

Our Pledge to Children and Young People in Care

- We promise to do our best for children and young people in care
- We will provide carers that treat you kindly, with care and respect, and support you to achieve your goals.
- We will listen to your views, and try to give you choice about where you live and about which school you attend if you move home.
- We will involve you in decisions which affect you
- We will hold regular reviews, and listen to what you tell us about how to make your review work best for you in order to make good plans for you. We will help you to lead your review if that is what you choose to do.
- If we make a plan we will try very hard to keep it but if it has to be changed we will explain to you what has changed and why.
- We will make sure you can have as much contact as possible with your parents, brothers and sisters, and friends or explain why you can't.
- We will make sure you have a named Social Worker and know how to contact him/her when you need to. We will make sure that your Social Worker can spend time building a relationship with you.
- We will always tell you why you are in care, and we will check with you first that you want to know, and are ready to hear.

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- We will make sure that every one of you can talk to someone who is independent of your Social Worker and carer if you want to, including having someone to help you say what you want at your review.
- We will talk to you about your health and emotional needs and make sure you get the right support. We will recognise your right to confidentiality about your health.
- We will help you think and find out more about who you are and your place in the world.
- We will try to provide a place at a good school that can meet your educational, emotional and social needs.
- We promise to give you support and help at school if you require it. You will have an up-to-date Personal Education Plan.
- We will also help you if you get excluded from school or College.
- We will tell you what support you are entitled to when you go on to College or University.
- We will give you information and encourage and support you to take part in activities in your spare time that you enjoy.
- We will tell you how much pocket money you should get and ensure you get it.
- We will give you details of the support that is available when you move on from care.
- We will help you to move into training and work opportunities.
- We will not keep secrets from you.

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Our Vision

In its role as Corporate Parent, Swindon Borough Council wants to achieve the same good outcomes for our Children Looked After as any parent would wish for their children. We want our children and young people to have similar opportunities and chances in life to that of children growing up in their own families.

We will seek to provide Children Looked After with the support and help that they need to reach the best outcomes during childhood and into adult life. We provide our Children Looked After with good quality placements and ensure that they have access to good education and health care. The development of the skills needed to live independently need to be fostered and encouraged in an age appropriate way throughout a child's life. This should not be different for a young person who has been brought up in care, and our expectation is that throughout their time in care each child/young person will be supported in acquiring and developing the skills to be independent across all aspects of their life.

Like any good parent we will assist our young people through further and higher education and / or into employment or training opportunities, and ensure that they have somewhere suitable to live once they leave their care placement.

To do this for every young person aged between 16 and 25 who qualify for leaving care services we provide them with a Social Worker or Pathway Advisor who will provide support and guidance, and work with other agencies to help the young person gain access to wider support services. All young people under 18 will have a qualified social worker to work alongside them.

The other agencies may include adult social care and health services for care leavers including specialist services for those young people who have learning difficulties or emotional and mental health problems.

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Our Objectives

- To motivate and assist every young person leaving care to reach their potential in terms of education, training and employment so that they can achieve independence.
- To promote their good health by encouraging each young person leaving care to recognise what they need to do to have a healthy sexual, emotional and physical lifestyle.
- To facilitate and support all young people leaving care to find suitable accommodation.
- To support all young people leaving care to maintain positive family and social/friendship relationships.
- To assist all young people leaving care to be financially independent, and to be able to budget, and to save and manage their money.
- To provide all young people leaving care with an allocated competent worker to support them in their aspirations.

Statutory framework

The statutory obligations on Local Authorities for Leaving Care Services are set out in:-

- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children (Leaving Care) (England) Regulations 2001.
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care leavers and The Care Leavers (England) Regulations Revised 2015.
- Section 3 of the Children & Social Work Act 2017

These regulations and guidance are designed to ensure care leavers are given the same level of care and support that their peers would expect from a reasonable parent and that they are provided with the opportunities and chances needed to help them move successfully to adulthood. They are intended to ensure that young people leave care when they are ready and equipped to do so.

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Introduction

This guidance provides an introduction to the leaving care services that young people will receive from Swindon Borough Council. The process of leaving care can be a challenging and confusing time. The aim of this guidance is to describe the type of support that young people will receive to enable them to make a successful transition to independence.

Who Will Receive a Service?

