan should be up-dated in advance of a placement move, or where a move takes place at short notice as soon after the move as possible (within 5 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, social worker, family placement worker, independent reviewing officer, residential social worker, leaving care personal adviser (where applicable).

The majority of children looked after are placed with foster carers. Approximately, two thirds of all children looked after live in fostering arrangements.

Foster carers tend to fit into three 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.

The remaining third of children looked after live in children's homes, residential schools, specialist therapeutic provision, supported lodgings, semi-independent provision and can be living at home.

Children's home tend to fit in 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 (just for that local authority).
2. Independent children's homes that take children for different local authorities
3. Specialist therapeutic residential units

Residential schools will often provide placements for children looked after and other children who have a 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 whom return home, should generally only do so as part of a planned reconciliation process. A placement at home is governed by a detailed set of regulations.

Children who are 'Accommodated' under Section 20 cease to be looked after at 18, or when they return to their parents or someone with parental responsibility. Where a child returns home 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. Where appropriate an IRO should hold a statutory review and agree the support and plan.

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

Young People Looked After Aged 16 & 17 and Care Leavers Aged 18 Plus

The majority of the children looked after system 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.

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.

'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 of the arrangements to ensure that 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 and the Personal Education Plan ceases when a child reaches the end of school year 13. When the PP and PEP 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 persons Leaving Care Personal Adviser.

'Eligible' children who cease to be looked after aged 16 & 17 become 'Relevant' children on ceasing to be looked after.

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 sets out a framework for the local authority to assess their suitability and the circumstances of children who can move to these arrangements.

The 'Responsible Authority' is a term used to denote which local authority is responsible for the 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/placed.

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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 programme they are engaged in on their 21st birthday.

Young people aged 21 to 25 who were previously 'Former Relevant' children have the right to return to their 'Responsible Authority' for support with education or training. The 'Responsible Authority' must assess the young person's needs and provide practical and financial support, a Personal Adviser and a Pathway Plan.

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 has to 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) 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) of 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 break (all planned and non being more than 4 weeks each) arrangements are deemed 'Qualifying'.

'Qualifying' Children are entitled to 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.

The majority of 'Eligible' and 'Relevant' children are not able to claim means tested benefits. The only groups (16 & 17 year olds) that are able to claim benefits are young people who are deemed 'Sick and Disabled' who can claim Employment and Support Allowance and lone parents who can claim Income Support, Child Tax Credits, 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 homes post 18 a move-on plan needs to be in place and agreed by Ofsted. For young people to remain in a fostering arrangement post 18 (where children looked after live) the young person needs to be deemed an adult member of the household and will be subject to a number of safeguarding checks.

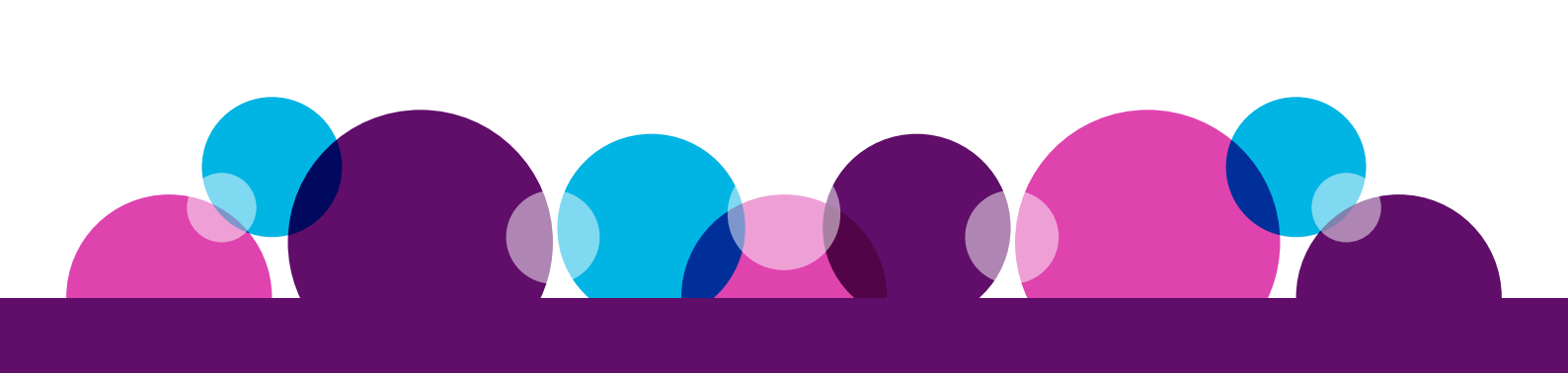
Local authorities are required to have a 'Staying Put' policy which highlights how the authority will support young people to remain in their former foster care placements post 18.

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 housing 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 a Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), or a disability and will transfer to Adult Services.

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 at 21 the entire responsibility becomes that of Adult Services.

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 such as 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, as well as Disability Living Allowances are disregarded when assessing the level of financial support that Children's Services provides.

NOTES

 01582 547820
 www.luton.gov.uk
 @lutoncouncil
 Lutoncouncil

14+ team
Luton Borough Council
1st Floor Town Hall Extension
Upper George Street
Luton
LU1 2BQ