

The Right Side of Care

In Care

What do all of these words mean?

The leaflets in this pack have been developed with children and young people from Wirral to give you some information when you first become looked after. You can also visit our website for children looked after, young people and care leavers: www.therightsideofcare.com

What do all of these words mean?

When you first come into care you might hear people using words you haven't heard before. This leaflet will help you to understand what some of those words mean:

Accommodated: This means you are looked after and have been given somewhere to live by the Council because you, or your parents, asked them for help. Your parents continue to have parental responsibility for you.

Adoption order: This is the legal document which is issued by a court if you get adopted. Your adopters then become your legal parents forever.

Advocate: Someone who is independent and can visit you to help you get your views across, for example if you want to make a complaint.

Assessment: Your social worker will find out about you and your life to work out what you need and how much your parents or carers are able to respond to your needs. This is called an assessment. It will help the social worker to write your care plan which says how your needs will be met.

CAFCASS: (Children and Family Advisory and Support Services). This is an independent organisation which advises family courts about what they think is in a child's best interest.

CAMHS: (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) If you are feeling sad or worried you may go regularly to see someone from CAMHS who will try to help you get better.

Care order: This is a legal document which a court issues if you become looked after. It says the local authority has parental responsibility for you.

Care plan: All looked after children have a care plan. This is the document your social worker writes which has all the information about you, your placement and the plans for your future. It should be updated regularly as you and your needs change.

Case records: These are a written record which must include your care plan and all other plans for your care, such as health, education, visits from your social worker and any court orders.

Child in need: Children who need the help and services of a local authority to make sure they are healthy and develop well. This also means children who have additional needs through disability.

Child Protection plan: This is a plan about what to do when a child is at risk of serious harm, for example being abused by someone. It looks at what the risk is and says what extra support is needed to keep the child safe.

Children's services (Social Care branch): This is the team of staff in your local authority that helps and supports children and their families. It used to be called Social Services so you may still hear some adults call it that.

Connected person: This is a relative, friend or other person who you know and trust. This may be someone you already know like a teacher, childminder or youth worker.

Corporate parent: When you go into care your local authority becomes your 'corporate parent'. This means that although the local authority is (obviously!) an organisation and not an actual person, it still has responsibility for helping you to grow up well and be happy, just like a parent should.

Council: You can find out more about the council by looking under 'local authority'.

Designated teacher: This is a teacher appointed by the school to support and promote the education of any child in the school who is looked after by the local authority.

Discharging the order: This is a legal term which is used if a court says your care order can end.

Eligible child: Young people aged 16-17 years who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 years and ends after they reach the age of 16 years.

Emergency protection order: This is a legal document from a court, which gives the local authority parental responsibility in an emergency. It can only last for 15 days while people work out what is best for you.

External placements (also called out of borough placements): This is when you are placed in a foster home, a children's home or a residential school that is not in your area.

Health assessment:

you will meet with a doctor who will check your health and write a plan with you for how you can stay healthy and happy.

Health plan: After your first health assessment when you become looked after, a health plan to help keep you well will be written for you and will be included in your care plan.

Local authority: This is the organisation which manages the services for the area where you live. It is like a mini government with elected politicians and paid staff, including social workers.

Looked after: A child who is in the care of the local authority either at the request of or by agreement with their parents or on a care order made by the court.

Parent: This means mother and father of the child whether or not married. 'A person with parental responsibility' can be someone who isn't a child's parent, but is a guardian appointed for a child (under section 5 of the 1989 Children Act) or a person who has been given parental responsibility for the child by court order – either a residence order or a special guardianship order.

Parental responsibility (PR): All those with parental responsibility are allowed to have a say in any decision that needs to be made about a child such as whether a child should receive medical treatment, changing a child's surname, travelling abroad with a child and which school they should attend. If you are looked after, the local authority shares PR with your parents. If you are adopted your new parents have PR.

Pathway plan: This is a plan you and the Pathway Service put together to help you prepare for adult life and moving into living on your own.

Permanence plan: This is a long term plan to help find somewhere where you feel like you belong, and that you are happy and safe.

Personal advisor: This is the person who the local authority chooses to support you when you are preparing to leave care and to support you when you have left.

Personal education plan: You will often hear people call this a PEP. This is a plan for making sure you get the most out of school while you are in care. It is part of your care plan.

Placement: This is the place where you live while you're looked after. For example, a child might say "I've had two placements before with foster carers, but I hope I get to stay with this new one for a long time because she's really nice".

Placement plan: This is part of your care plan - it says why the placement you're in is thought to be right for you.

Residence order: A residence order (under the Children Act 1989) is court order confirming where a child will live. This normally expires when the young person turns 16.

Review: This is the meeting led by your independent reviewing officer (IRO), which looks at your care plan to make sure it is being followed by everyone involved with looking after you and checks if any changes need to be made to it.

Short break: If you have a disability and go into a local authority placement for a short period time as a break from your family, it is called a 'short break'.

Special guardianship order (SGO): This is a court order which gives parental responsibility to someone other than your parents and the local authority to care for you until you are 18 years old. This is often a relative or friend of the family. It is similar to adoption in that your guardians will have responsibility for most important decisions in your life. Your parents have some limited rights over your life and can apply to court to reverse the order unlike adoption.

Subject to a care order but living at home:

This means you are on a care order and the local authority shares parental responsibility for you, but has decided you can live with your parents with a lot of support from social workers.

Supervision order: This is a court order which says you can live at home but with regular visits and checks from social workers to make sure you are being cared for properly.

Some useful contact numbers

Childline

Tel: 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

Childrens Commissioner for England

Tel: 020 7783 8330
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Childrens and Young People's Participation and Engagement Team

Tel: 0151 678 1936
Mobile: 07799 861 764

Childrens Complaints Officer

Tel: 0151 666 5677

Bullybusters

Tel: 0800 169 6928
www.bullybusters.org.uk

Ofsted

Tel: 0300 123 1231
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Wirral Council Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT)

Tel: 0151 606 1008

Wirral Council Emergency Duty Team:

Tel: 0151 677 6557