In order to understand the type of support that young people leaving care will receive workers will need to understand some key words which are used to describe each category of care leaver. These key words and their definitions are described below:

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Eligible Children	Relevant Children	Former Relevant Children	Qualifying Young Person
<p>Aged 16 or 17.</p> <p>Currently in care.</p> <p>Has been in care for 13 weeks or more since they were 14. The 13 weeks do not have to be in succession. At least one day must be after the young person's 16th birthday.</p>	<p>Aged 16 or 17.</p> <p>Not currently in care.</p> <p>Has been in care for 13 weeks or more since they were 14. The 13 weeks do not have to be in succession. At least one day must be after the young person's 16th birthday.</p> <p>If a relevant child returns home for a period of 6 months or more, they cease to be a relevant child.</p>	<p>Aged between 18 and 25.</p> <p>Was previously an Eligible or Relevant Child.</p> <p>Local councils must offer support to all care leavers up to the age 25. It does not matter if they are in education or training or not.</p> <p>This means the younger person can return to the local authority at any point up to the age of 25 and request advice and support (see section 3 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017).</p>	<p>Aged between 16 and 20.</p> <p>Has previously been in care but has not accumulated the 13 weeks needed to be an eligible or relevant child.</p>

CATEGORIES OF CARE LEAVERS

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Eligible Young People (if the young person is 16 or 17 and still looked after) are entitled to:-

- All the normal services provided to a looked after child.
- A needs assessment
- A pathway plan
- A Pathway Adviser
- Assistance to achieve the goals set out in the pathway plan concerning:
 - education
 - training
 - employment
 - general advice support and assistance

Relevant Young People (if the young person is 16 or 17 but has left care) are entitled to:-

- A Pathway Adviser
- A Needs Assessment
- A pathway plan
- Assistance to achieve the goals set out in the pathway plan concerning:
 - education
 - training
 - employment
 - general advice support and assistance
- Unless the young person is living at home, the young person will be provided with somewhere suitable to live, a personal allowance and other financial support according to their circumstances.
- The Pathway Adviser must keep in touch with the young person

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Former Relevant Young People (if the young person is over 18 and has left care) will be entitled to:-

- A Pathway Adviser
- A needs assessment
- A pathway plan
- The Pathway Adviser must keep in touch with the young person
- Assistance to achieve the goals set out in the pathway plan concerning:
 - education
 - training
 - employment
 - general advice support and assistance
- Vacation accommodation for higher education or residential further education if needed.

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Qualifying young people (if the young person was over 16 when they became looked after).

Qualifying young people are aged 16 to 21 (up to 24 if in full time education) who became looked after over the age of 16 and do not meet the criteria for eligible or relevant young people will be entitled to:- □ Advice and assistance, based on a needs assessment.

- The local authority must keep in touch with the young person.
- The local authority has the power to assist with education and training up to age 24 and with vacation accommodation where young people are taking higher or further education courses.

The Role of Social Workers and Pathway Advisers

As an eligible care leaver the young person will already be allocated a Social Worker. The Social Worker will hold case responsibility and will be responsible for the preparation of the young person's **needs assessment and pathway plan**. If the young person remains an eligible care leaver they will continue to be allocated to a Social Worker until they reach 18 years old when they become a former relevant young person.

Alongside the Social Worker the young person will also be allocated a Pathway Advisor (PA) from the Positive Futures Team who will assist the young person in preparing for their transition to adult life. See Process for referral to the Positive Futures Team below

If the young person is supported by the Disabled Children's Team their allocated Social Worker will continue to support them as a Care Leaver until their transition to Adult Services. The Positive Futures Team will allocate a **Pathway Adviser** to work alongside the existing Social Worker who will be available to support the transition to Adult Services. The Pathway Adviser will take over responsibility for the preparation of their pathway plan when they reach 18 and achieve Former Relevant status

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Process for referral to Positive Futures Team from Locality Teams

Eligible young people aged 16 and 17yrs

Eligible young people can be transferred into the Positive Futures Team if they are over 16 years of age..

When the young person reaches the age of 15½ years and it is likely that they will remain looked after their 16th birthday, the responsible Team Manager/ATM will notify the Positive Futures Team Manager to ensure timely transfer into the Positive Futures Team. The caseholding team will be responsible for the completion of the Positive Futures referral form on care director and all relevant documentation must be brought up to date.

For all eligible young people who are over 17 years old and are held within other teams within the service, the responsible Team Manager/ATM should notify the Positive Futures Team Manager when the young person reaches 16¾ years old so that a Pathway Adviser can be allocated to work alongside the Social Worker to support the young persons transition to independence.

