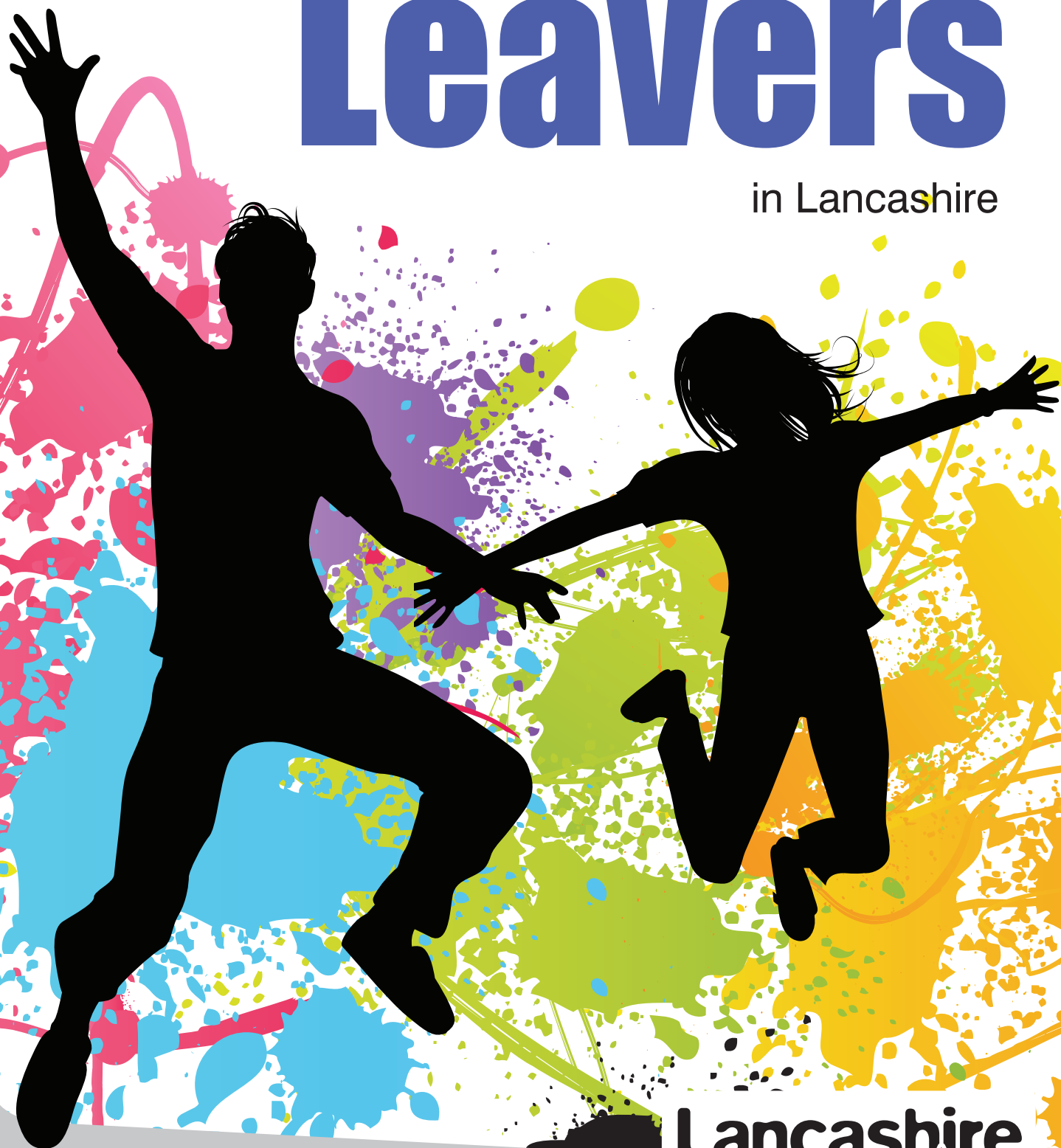


Information for

Care Leavers

in Lancashire



Lancashire

County
Council



Leaving Care Offer

In this guide you will find out about the support and services which will be available to you as a care leaver aged 16+ who is the responsibility of Lancashire County Council.

Who is a Care Leaver

A care leaver is a young person who has previously been in care. Your right to support as a care leaver will depend on when and how long you were in care. The Leaving Care Act has defined three new categories of Care Leavers - eligible, relevant and former relevant. See details below, your worker will help you to understand which category is relevant to you.

Eligible

A young person aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who are still looked after.

Relevant

A young person aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who have left care. This also includes young people who were detained (e.g. in a youth offending institution or hospital) when they turned 16 but immediately before that were looked after.

Former relevant

A Young person over 18 who was previously 'eligible' or 'relevant'. Local authorities support this group at least until age 21 or longer if in education or training.

Qualifying

Any young person under 21 (or 24 if in education or training) who ceases to be looked after or accommodated in a variety of other settings, or privately fostered, after the age of 16.



Statutory Responsibilities

The responsibilities that Local Authorities have towards care leavers are set out in the Statutory Guidance and Regulations called Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers.

