



Children in Care Council Newsletter

WINTER ISSUE

Message from Edward Timpson MP, Children's Minister

To all Children in Care Councils,

I'm happy to be writing to you again I really wanted this newsletter to tell you about all that's going on in government for care leavers and looked after children (and there's plenty!). So I've asked my officials to have a think about how they can change the newsletter so it is more relevant, informative and, most importantly, more helpful. I hope we've achieved that with this edition!

I really believe you can make the difference. I also believe that knowledge is power. By knowing exactly what you should be getting from your council, you'll be able to effectively challenge them if you feel they're not supporting you, or taking into account your wishes, feelings and needs. That's why, as well as keeping you informed about everything the government is doing for you, we'll include, in this and all future issues, a "Support and Guidance" section that will help you to identify the different areas of support available to you.

I speak to a lot to care leavers. Most of them have told me that they think the CiCC Newsletter is great, but that they don't always get to see a copy. If you're holding a

copy in your hand right now, please let your friends and colleagues know, or print out copies for your next CiCC meeting! You can also cut and paste the information here into your own local newsletter too.

Last year I asked all local authorities to discuss the Charter for Care Leavers with you. You will be pleased to hear that nearly all local authorities have now signed up to the Charter and its principles. I would be really interested to hear if the Charter is helping to make a difference in the way you are being cared for – let me know via the new feedback mailbox:

CareLeavers.FEEDBACK@education.gsi.gov.uk

I really hope you find the new CiCC Newsletter more useful. If you think there is anything missing, or, if you feel that it could be even better, please send feedback to my officials, so that together we can make the CiCC Newsletter even better.

**Edward Timpson,
Children's Minister**

What's been going on in government for you?

January 2014

New residential care rules on “out-of-area” placements

New rules making residential care safer and putting an end to unnecessary out-of-area placements for vulnerable children will come into force in January.

The changes were announced in the government's response to the consultation on residential care reform and will result in much stricter scrutiny of councils' decisions about where children are placed.

You can find out more here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/councils-told-to-stop-housing-vulnerable-children-miles-away-from-home>

You can see the consultation on residential care reform and the government's response here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/improving-safeguarding-for-looked-after-children-changes-to-the-care-planning-placement-and-case-review-england-regulations-2010>

Tougher rules to support missing children

Every child who goes missing from home or care will now have the chance to talk to an independent person about why they ran away.

The new rules will see all children who return, having run away, receive an independent return interview organised by their local authority. Only then will agencies find out why they ran away and help prevent it happening again.

You can find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tougher-rules-to-support-missing-children>

You can read the new guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

December 2013

Children to stay with foster families until 21

Children and Families Minister Edward Timpson announced in December that he is placing a new legal duty on local authorities to provide financial support for every young person who wants to stay with their foster parents until their 21st birthday - giving local authorities £40 million over the next 3 years to put the support arrangements in place.

You can find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/children-to-stay-with-foster-families-until-21>

October 2013

Care leavers strategy is launched

Children and Families Minister Edward Timpson launched the Care leavers strategy document at the National Care Leaver Week annual conference in October. The strategy sets out in one place the steps the government is taking – across all departments - to support care leavers to live

independently once they have left their placement. Young people leaving care will be able to see exactly what support is available to them as they take the first steps into adult life in the areas that really matter such as education, employment, financial support, health, housing, the justice system, and on-going support.

You can find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-cross-government-support-strategy-for-care-leavers>

You can read a copy of the Care leavers strategy here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-leaver-strategy>

You can read Edward Timpson speech at the National Care Leaver Week annual conference here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/edward-timpson-speaks-at-the-national-care-leaver-week-annual-conference>

New 'pupil premium plus'

The new 'pupil premium plus' will see funding to support children in care at school increase by £1,000 per pupil. Children will be covered as soon as they enter care and 10,000 more children in care will benefit, bringing the total to 50,000.

Children in care have previously attracted pupil premium funding at the same rate as children from low-income families, but in future they will attract a higher rate of funding - the pupil premium plus. From April next year, children in care will attract £1,900 additional funding per pupil, more than double the £900 awarded in 2013 to 2014.

In addition, this support will now reach more children. At the moment, children in care attract the pupil premium if they have been looked after for 6 months or more, but in future they will be funded from their first day in care.

You can find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/100-million-to-support-the-education-of-children-in-care>

Support and guidance

The following tables highlight the support and guidance available to you, including financial support. There are sections for education, financial support, and advocacy.

Further and Higher Education (FE and HE)

The support available to you if you plan to enter further or higher education.

