

A YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO BEING IN CARE IN YORK

SPEAK UP

York's Children's Rights and Advocacy Service



CITY OF
YORK
COUNCIL

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HELLO FROM YORK'S CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

If you reading this, you have
most likely just come into
care.

The care journey can be scary!
But there is so much support
around you, enabling you to
get involved and shape your
care experience so you can
have a positive future!

BEING IN CARE

What does 'being looked after' mean?

Being looked after or being in care means that Children's Social Care (CSC) are responsible for making sure you have somewhere safe to live. In York, young people have told us that they prefer people to say 'children and young people in care' or 'being in care', rather than 'looked after'. Being in care can include staying with Foster Carers, living in a Children's Home or Residential School, and sometimes with an adult you or your parents already know.

What is a Care Order?

A Care Order is made by court. If there is a Care Order, the court has decided that living away from home would be best for you. If the court decides to make a Care Order, CSC has to provide you with somewhere to live and make sure you are cared for. Your parents and CSC are jointly responsible for you as long as the Care Order is in place. The Care Order stays in place until you leave care when you're 18 to live independently, or if your parents go back to court and the court decides that you can return home.

What is 'being accommodated'?

This is when your parents and CSC have agreed that it would be helpful for you to be looked after for a while. You are still a young person in care but there is no legal order that the courts have put in place. Your family may ask for you to go home at any time but it is best if this is planned and agreed by your Social Worker. Your views should always be listened to in any decisions made.

What is a Foster Carer?

A Foster Carer is someone who looks after other people's children when they have to live away from home. All sorts of people can be Foster Carers. They can be married and unmarried couples, or they could be single. You will live with them in their own home and they may have other foster children or children of their own living with them too.

What is a Children's Home?

A Children's Home is where the staff are employed to look after you. The same staff do not live with you all day but there will always be staff there to take care of you.

What is a Connected Carer?

Having a connected carer means you will be cared for by somebody within your family who has agreed to be your carer and has been assessed as being able to meet your needs. This is usually a relative within birth your family but on occasions it may be a close family friend.

Living outside of York

Occasionally, young people are placed outside of York. If this happens York CSC is still responsible for you and your care. You will still have a Social Worker from York and you can still ask for support from Speak Up.

TAKING CARE OF YOU

Whether you live with Foster Carers or in a Children's Home, adults will be responsible for looking after you and will do things such as...

Keep you safe

Make sure you
have decent,
clean clothes
to wear



Explain what is
expected of
you

Make sure you
have enough
to eat



Talk and listen
to you

Encourage you
with school,
college or work



Help you
find things
to do in your
spare time

Help and
support you

WHERE YOU LIVE

Rules

All homes have rules, they are there to help you and the people you live with to get along together and feel safe. Your Foster Carers and Social Worker will explain the rules where you live so that you understand.

Will I get my own room?

Yes, you will usually get your own bedroom. In some circumstances you may need to share a room with other children and young people, but only if it is decided this is appropriate.

Your personal belongings

You will have somewhere to keep your clothes and other things that are important to you.

Pocket money

If you are old enough you will get pocket money. This is for you to spend on extra things for yourself. Pocket money should be arranged when you move into your placement. You can talk to your Social Worker if this does not happen.



FAMILY AND FRIENDS

All young people have the right to spend time with their family and friends, unless it is not safe to do so. All professionals know how important this can be.

Seeing your family and friends

All arrangements to see your family are discussed in your reviews and are one of the things included in your care plan. It is important that you let someone know what you want, how it is going or if anything is upsetting you about seeing your family and friends. If you are unhappy with arrangements you can talk to your Social Worker or an Advocate from Speak Up.

What if you can't see your family?

Sometimes it may not be a good idea for you to see someone. If this happens, your social worker should always explain why you're not able to see someone. Social Workers can ask the court for an order to stop people from seeing you if they think it will be harmful to you. Even if you can't see someone, you may still be able to get photographs, letters or cards from them. That way, if you want to, you can still remember them and know that they remember you.

What if you don't want to see someone?

If you are worried about having to see someone, including your parents or other family members, then you have the right to say you do not want to. You must tell your Foster Carer or Social Worker if you do not want to see someone and they can support you to find the best way forward.