These responsibilities Include:

- Keeping in touch with you
- Keeping your Pathway Plan under regular review
- Providing you with a Personal Advisor to offer advice and support
- Providing financial assistance to help with employment, training or education expenses where needed.
- Pay a higher education bursary if you are at university

When you turn 21 support will change depending on your circumstances.

Due to new laws from 2011 care leavers under the age of 25, who tell their Local Authority that they have returned, or want to return, to education or training are entitled to an assessment of your educational needs.

If at age 21 you are already in education or training then leaving care support continues until this ends but if at age 21 you are not in education support from leaving care will stop.

If you are entitled to on-going support you will be allocated a Personal Adviser, and a new pathway plan with focus on the support you will need to be able to meet your agreed education or training goals.





Our Approach!

At age 16 years an assessment of need will be completed and a pathway plan will be developed. You will also have an allocated worker to support you.

Your well-being, achievements, aspirations and hopes are important to us. We want to support you so you can establish yourself as an independent and successful member of the local community, we will work hard to ensure you have access to the opportunities, services and support you need to achieve your goals.

Services and Support

There are a wide range of services and support available for care leavers in Lancashire. Some of these services are provided directly by the council, and some are provided in partnership with other agencies. Services are available for all care leavers, but you might not need to access all of the services, this will depend on your own personal circumstances.

The types of services offered to care leavers include an allocated personal advisor, accommodation, education, employment and training, higher education, financial support and support with your health and well-being.

Social Work Support

- Allocated worker/Personal Advisor – care leavers have an allocated worker to provide and coordinate the support that you need.
- Keeping in Touch – your allocated worker will see you at least once every 2 months, and will keep in touch with you in between visits. The exact level of contact will be agreed between you and your allocated worker.
- Mobile Phone/text contact – all our 16+ staff have mobile phones so you can keep in touch via text.
- Pathway plan and reviews – your pathway plan will be reviewed regularly, at least every 6 months, and more often if needed or if you request it. Your pathway plan should be detailed, clear and relevant to your circumstances at the time.

Accommodation 18+

- Staying Put— young people in foster care are encouraged to “stay put” with their carers when they turn 18. This arrangement allows you to remain with your foster carer till the age of 21. Your allocated worker can provide you with the full details.
- Priority access to supported accommodation—if you do choose to move on from your placement, then care leavers have priority access to some supported accommodation projects in the County.
- Housing Allocations – following an assessment by the council care leavers are given priority access to accommodation managed by the 12 District Councils. When it is assessed that you are ready to live independently you will be supported to bid for suitable properties.

If you do not live in Lancashire we will support you to find suitable accommodation in the area where you do live.





Education, Employment, Training

Your allocated worker will work with you to ensure that you have all the information that you need about the different education, employment and training opportunities that are available.

We are able to provide numerous opportunities for care leavers that include work placements, apprenticeships and access to further education colleges.

The council also has its own Apprenticeships scheme that we can help you apply for and each local FE College has a designated tutor who has lead responsibility for care leavers. Colleges offer mentoring and pastoral support for care leavers too.

Care leavers may have priority access to the 16-19 year bursary paid to young people in education or training.

Also care leavers aged 21 or over are encouraged to come back to request support to access education or training opportunities. Lancashire has a policy in place that which information on how young people can get in touch, how we will work with you to develop a new education and training focussed pathway plan, and information about any financial support you may receive.

Higher Education

We work closely with our local Universities to provide opportunities for care leavers to experience University life.

Lancashire provides a financial package of support for care leavers going on to University.

For undergraduates we provide accommodation costs during vacations, a Higher Education bursary of £3500 on successful completion of the degree course and assistance to access other financial and welfare support through the University.

Also your personal advisor will support you throughout your course.

Health and Well-Being

Your allocated worker will help you to register with a Doctor and a Dentist, and will also be able to give you advice about healthy diets and healthy lifestyles.

We will provide you with information, advice and guidance on a wide range of health issues relevant to you.

Celebrating your Achievements

We will celebrate your achievements with you whatever these may be – personal, academic, sporting, arts or vocational. We hold an awards evening every year where we celebrate the successes and achievements of all our care leavers.

Financial Support

Care leavers will receive financial support from Lancashire County Council and other agencies including department of work and pensions and colleges. Please find guide to financial support you may receive from Lancashire County Council on pages 8 and 9. Your Personal Advisor will be able to explain this in more detail.

How to Complain

We hope that you as a care leaver are satisfied with the services and support that you receive, but if you have any concerns then you should raise these with your worker or their manager and we hope to resolve these quickly.

The Children's Rights Service is available to support you as a care leaver up to the age of 18.

For more information about services and support for care leavers in Lancashire please speak to your allocated worker.



Financial Entitlements/Support

The type of financial help you will receive from Lancashire's Children and Young Peoples Directorate will depend on whether you are an eligible, relevant, former relevant or a qualifying young person. This quick guide below will help you understand what you may receive. Your personal adviser will assist you in understanding the details and what other financial support maybe available depending on your circumstances.