The young person's Needs Assessment and pathway plan should be drawn up by the allocated Social Worker in consultation with the young person, the Pathway Adviser, the young person's carer and other involved parties.

The Pathway Adviser should attend the young person's Children Looked After review meeting following their 17th birthday, with the consent of the young person. The Pathway Adviser should attend any other relevant meetings regarding the young person as required.

The Pathway Adviser will work alongside the allocated Social Worker, from the young person's 17th birthday, and will have a key role in providing support to the young person after he/she leaves care.

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The support by the Pathway Advisor to the allocated Social Worker for the young person will be to assist in the development, implementation and review of services as set out in the pathway plan which must be in place by the statutory timescale i.e. by the maximum of three months following the young person's 16th birthday.

The pathway plan should clarify the tasks that the Social Worker, the Pathway Adviser, the young person, carers and other involved parties will complete with SMART outcomes.

The young person's pathway plan should be reviewed every six months within the young person's statutory review and amended to reflect any changes in the young person's circumstances. The pathway plan can also be reviewed if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances.

ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER

Whenever a child or young person becomes looked after, Social Workers should be planning from the outset for their eventual discharge from care. It may be clear from the beginning that this will be a move on to independent living or it may be a return home.

Even where there is an active and realistic plan for rehabilitation, planning will include the provision of services aimed at maximising the chances of good outcomes in adulthood. This will focus on the categories:

- health
- education/employment/training
- identity
- family and social relationships
- social presentation
- emotional and behavioural development
- self-care/independent living skills

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The pathway plan should be a major part of young people's planning for the future. It should include their hopes and ambitions as well as smaller goals for them to reach along the way.

Each young person will be central to drawing up their own plan, setting out their own goals and identifying with their pathway adviser how the Local Authority will help them. At all times young people are consulted about their future and encouraged to be actively involved in the decision making process and implementation of the pathway plan.

The Social Worker and Pathway Adviser will work to ensure that the plan is owned by the young person and is able to respond to their changing needs and ambitions. It should look ahead at least as far as the young person's 21st birthday and will be in place beyond that where the young person continues to receive a service from Swindon Borough Council.

Relevant young people aged 16 and 17yrs

Prior to any young person leaving care, an amended pathway plan should be prepared by the Social Worker in consultation with the young person and their Pathway Adviser and discussed at a statutory review chaired by the young person's Independent Reviewing Officer. This is to ensure that an appropriate support package is in place for the young person.

POST 18 years Former relevant young people

When a young person reaches the age of 18 years, the Pathway Adviser will take on full case responsibility for the young person's support needs. They will also be responsible for reviewing and updating the pathway plan on a six monthly basis. The Pathway Adviser's Line Manager/Supervisor will be responsible for checking and countersigning the Pathway plan.

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PREPARING FOR INDEPENDENCE

The role of carers

All carers (Foster Carers/residential/semi independent placement staff/suported lodgings hosts) have key formal and informal roles in the preparation of young people for independent or semi independent living.

Formal roles include contributing to:

- Care plans
- Placement agreements
- Child care reviews
- Needs assessment
- Pathway plans
- Life story work
- Completion of independent living skills handbook.

Foster carers are expected to prepare for and attend all relevant meetings in respect of the above and take a proactive approach in the development and implementation of such plans.

The informal roles of carers are less easy to define but are at least as important as their formal roles.

Carers are best placed of all those in the young person's network to help prepare them for independence on a day to day basis. For some young people this will involve helping them complete practical tasks such as making job or housing applications. Young people about to move into semi-independent or independent accommodation may need help in preparing a budget, or notifying relevant agencies such as energy companies of the move.

Swindon Borough Council expect carers to be proactive and positive in carrying out such tasks, whilst balancing the need to encourage the young person to take on increasing levels of responsibility for their own life.

Foster carers will be expected to be aware of and take opportunities to provide children of any age with age and developmentally appropriate

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opportunities for learning independence skills. Such opportunities may include:

- Observing religious festivals and customs
- Making simple choices such as what clothes to wear or food to eat
- Independent play
- Shopping and handling money
- Learning to travel unaccompanied
- Learning to ride a bike
- Use of a library
- Safe use of internet and digital communication
- Attending clubs or religious organisations
- Sex and relationships education
- Drugs awareness
- Learning to keep safe
- Preparing simple meals
- Opportunities to form and maintain friendships
- Simple household tasks, becoming more complex as the child gets older.

