

## **Care Leavers Entitlement**

Now that you are aged 16+ and have been in the Care of Kent County Council, (KCC), you are legally entitled to ongoing support from Kent County Council. (KCC)

KCC works within **The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children act Transition Guidance (vol3)** which is designed to give 16 and 17 year olds still in care, and care leavers, the support and advice that you need to enable you to move successfully into adulthood.

This leaflet describes the support and financial help you should receive from Kent County Council as a Care Leaver and also gives you details of other information that you can access to help you understand what support you can expect to receive from KCC.

What specific support you will get will depend your “Care Leaving status”, which is based on how long you have been in care and how old you are. Depending on this you may get help with housing, education and training. However, all care leavers, (no matter what your status) can expect the same quality service which is set out in Kent’s charter for care leavers. This sets out 14 key promises to you which means we **“promise to listen, support and guide you to grow into healthy, happy and successful young adults”**.

### **Care Leavers Status:**

There are 4 different types of status that you might hear people talk about:

**Eligible child** – If you are 16 or 17 years old who is still in care and who has been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14.

**Relevant child** – If you are 16 or 17 years old who has left care but were in care on or after your 16th birthday and had been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14. This can include if you have been part of youth justice system or hospitalised on your 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Former Relevant child** - if you are now aged 18 - 21 years old who was previously either an eligible or relevant child.

**Qualifying child** – If you are aged 16 - 21 years old, and have been Looked After or, if disabled, have been Privately Fostered after reaching 16, but do not qualify as Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant. (i.e you spent less than 13 weeks in care).

You may also qualify if you are the subject of a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and were Looked After immediately before the SGO was made.

Or if, you were previously an eligible child but returned to live with someone with Parental Responsibility (PR) for more than 6 months before your 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

## **What support you can expect from KCC:**

### **Eligible or Relevant child, you can expect to receive:**

An allocated social worker / personal advisor

A full assessment based on your needs

A detailed Pathway Plan (based on your assessed needs) which will be overseen by a qualified social work Team manager

Your plan will be reviewed every 6 months

We will keep in touch / visit you every 6-8 weeks (more often if necessary)

Provide you with financial support (see table below)

Support you to access safe and suitable accommodation

Financial support to help you maintain education / training / employment (see table below)

Ensure that you have a bank account / NI number and passport (unless your legal status prevents you)

### **If you are aged 18+ and Former Relevant**

An allocated personal advisor

A full assessment based on your needs

A detailed Pathway Plan (based on your assessed needs) which will be overseen by a qualified social work Team manager

Your plan will be reviewed every 6 months

We will keep in touch / visit you every 6-8 weeks (more often if necessary)

Ensuring that you are in relevant safe and suitable accommodation

Financial support to help you maintain education / training / employment (see table below)

Provide you with vacation accommodation if in higher or further education

### **Qualifying:**

If you contact us requesting support we will:

Assess your current needs and provide you with the appropriate advice and support based on those needs

Provide you with vacation accommodation if in higher or further education

### **Financial support**

The type of financial help you receive from KCC will depend on whether you are an eligible, relevant, former relevant or qualifying young person. The details below are a guide to the kind of help you might receive and your social worker / personal advisor will assist you to understand your entitlement.

It is important that you discuss the timings and amounts with your social worker / personal advisor as some of these amounts are fixed and others are discretionary, meaning that they may have to be agreed by a group of managers before they can be agreed in your pathway plan. (This is often referred to as a Panel).

For a detailed explanation of what you are entitled to visit [www.becomecharity.org.uk](http://www.becomecharity.org.uk)  
– monies