CARE PLAN AND REVIEW

Every young person in care has a care plan. This plan should say what your needs are and how workers and family/friends can support you. Your care plan is reviewed to make sure that the City of York Council and your Foster Carers are doing their very best to make sure your needs are being met and that you are well looked after.

When you first go into care you will have a review within 4 weeks. You will have another review after 3 months and then they will happen at least every 6 months.

Your views!

It is really important that you are able to contribute to your review by saying how you feel. This is called your consultation. This happens before your review and involves talking to your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who is there to make sure you have your say. Sometimes you may want to talk to other workers you are comfortable with about your review and this is fine too.

An Advocate can support you to prepare for your review and can also support you during the meeting. Find out more about advocates on page 10!

Did you know...?

You can have a say in where your reviews are held and who you would like to attend. You can also say how you would like the review to take place, you can even chair the review if you'd like to!



CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

At times you may have meetings or come to a group or event at West Offices. This is the building where a lot of workers from the council are based. You can find us at Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA which is not far from the city centre.



OUR GUARANTEE TO YOU

The City of York Council has made a promise to children in care. It's called the Guarantee. Children's Social Care (CSC) is in charge of making sure you and other young people in care are looked after properly. In your pack, you will find the Guarantee and a chatterbox for you to make.

SPEAK UP

YORK CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

SPEAK UP

York's Children's Rights and Advocacy Service

Speak Up is here to help you understand your rights and to provide you with help and support on anything and everything to do with being in care. Speak Up would like to know your opinion on Children's Social Care (CSC), on being in care and on what you would like to happen in your life.

The workers at Speak Up are called Advocates and we are here to help you speak up or to speak up on your behalf to help resolve any problems or issues you have. Advocates are confidential, and won't talk to your Social Worker, Foster Carers or any other person without asking your permission (unless you are putting yourself or someone else in danger).

An Advocate can:

Help you
express your
views

Help you work out
what you want to
say and how to
say it

Help you prepare
for meetings, such
as reviews

Put your views forward
for you or help you speak
up for yourself

Make sure you have
information about your
rights and entitlements

PARTICIPATION



Speak Up supports 3 groups for children and young people in care. These are:

Speak Up
Youth

Show Me That
I Matter

I Still Matter
York Care Leavers
Forum

All of these groups make up York's Children in Care Council.

There is a flyer in your pack that explains more about these 3 groups and how to get involved.

SMTIM and I Still Matter are participation groups which means we ask you to get involved because your views are important to us and can make a difference. This might involve telling us what you like and don't like about services, helping us to design posters/leaflets and maybe even making videos or art work to tell people what it's like to be in care so they can understand better.

LEISURE

FREE SWIM AND GYM

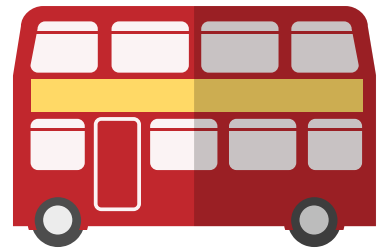


Any young person in care, who is aged 11+, is entitled to a FREE gym and swim membership which you can use at Energise Leisure Centre and Yearsley Pool. If you haven't received this, you can ask your Foster Carer or Social Worker to do this for you.

FREE BUS TRAVEL

Did you know that you are also entitled to a bus pass so that you can travel around York for free? If you don't already have one, you can ask your Social Worker or Foster Carer to arrange this for you. If you live outside of York, you can still speak to your social worker about how we can support you to travel around the city by bus.

You may also be entitled to a bus pass after you turn 21. This is if you are in education, training or an apprenticeship. Speak to your Social Worker or Pathway Worker for more details.



FREE AND DISCOUNTED DAYS OUT

Did you know that Foster Carers are entitled to a discount card called the Max card which provides free or discounted entry to many attractions in York and across the country? This is to help support you carers to take you out to fun activities.



Details of how your Foster Carer can apply for this can be found at www.mymaxcard.co.uk or they can ask someone from the fostering team. Take a look on the website to find out where you can get discount.