This is far from an exhaustive list and there will be many other ways that individual children can be helped by carers to develop independence skills. Carers should be mindful of such opportunities and take them as they arise.

Carers should also be mindful of the need to avoid putting too much pressure on the child, while at the same time ensuring that the child is encouraged to meet achievable challenges that will help to develop independence skills, whether independent living itself is imminent or still many years away.

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services require us to ensure that our fostering services help to develop the skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

Further requirements are imposed, including the provision of written guidelines to carers in terms of what is expected of them in preparing

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children and young people for independent living, ensuring that carers understand the need to provide all children in their care with age and developmentally appropriate opportunities for learning independence skills.

Whatever the individual young person's background, everyone involved in their care has a role to play in preparing and planning for as successful a transition to adulthood as is possible.

Young people placed with our carers also share the common characteristic that case responsibility remains with the placing authority. Our carers and staff share a duty to plan for the young person's care in partnership with others including the young person.

Financial Support to Care Leavers

Who will be eligible for financial support?

Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant young people will be entitled to financial support from Swindon Borough Council. Qualifying young people will be eligible for financial support subject to an individual assessment.

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

What Kind of Financial Support is available?

All of Swindon's care leavers aged 16-21 years will receive financial support as below:-

- Birthday allowance of £ 50 per year
- Christmas/festival allowance of £100 per year

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- Leaving care grant £ 2000
- A provisional driving licence
- Driving lessons up to the value of £500 if young person requires this for work/education training.
- Passport cost
- Cost of birth certificate if needed

Any financial support given to a young person should be clearly recorded in their Pathway plan.

The young person may also receive up to £200 per annum for leisure/cultural activities if there are not any other funding options available. The young person's needs should be fully recorded in the young person's pathway plan.

The amount of financial support that the young person will receive will in part be affected by their leaving care status.

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

In Education, Training or Employment

Relevant young people (16/17 year-olds), in many cases, will not be entitled to claim the major means-tested benefits, therefore, if young people are 16 or 17 yrs old and a relevant care leaver (i.e. they have left care) and are in some form of education, employment or training the young person will receive the equivalent of Job Seekers Allowance. The Care Leavers Team will also provide an incentive payment each week of up to £30.00 depending on the young person's College course/training, hours of attendance and their employment salary/wages. This will be assessed on an individual basis and recorded within their pathway plan.

The Positive Futures Team will also cover the cost of the young person's rent until they reach 18 years old.

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The Positive Futures Team will also pay the cost of special clothes or expenses associated in maintaining the young person's education, employment or training.

Not in Education, Training or Employment

If the young person is a Relevant Care leaver (i.e. they have left care and are 16 or 17 years old) and they are not engaged in employment, education or training, then the level of financial support that they will receive will be less than the amount of money that they would receive if they were in education, training or employment. In such circumstances they will only receive the equivalent of Universal Credit and if they are actively seeking work or training opportunities then an additional weekly payment of £5.00 per week may be paid to the young person.

The Positive Futures Team will also pay:

- The young person's rent
- Any costs associated with transport to and from interviews
- The cost of special clothes or expenses associated with attending interviews or associated with starting a job or a training course (e.g. special clothes or equipment). The young person's Pathway Adviser will help the young person to claim any benefits that they are entitled to inclusive of the education bursary

The young person's Pathway Adviser will provide the young person with a copy of their pathway plan which will include in it a description of the financial support they will receive from the Positive Futures Team. The Pathway Adviser will provide the young person with advice on how to manage money and they will be encouraged to complete an individual budget plan which will help them to ensure that they manage money effectively and do not get into debt. The pathway plan will be reviewed regularly so it can be adapted to any change in the young person's circumstances.

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

Former relevant young people who are aged 18 to 25 and have left care are entitled to claim benefits. Where a young person is not in education or employment then they are expected to maximise the take up of these benefits. If the young person is a former relevant care leaver and they are in education or training they will be eligible to apply for Universal Credit. Young people will also be entitled to apply for Housing Element to cover their rent. The Positive Futures Team can assist with financial support until these claims are processed, but the young person will be expected to apply for these benefits. The Positive Futures Team may also pay the cost of special clothes or expenses associated in maintaining their education, employment or training. This will be assessed on an individual basis.