	What is it?	Who is it for?	What can I use it for?	Where can I find out more?
Pupil Premium	Additional funding given to schools so that they can support your education.	<p>Until April 2014, for children in care that have been looked after for six months or more.</p> <p>From April 2014 children in care regardless of when they started to be looked after.</p>	<p>The local authority usually give the pupil premium funding to your school.</p> <p>Your school decides how to spend it to help you do what's in your personal education plan (PEP).</p>	Please visit: http://tinyurl.com/nzg6try
16 to 19 Bursary	A bursary of £1,200 a year, paid directly by your school, college or training provider.	Children in care and care leavers who are entering further education.	It can help pay for costs like equipment you might need for your course; lunch; and transport to and from your school or college.	<p>Speak to your student services or your tutor.</p> <p>You should also download 'The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund: your questions answered' here: https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund</p>
HE Bursary	A one-off payment of £2,000 which can either be paid in a lump sum or in instalments of various amounts by your local authority.	All care leavers undertaking a recognised course of higher education before their 25 th birthday.	<p>To pay for the potential costs of going to university.</p> <p>The bursary is completely separate from any other financial help you apply for i.e. grants and loans.</p>	Speak to your local authority if you think you are eligible.

	What is it?	Who is it for?	What can I use it for?	Where can I find out more?
Buttle UK Quality Mark	An award to further and higher education providers who demonstrate their commitment to young people in and leaving care.	Care leavers thinking about going to college or university but can't decide which one is right for them.	The Quality Mark means that a college or university is committed to looking out for you.	Please visit the Buttle UK website: http://tinyurl.com/7r7zgx5
The Who Cares? Trust's HE Handbook for care leavers	An online Guide about higher education (HE), covering a range of issues from applying to grants to accommodation.	For young people in care who are thinking of continuing or returning to study at a university (or college to study a higher education course).	To see exactly what universities and colleges across England and Scotland offer care-experienced students.	The handbook is available to download at: http://tinyurl.com/pc3tpfb
The Who Cares? Trust Town Bank	A one-stop-shop for guidance on banking and finance for children and young people	All looked after children and young people.	To help you manage your finances.	Please visit the bank here: http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/who-cares-town/

Finance and support

As a care leaver you should be getting financial assistance to help you on your road to independence. Do you know what you are entitled to?

	What is it?	Who is it for?	What can I use it for?	Where can I find out more?
Leaving Care Grant / Setting up home allowance	<p>A grant given to young people leaving care to help them set up home.</p> <p>The amount that the government has said is sufficient to set up a home is a minimum of £2,000.</p>	All care leavers.	To help buy the essentials you need when setting up home and moving to independence.	<p>Speak to your local authority about the amount they give.</p> <p>If your authority is not giving this much, perhaps you may want to raise it as an issue at your next CICC.</p>
Junior ISAs (JISA)	Long term, tax-free savings accounts for children.	Have I got a Junior ISA? If you don't know ask your carer, social worker and/or IRO.	You can only take out money from your Junior ISA when you turn 18.	<p>On The Share foundation website: www.sharefound.org.</p> <p>You should also ask your local authority whether an account has been opened in your name (If it has you should have been informed).</p>
Prince's Trust	Development Loans of up to £500.	You must be 16-25 and not at university yet – so this is only for prospective students.	To fund childcare costs to help you attend a college course, buy equipment, materials or tools, pay for travel costs to a work placement, training course or job. It will not fund university tuition fees.	For more information please visit: http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/

	What is it?	Who is it for?	What can I use it for?	Where can I find out more?
The Care Leavers' Foundation Trust Fund	A small grants scheme for care leavers aged up to 29.	Care leavers aged up to 29.	To help with personal development needs, crisis payments, education, training or employment needs.	You can download the application from the CLG website here: http://www.thecareleaversfoundation.org/Apply
From Care2Work	Partnership between local authorities' leaving care services and employers, coordinated by Catch22/NCAS to create work opportunities for care leavers.	All care leavers looking for employment opportunities.	To create work opportunities for care leavers.	Speak to your Leaving Care Personal Advisor or an Employability Worker about what's available in your area. More information is available on the Catch22 website: http://tinyurl.com/k3um2lm
National Citizenship Service (NCS)	NCS is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that enables you to take part in social action projects which will require time away from home.	It is open to all 16 & 17 year olds in England and Northern Ireland.	NCS helps you build your skills for work and life, while you take on new challenges and meet new friends	Just fill out a few details on their website www.ncsyes.co.uk/ and someone from your local NCS will get in contact with you.
Prince's Trust "Team" Programme	A 12-week personal development course.	Young people aged 16 – 25.	It offers work experience, qualifications, practical skills, community projects and a residential week.	You can find out more from the Princes Trust website: http://tinyurl.com/6b335oo
Independent Visitor	A volunteer who supports and lends a listening ear to a young person who	Young people in care who want someone to speak to and hang out	For companionship, support and friendship to help	Ask your social worker and IRO for an independent visitor if you want

What is it?	Who is it for?	What can I use it for?	Where can I find out more?
	has little or no contact with their family.	with.	build a young person's confidence. one? Find out more here: http://tinyurl.com/oq8sfxv

Advocacy

All the charities and organisations below are independent from the local authority and offer advocacy for young people.