<http://www.becomecharity.org.uk/media/1066/factsheet-1-finances.pdf>

	<b>Eligible (aged 16-18)</b>	<b>Relevant (aged 16-18)</b>	<b>Former Relevant (18+)</b>	<b>Qualifying (16-21)</b>
<p><b>Income maintenance</b></p> <p>(personal allowance / essential living allowance (ELA) (This is in line with payments made by DWP) (As of 2016 = £57.95p per week)</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>If in foster care an agreement as to your weekly allowance given to you by your carer will be agreed as part of your Pathway Plan and this will be reviewed every 6 months</p> <p>If in Supportive Lodgings or a Semi-independent living home then a personal allowance will be paid which is equivalent to the benefits rates for young people (£57.95 as of 2016)</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>If in Supportive Lodgings or a Semi-independent living home then a personal allowance will be paid which is equivalent to the benefits rates for young people (£57.95 as of 2016)</p> <p>If you have returned to live with someone with Parental Responsibility (PR) we will continue to pay upto the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 weeks only, until person with PR has claimed Child benefit</p> <p>After 6 months you will move to Qualifying status</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Only paid for 1<sup>st</sup> month whilst claim is being processed with the DWP. (in exceptional circumstances this may be extended and food vouchers provided if needed)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>Accommodation Costs</b></p> <p>Foster care</p> <p>Supported lodgings</p> <p>Semi independent living</p> <p>Vacation accommodation if in HE or residential FE (amount to be agreed by Pa and young person).</p> <p>Independent accommodation + Setting up home allowance</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Yes to setting up home allowance if moving into independent accommodation (up to max of £2,000)</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Yes to setting up home allowance if moving into independent accommodation (up to max of £2,000)</p>	<p>N/A – unless in a staying put arrangement at which point placement changes from foster care to supported lodgings</p> <p>Y.person to claim housing benefit and pay utilities fees and for own food LA to pay top up support needs where assessed (staying put) As above</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> month rental deposit paid if no other source available (depending on needs and financial assessment)  Max of £2000, paid in instalments</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Yes (subject to assessment)</p> <p>No</p>
<p><b>Education employment training</b></p> <p>Fees / materials</p> <p>Travel costs</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Bursary to be used where eligible</p> <p>Yes through Kent travel pass – bursary can be used</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Bursary to be used where eligible</p> <p>Yes through Kent travel pass – bursary can be used</p>	<p>Bursary to be used where eligible</p> <p>Yes through Kent travel pass – bursary can be used</p>	<p>No</p>

	In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to additional payments if <b>having</b> to travel outside of Kent - To be agreed at Panel	In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to additional payments if <b>having</b> to travel outside of Kent – To be agreed at Panel	In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to additional payments if <b>having</b> to travel outside of Kent – To be agreed at panel	
<b>Higher Education (university)</b>	N/A	N/A		
Bursary			Yes £1000 per annum	No
Travel back to Kent during holiday time			Yes	No
Accommodation during vacancies			Yes	No
<b>Other support payments</b>				
Birthday (17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> )	Yes £30 17 <sup>th</sup> b day £60 18 <sup>th</sup> b day (If you are in a placement where KCC pays the maintenance to the provider then agreement will be sort for the provider to give you this payment either through gifts / vouchers or cash)	Yes (unless returned home for more than 6 months as you then become Qualifying)	No	No
Clothing	Yes  £100 (£50 + £50) If you are in a placement where KCC pays the maintenance to the provider then agreement will be sort for the provider to give you this payment either through vouchers or cash and will form part of your independent skills within your pathway plan	Yes  £100 (£50 + £50) If you are in a placement where KCC pays the maintenance to the provider then agreement will be sort for the provider to give you this payment either through vouchers or cash and will form part of your independent skills within your pathway plan  If you receive maintenance direct from KCC then your social worker will agree with you as to how this will be paid and will form part of your independent skills within your pathway plan	No	No
<b>Other discretionary payments – (to be agreed with social worker or Personal advisor as part of PWP and agreed at Panel)</b>				
Costs associated with special needs	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Costs of child care	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Travel Contact with family	Yes	Yes	Yes (only for contact with younger siblings (under 18) or own children – to be discussed with pa	
Counselling therapeutic needs	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Cultural religious needs	Yes	Yes	Yes	
College bursary (16-19) dependent on				

individual colleges you will be assisted to claim where appropriate – bursary payment expected to used for travel / trips for part of course / equipment.				
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*Shaded entitlements are discretionary. If following discussion with your social worker or personal advisor it is felt that you are entitled to some of these payments and it has been assessed within your pathway plan then your worker will take your request to a Panel of senior managers to seek approval.*

### **Advocacy and complaints**

We always try to give a high standard of service, but if you are unhappy with the service you receive, you should discuss this first with the staff who are working with you, for example your Social Worker/Personal Adviser or your advocate.

As a care leaver you have an entitlement to have an advocate. In Kent this is run by the Young Lives Foundation who will work with you on your behalf. [www.ylf.org.uk](http://www.ylf.org.uk). Please talk to your social worker / Personal Advisor about this and can they advise you on the process to request an advocate.

An Advocate can support you whilst in care and can support you if you are feeling unhappy about any aspect of the care you are receiving.

If you are unable to solve things this way you can make a complaint to Kent County Council

[www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/specialist-childrens-services-complaints](http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/specialist-childrens-services-complaints)

If you are unhappy about the responses from Kent County Council you can contact The Local Government Ombudsman who has a fast-track procedure for dealing with complaints made by or on behalf of children and young people up to the age of 19 (or 25 if they have a disability).

Contact details:

**Local Government Ombudsman**  
**PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH**  
Phone: **0845 602 1983**  
Fax: **024 7682 0001**  
Email: **advice@lgo.org.uk**