Former Relevant Young People Not in Education or Training

If the young person is 18 years old and they are not in employment, education or training, then the level of financial support that they will receive will be less than the amount of money that they would receive if they were in education, training or employment. In such circumstances the young person will only receive Universal Credit. Young people will be entitled to Housing Element to cover their rent. The Positive Futures Team may also pay the cost of special clothes or expenses associated with attending an interview. This will be assessed on an individual basis.

Benefits

Care leavers may be able to apply for a range of state benefits and allowances. Some benefits, but not all of them such as DLA, will be taken into account when calculating the level of financial support that young people receive from the Positive Futures Team. The young person's Pathway Adviser will help them to claim any benefits and allowances that they are entitled to receive.

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Help with going to College and the 16 plus Bursary

If a young person is looked after or has left care, are above school age and they are completing a further period of study, then they will be entitled to claim from their place of study, e.g. the college that they attend, a 16+ bursary. The 16+ bursary is administered by the college to support young people in their studies.

Young people should get in touch with their education provider (e.g. school or College) to find out how to claim the bursary. The young person's Pathway Adviser will also assist in claiming the Bursary.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/eligibility>

Help with the Cost of Going to University

If a young person is a relevant or former relevant care leaver and they enter a higher education or University degree course, then the Positive Futures Team will provide the following support:

- A minimum grant of £2,000.00 throughout the length of the whole course.
- Help and support with vacation accommodation up to £ 3000 per year.
- Liaise with nominated support worker at the University to ensure all necessary support is accessed.

Information regarding the financial support available to care leavers can be found via The Student Finance website which can be accessed through **www.direct.gov.uk**

This has lots of information as well as being the place to apply. There are downloadable guides that are very good and are easy to understand.

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A searchable website **Propel** provides full information about each educational institution's provision for care leavers, as well as inspirational stories from care-experienced students.

Your Pathway Adviser can support you with your applications and ensure that you receive your full entitlements.

The financial arrangements and vacation accommodation should be clearly recorded in your pathway plan.

The young person's Pathway Adviser should support the young person with their applications and ensure that they receive their full entitlements. The financial arrangements and vacation accommodation should be clearly recorded in the young person's pathway plan.

University and College hardship funds

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

Universities and Colleges also have hardship funds and young people could be entitled to extra money from their University/College. Contact should be made with the Student Services Department at the education establishment to find out if the young person is eligible for these funds. If the young person is experiencing financial hardship because they have been in care, have a disability or are students with children they could receive additional financial support.

Whether students are given anything from this is the decision of the University/College. They can give money as either a grant or a loan and in a lump sum or in instalments. Students need to apply to the Student Services Dept.

Disabled students can claim additional allowances. These are to cover such things as special equipment or a helper. These are known as

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Disabled Student Allowances (DSAs) and an assessment has to be undertaken before any money is awarded. These allowances are grants not loans.

In addition to the above, many universities provide additional bursaries to care leavers. More information about bursary payments can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/extra-money-pay-university>

Financial support to young people in custody

Young people who are in custody will continue to be provided with support from their Pathway Adviser and have a pathway plan.

For young people, if under 18 years, in exceptional situations where education, training or work opportunities are not available and no pocket money or remuneration scheme exists, young people will be provided with a £10.00 per week pocket money allowance. This will be provided in-line with any recommendations of the particular establishment and should be set out in the young person's pathway plan.

Additionally, and in exceptional circumstances, a clothing allowance commensurate with the leaving care clothing allowance of £5.00 per week may be provided.

Suitable Accommodation

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care leavers and The Care Leavers (England) Regulations Revised 2015 place duties on local authorities who should:

- Ensure that young people live in suitable accommodation when they leave care
- Plan with young people and involve them in decisions
- Avoid moving young people who are settled
- Assess young people's needs and prepare them for any move

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- Ensure that the accommodation meets any needs relating to impairment
- Consider education, training and employment needs
- Where practicable, offer a choice of accommodation
- Set up a package of support to go with the accommodation have a clear financial plan for the accommodation and a contingency plan.

The young person's **pathway plan** should detail what action and support is needed for the young person to make a successful transition to adulthood and meet the above requirements. A young person should not leave care without a statutory review to ensure that the appropriate support package is in place and the accommodation has been assessed as suitable.

The definition of Suitable Accommodation

Regulation 9(2) of the Care Leavers Regulations 2010 defines what is meant by '**Suitable accommodation**'. It is accommodation:

- Which, so far as reasonably practicable, is suitable for the child in light of his needs, including his health needs;
- In respect of which the responsible authority has satisfied itself as to the character and suitability of the landlord or other provider; • Complies with health and safety requirements related to rented accommodation; and
- In respect of which the responsible authority has, so far as reasonably practicable, taken into account the child's
- wishes and feelings; and
- education, training or employment needs.