	What is it?	Where can I find out more?
Voice	<p>Voice has trained staff called advocates who can help you if you are having problems in care or living away from home. They help with informing you about your rights and entitlements.</p> <p>Their advocates can make sure you understand what people are saying and help you say what you want to say and make sure people listen to you, especially at review meetings.</p>	<p>You can find out more here: http://www.voiceyp.org/</p> <p>Or call the Voice helpline on 0808 800 5792</p>
National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)	<p>NYAS is a UK charity providing socio-legal services. They offer information, advice, advocacy and legal representation to children, young people and vulnerable adults.</p> <p>NYAS provides a safety net for those people who have nowhere else to turn. They can help if you need support talking to social services or whether you just need some advice. They not only help with advocacy issues but they also deal with a range of services including independent visitors and family contact services.</p>	<p>You can find out more here: http://www.nyas.net/</p> <p>Or call the NYAS National helpline on 0808 808 1001</p>
A National Voice (ANV)	<p>ANV are a voice for a nation of young people who are in care or who have been in care. It's an organisation which is run by young people who are in care or who have been in Care.</p> <p>They work on a national level to help young people speak up and have an effect on decisions about the care system but they also help young people send out good messages about themselves and tackle negative stereotypes. They can also help young people from all over England to set up and join in local in-care/aftercare groups</p>	<p>Find out more here: http://www.anationalvoice.org/</p>
Child Line	<p>Child Line supports any young person that needs someone to speak and listen to.</p>	<p>Child Line is available 24/7 on 0800 1111</p>

Useful links for looked after children and care leavers

Organisation	You can find more information on	Contact Details
Department for Education	Care leavers entitlements	Web: http://tinyurl.com/nfw47ng
	Charter for Care Leavers	Web: http://tinyurl.com/b923r5q
	Foster Carers' Charter	Web: http://tinyurl.com/abll8nl
A National Voice (ANV)	National advocacy information	Web: http://www.anationalvoice.org/ General Enquiries: 0161 237 5577
Care Leavers Foundation	National Care Leavers Week; New Belongings Project; grants for children in care	Web: www.thecareleaversfoundation.org/ General Enquiries: 01678540598
Catch 22/NCAS	From Care2Work programme	Web (Catch22): http://www.catch-22.org.uk/FromCare2Work Web (NCAS): http://tinyurl.com/ntn5knt
Children Rights Director	Young people's guides; surveys; reports; your rights	Web: https://www.rights4me.org/
Department for Education	Looked after children's entitlements	Web: http://tinyurl.com/pcqeqch
Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's)	10 important facts to know about your IRO	Web: http://tinyurl.com/d4y78rr
National Citizen Service	Opportunities for 16 & 17year olds	Web: http://www.ncsyes.co.uk/
National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)	Advocacy information and support	Web: http://www.nyas.net/ Freephone: 0808 808 1001
Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)	General information, advice and useful links	Web: http://www.info4carekids.org.uk/
Voice	Advocacy information and support	Web: www.voiceyp.org/ Free phone: 0808 800 5792
Who Cares? Trust	APPG; Care Leavers Week; Bullying guide; HE Handbook; Town Bank; and, Listen Up! event	Web: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk General Enquiries: 0207 251 3117

Feedback

The Children and Families minister Edward Timpson is eager to hear from you about your experiences in care. Please let us know

- If your local authority has signed up the Charter for Care Leavers
- If your local authority is paying the recommended minimum amount of £2,000 for your leaving care grant/setting up home allowance
- How your Children in Care Council is making a difference in your council
- Anything you think it is important for the minister to know

You can now send your feedback to:

CareLeavers.FEEDBACK@education.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a particular issue or seek advice from the Department for Education, you should send your enquiry via the web-form at:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus>

in order for your correspondence to be properly tracked and placed within the Department.

Alternatively, you can telephone the Department for Education with your query on 0370 000 2288.



Department
for Education

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CareLeavers.FEEDBACK@education.gsi.gov.uk

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