**Individual Savings Accounts - ISAs – Operational Guidance- September 2020**

**Context**

The Share Foundation runs the Junior ISA scheme for children and young people in care (known as 'Looked After') on behalf of the Department for Education. The Share Foundation, or 'Sharefound' for short, has been running the Department for Education's Junior ISA scheme for looked after children and young people since 2012. An account is opened for every child and young person under 18 throughout the United Kingdom who has been in care continuously for at least one year and who doesn't already have a Child Trust Fund. Local authorities are required by Government to provide the Share Foundation with the necessary details, so an account is opened, drawing down £200/£250 from the Department for Education.

The money in a Junior ISA belongs to the young person, but they can't take the money out until they are 18. They can then decide what they want to do with it. If the young person chooses not to take the money out, the Junior ISA will automatically become a regular ISA.

Junior ISAs replaced Child Trust Funds, which ceased to receive state contributions in 2010. However, children – including those in care - born between 1st September 2002 and 2nd January 2011 are entitled to a CTF, which should already be open and active.

For more information on Child Trust Funds for children in care, including how to make payments into it, see [**GOV.UK - Child Trust Fund for local authorities**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-trust-fund-for-local-authorities).

Derbyshire's Management information team provides regular updates of children in care to Sharefound. Administration of ISAs such as holding a list of current recipients, uploading information to Mosaic and contacting relevant staff on receipt of information from Sharefound is undertaken by the CS BS HQ team. It can take up to 3 months from a young person turning 18 until they receive their money.

The Head of Service, Children in Care provision, is currently the named management contact for Sharefound.

More information including leaflets aimed at young people and foster carers can be found on [**The Share Foundation website**](https://sharefound.org/).

Further financial education resources are available at [**Young Money website**](https://www.young-money.org.uk/financial-education-children-care-and-care-leavers) or [**The Share Foundation website**](https://sharefound.org/). And on TriX Resources

Sharefound do run a Stepladder plus scheme which provides financial incentives for young people

**Operational guidance**

1. **Letters**

Sharefound (sql@sharefound) send child specific letters to the LA’s named management contact for Sharefound for several reasons:

1. For children no longer in our care – e.g. been adopted or discharged home - Via Egress

*Some of the young people previously in the care of your Local Authority may hold a Child Trust Fund account which was opened with a government contribution.*

*The Share Foundation DOES NOT look after the accounts for children who have a responsible adult.*

*A letter to the responsible adult for each child is attached, informing them how to find the Child Trust Fund account using HMRC’s web-based Child Trust Fund Location service.*

*Please can you pass these letters on to the responsible adult in each case.*

*No further letters will be issued in respect of these children so these letters must be acted upon.*

Action;

* CS BS HQ team retrieve letter from HoS mailbox, check Mosaic, upload and send to PR holder
* If unclear – seek advice from most recently involved professional
* If still unclear – seek advice from HoS
1. Other letters – turning 16, turning 18 and change of status ( CTF and ISA)

*e.g. At age 18 you become entitled to access the account and can choose to continue to keep the money in a savings account or to withdraw some or all of the balance.*

Action;

* BS find the young person on Mosaic then look at their allocated social worker ( or if not – most recently involved professional) - this may include linking with Adoption East Midlands where the child has been adopted
* BS will then upload the letter to Mosaic
* They email the allocated social worker to check they are still that young person’s social worker
* Once confirmed, they send the letter to the social worker to distribute and asking them to explain the letter to the young person.
* Occasionally the social worker will ask BS to arrange postage. They will confirm the current address of the young person with the social worker then arrange postage/ask Digital Print to post (during Covid). BS will ask the social worker if they would like a covering letter to be sent with this.
* When BS have confirmation that the letter has been distributed, they will upload this confirmation of receipt email to Mosaic
1. **Management information**

Management information team (via CS.Informationenquiries@derbyshire.gov.uk):

* Undertake secure information exchange to Sharefound re eligible children
* Update spreadsheets issued by Sharefound n.b. BS team to retrieve from HoS mailbox and forward to MIT
* Can advise on individual eligibility, though the social worker needs to check the website first
* Can link with Sharefound to track missing ISAs or CTFs
* Hold the updated valuation report sent by sue.jones@sharefound.org to HoS; retrieved and forwarded by BS who also keep a copy.
1. **Social workers and leaving care**
* Either do or support others to help young people to develop money management skills
* Use information available on Sharefound website
* Can enable young people to save into their ISA account e.g. their DLA – form to do so is available on Sharefound website
* Update financial part of pathway plan
* Confirm arrangements for the young person to receive and use their cheque

N.b. Once the young person is 18 the money is legally theirs so cannot be withheld other than if a Mental Capacity Assessment is undertaken. Where there may be lower level concerns such as risk of peer exploitation, the best option may be direct support to shop or use the money.

Mary Wilton

Head of Service

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