The Regulations and Guidance also states that "Children's Services will need to work with housing strategy, housing options, housing related support functions and other partners to secure a range of suitable housing and support options for young people leaving care" (pa and that "Housing

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Services and Children's Services should adopt a shared strategic approach to the provision of emergency accommodation and housing and support pathways for young people in order to avoid the use of B&B accommodation"

In January 2015, the guidance was revised to clarify that Bed & Breakfast accommodation was unsuitable accommodation for care leavers, and should be used for no more than two working days in an emergency.

Leaving Care Grants

All Relevant and Former relevant young people who are eligible for a Leaving Care Service will receive a Leaving Care Grant, which is currently £2000, after young people become eligible for a leaving care service. The Leaving Care Grant is issued to young people so that they can purchase furniture and equipment associated with setting up their own home. There is a great deal of flexibility in planning how the grant is spent. The grant can be partially spent whilst young people are in care in preparation for when they move into their own accommodation. The grant is usually provided in instalments, so that it can be spent as and when it is needed.

The young person's Pathway Adviser will work with them to decide the best way to spend the grant and together they should develop a spending plan for the use of the grant. The young person's Pathway Adviser will advise and support the young person to spend the grant carefully and appropriately.

All individual spends from the grant expenditures must be supported by the young person's Pathway Adviser and approved by their line manager who has budgetary authorisation.

Details of the arrangements for providing the leaving care grant should be clearly set out within the young person's pathway plan.

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Crisis Payments

Living independently can at times be challenging and sometimes things do go wrong. If a young person requires financial support in a crisis, then under certain circumstances, the Care Leavers Team can make emergency financial payments to all care leavers up to the age of 25 years. Each individual request for a crisis payment will be assessed by a Pathway Adviser and will be subject to approval by a Manager from the Positive Futures Team.

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

- Additional needs relating to such things as cultural events, counselling, preparation for interviews, emergency payments.
- Contact with family or other significant relationships
- Incentive payments for participating in training or employment
- Special circumstances where additional funds may be needed.

These payments will be subject to an individual assessment.

Bank Accounts

Wherever possible payments made to care leavers will be paid directly into their bank accounts. If a young person does not already have a bank account their Pathway Adviser will help them to open an account. However, it's expected that all children in care will have an account as it is part of the role of foster carers to open savings account for children in their care.

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

Spending Plans

Making ends meet on a limited budget is a challenging task. Spending plans are a useful way of making sure that young people budget carefully

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and don't overspend. The young person's Pathway Adviser will help the young person to produce a spending plan which can be used to balance incoming funds. Making a spending plan with the young person is a useful way of discussing and planning how the young person will budget.

Post 21 year old young people returning to education, employment and training.

If a former relevant care leaver chose to close to the service following their 21st Birthday, they can at any point up to their 25th Birthday contact the Positive Futures Team to discuss support. , A Pathway Adviser will be appointed to assess this request through the completion of a specific needs pathway plan.

Appendix 1

Schedule of Payments to Care Leavers for 2022/2023

All care leavers aged 16-21years will receive:-

- Birthday allowance of £50 per year
- Festival allowance of £100 per year
- A provisional driving licence
- Driving Lessons up to the value of £500 if associated with employment/education/training
- One passport cost
- Birth Certificate if needed
- Leaving Care Grant of £2,000

SWINDON'S LEAVING CARE POLICY

Relevant young people not engaged in employment, education or training will receive a Personal Allowance equivalent to Universal Credit payments per week.

Incentive payments

Relevant young people engaged in education, employment or training may receive an incentive payment of up to £30 per week, assessed on an individual basis.

Relevant young people not engaged in education, employment or training but actively seeking employment may receive an incentive payment of £5.00 per week.

Further Education and Training

Young people may receive assistance with the cost of:

- Course fees, within reasonable limits.
- Travel costs to attend Education or Training, within reasonable limits.
- Course related materials (for example health and safety clothing/equipment)

University Students

Students will receive up to £3,000 per annum for vacation accommodation costs.

University students are entitled to financial support in the form of a bursary of £2,000. This can be paid in a lump sum or in instalments. The young person's Pathway Adviser will discuss and agree these arrangements.

SWINDON'S LEAVING CARE POLICY