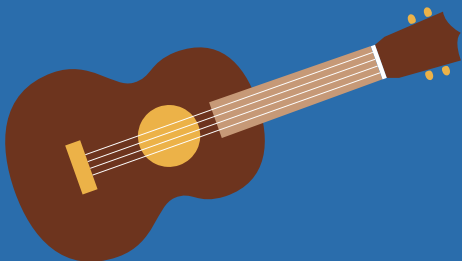
VIOLET CHAMBERS FUND

Did you know... if you are 7 years or older, you can apply for up to £100 from the Violet Chambers Fund to go towards something fun and memorable? There may be somewhere you have always wanted to go, or something you have always wanted to do.

For an application form, please email showmethatimatter@york.gov.uk. If you would like help to fill it in, you can contact us or you could ask your Foster Carer or anyone else who supports you.

Here are some examples of how others have used this fund...

Going to see your favourite band



Taking friends or family out for a meal



Recording a song in a studio



Watching a football match



Going to the theatre



JUST FOR FUN...



D Y O H D W N P A W T O K O T
F R I E N D S E N Q U N A R P
P F G R Z A W F T Y G I C E Y
X Y V P B D V X N S G I C V X
V J C Y E V W W R Q I Y O I L
F Q G C W O D T D N V L M E V
L S I S N C M S K C B H M W V
E O S P E A K U P A X Z O M D
V M X X E T Q K R R T V D E W
F Z L F M E Q Z U E Y F A E V
K R I G H T S M B O K A T T O
E D O R Y Y M B V R K M E I S
Y B Y B R T N D C D B I D N G
H W Q N P I T K P E E L U G N
G N I S K J W F R R Z Y J I C

FRIENDS

RIGHTS

VOICE

LISTEN

ACCOMMODATED

SPEAK UP

CARE ORDER

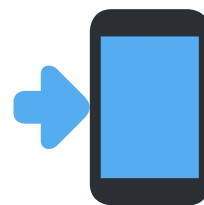
ADVOCATE

REVIEW MEETING

FAMILY



YOUR SUPPORT AND CONTACT DETAILS



This section is for you to fill out so you have details about the different people supporting you and how to contact them.

Social worker

Name.....

Phone number.....

Independent Reviewing Officer

Name.....

Phone number.....

Independent Visitor

Name.....

Phone number.....

Advocate

Name.....

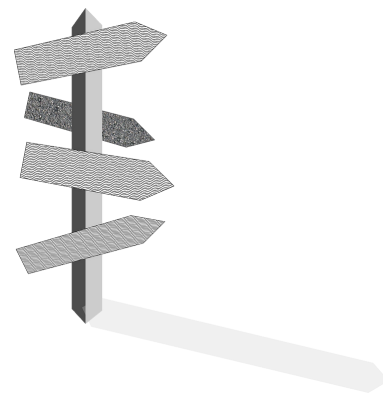
Phone number.....

Emergency Duty Team

Phone number: 01904 780780

Use this number if you need to contact a Social Worker in an emergency in the evening, night time or weekends

KEY PEOPLE AND SERVICES IN YORK



Speak Up Service

Phone number: 07769 725174

Email: speakup@york.gov.uk

Website: www.showmethatimatter.com

30 Clarence Street

Free and confidential information, support and advice, and free counselling for any person aged 16-25.

Phone number: 01904 555400

Email: fis@york.gov.uk

Pathways

Support for care leavers. You should be allocated a worker when you are aged 17 and a half. Contact number: 01904 555309.

Complaints

Phone number: 07769 725174

Email: haveyoursay@york.gov.uk

USEFUL WEBSITES



Childline

Free and confidential helpline and website for you to get advice about any worries or issues you have.

Phone number: 0800 1111 Website: www.childline.org.uk

Show Me That I Matter

Find out about support for young people in care and care leavers in York.

Phone number: 07769 725174

Website: www.showmethatimatter.com

Aspire to More

A blog created by Show Me That I Matter to share positive stories to inspire others.

Website: www.aspiretomore.wordpress.com

Become charity

A voice for children in care

Website: www.becomecharity.org.uk

Law Stuff

Great website for all you need to know about your legal rights.

Website: www.lawstuff.org.uk

For ME

A useful app with advice and support on loads of topics, from school and exam stress to personal issues such as self-harm and mental health.

Search 'For ME' in the app store.