Financial Support	Eligible	Relevant	Former Relevant	Qualifying
<u>Income Maintenance</u> (incorporates personal allowance and living allowance)	Yes	Yes	No	No
<u>Rent/Accommodation Costs</u>				
Supported accommodation	Yes	Yes	No	No
Semi-independent living	Yes	Yes	No	No
Independent living rent	Yes	Yes	No (in certain circumstances can be paid)	No
Deposit/Bond (one per young person)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Vacation Accommodation if in higher education	No	No	Yes	Yes



<u>Standard Grants (if living independent)</u>				
Christmas/Festival	Yes	Yes	No	No
Birthday	Yes (17th/18th Birthday)	Yes	21st Birthday only	No
<u>Education/Training</u>				
Transport to education/training	Yes – if costs cannot be funded by Bursary fund or training provider	Yes – if costs cannot be funded by Bursary fund or training provider	Yes – if costs cannot be funded by Bursary fund or training provider	No
Higher Education – under graduate degree, Bursary paid over the 3 years	Non Applicable	Non Applicable	Yes	No
Graduation Award – on successful completion of degree	Non Applicable	Non Applicable	Yes	No
<u>Driving</u>				
Driving licence	Yes if young person being provided with driving lessons	Yes if young person being provided with driving lessons or needed for ID	Yes if young person being provided with driving lessons or needed for ID	No
Driving lessons	Yes if linked to a future career or employment (Young person to contribute 10%/if in employment 50%)	Yes if linked to a future career or employment (Young person to contribute 10%/if in employment 50%)	Yes if linked to a future career or employment (Young person to contribute 10%/if in employment 50%)	No
<u>Clothing Allowance</u>				
Day to day/interview/work wear/maternity wear	Yes – twice a year if living independently	Yes – twice a year if living independently	Yes – interview clothing/work wear – based on need	Only in exceptional circumstances
<u>Setting up home</u>				
Starter pack (one off payment payable when first moving into independent accommodation)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Setting up home allowance (includes removal costs)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Discretionary Payments

You may also be able to receive additional funding for some of the following. This will be based on an assessment of need and your personal advisor will discuss any additional payments with you when you are completing your pathway plan.

1. Educational materials/equipment
2. Child care costs
3. Staying in touch with your family or significant others
4. Hobbies or leisure
5. Travel to education/training/employment
6. Emergency payments for food and heating in exceptional circumstances
7. Financial assistance whilst waiting for benefits to be processed providing requests/ requirements of the DWP have been followed
8. Leaving Care Allowance enhancement may be paid in certain circumstance i.e. completing voluntary work, training
9. Cold weather fuel payments in extreme conditions
10. Health costs

Useful References for Further advice

Official Government Website for the UK: www.directgov.co.uk

National Care Advisory Service: www.leavingcare.org/

The Prince's Trust:

www.princes-trust.org.uk/need_help/grants/development_awards.aspx

The Prince's Trust Development Award provides practical help - including financial support. It can also buy equipment for courses.

Educational Grants Advisory Service:

www.family-action.org.uk/section.aspx?id=1924

The Educational Grants Services (EGS) specialises in identifying funding from charitable trusts for educational purposes, and maintains a database of trusts and charities that assist students

Advice regarding Health costs: Health cost advice line: **0300 330 1343**


www.directgov.co.uk, www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/112t5.aspx

Office for the Children's Rights Director for England: www.rights4me.org

A National Voice: www.anationalvoice.org

An organisation run by and for young people who are in or leaving care





Care Leavers Association: www.careleavers.com
A user-led charity run by care leavers for care leavers

UCAS: <http://www.ucas.ac.uk/students/studentfinance/>

GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

Student Finance England: <http://www.studentfinanceengland.co.uk/>
Information about and how to apply for financial support for care leavers applying for university

Useful Contact Numbers

Lancashire County Council:

Social Care –Tel: **0300 123 6720**

Emergency Duty Team (emergency support from social care out of hours) Tel: **03001236722**

Welfare Rights – advice regarding benefits: Tel: **0300 123 6739**

Young Peoples Service – Advice and support confidential helpline – Tel: **0800 51 11 11**
Text **07786511111**

Service 6 – out of hours support service for care leavers – Tel: **0800 51 11 11**

Other Agencies that maybe able to support you:-

Shelter Housing Advice Helpline Tel: **0808 800 4444**

Citizens Advice Bureau Tel: **0345 404 0506**

Job Centre Plus:- New benefit Claims – Tel: **0800 055 6688**

Job Centre plus – universal Job Match Service -Tel: **0345 606 0234**

Health Support

Young Minds (support around emotional health) Tel: **0808 802 5544**

Brook (counselling service) Tel: **01942 483180**

NHS – health assessment support Tel:111

Advocacy

National Youth Advocacy – Tel: **0800 616101**

N-Compass – **0800 988 8376**

The Children's Society in Lancashire – Children's Rights Service (Advocacy and Independent Visitors): **01772 256900 or 0800 085 6324**



Other Useful Numbers You May Need:

You can use this space with your allocated worker to record other important numbers i.e. your allocated workers number and the teams duty number and also local numbers in your area that maybe able to support you:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Allocated worker number: _____

