

Leaving Care: A guide for Young People

Table of Contents

Who is a Care Leaver?	3
Social Workers and Personal Advisors	4
Pathway Planning	4
Care Leaver Entitlements	6
Setting Up Home Allowance	7
Somewhere to Live	9
Further Education	10
Employment and Training	10
Support and somewhere to meet	11
Benefits	12
Financial Advice	12
Care Leavers Pledge	13
Children's Rights and Advocacy Service	14
Useful Contacts	16
Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions	17
Legislation, Guidance, Regulations	18

What is a Care Leaver?

The level of support young people receive from the Leaving Care Team (Pathways) depends on your legal status as a care leaver.

Eligible Young People

Are aged 16 or 17, have been Looked After for a period or periods totalling at least 13 weeks starting after their 14th birthday and are still in care. (This total does not include a series of pre-planned short-term placements of up to four weeks where the young person has returned to a parent.) There is a duty to support these young people up to the age of 18, wherever they are living.

Unaccompanied asylum seekers aged 16 and 17 are always deemed to be looked after until they are aged 18 and are therefore 'eligible' under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

Relevant child

They are aged 16 or 17 and are no longer Looked After, having previously been in the category of Eligible Young Person when in care. However, if after leaving care, a young person returns home for a period of 6 months or more to be cared for by a parent and the return home has been formally agreed as successful, he or she will no longer be a "Relevant Young Person".

A young person is also "Relevant" if, having been in care for three months or more, he or she is then detained after their 16th birthday either in a hospital, remand centre, young offenders' institution or secure training centre. There is a duty to support Relevant Young People up to the age of 18, wherever they are living.

Former Relevant

They are aged 18 to 21 (or up to 25 if in full-time further or higher education), and have left care having been previously either "Eligible", "Relevant" or both. There is a duty to consider the need to support these young people wherever they are living.

Qualifying

They are over the age of 16 and under the age of 21, (or up to 24 if in full-time further or higher education), and have been Looked After or, if disabled, have been Privately

Fostered after reaching 16, but do not qualify as Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant. They may receive support, advice and assistance wherever they are living. They may also qualify if they are the subject of a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and were Looked After immediately before the SGO was made

Social Workers and Personal Advisors

As an Eligible Young Person, you will continue to work with your social worker from the Children Looked After team. When you are 17 and half you will be given a pathway Advisor who will work with you and your social worker to prepare, you for the next stage in your journey to adulthood. When you turn 18 you will be fully welcomed by the pathways team. Your pathways advisor will become the person who supports your and coordinates your pathway plan. Here at pathways, we can continuing supporting you until the age of 25 if that is something you want or need.

Pathway Planning

All young people who are Looked After who are 16 and over and Care Leavers in Calderdale have a Pathway Plan. Your Pathway Plan will replace your Care Plan from the age of 16. Your Pathway Plan is about your needs and what we all need to do to ensure your successful transition to adult life.

How will I be involved?

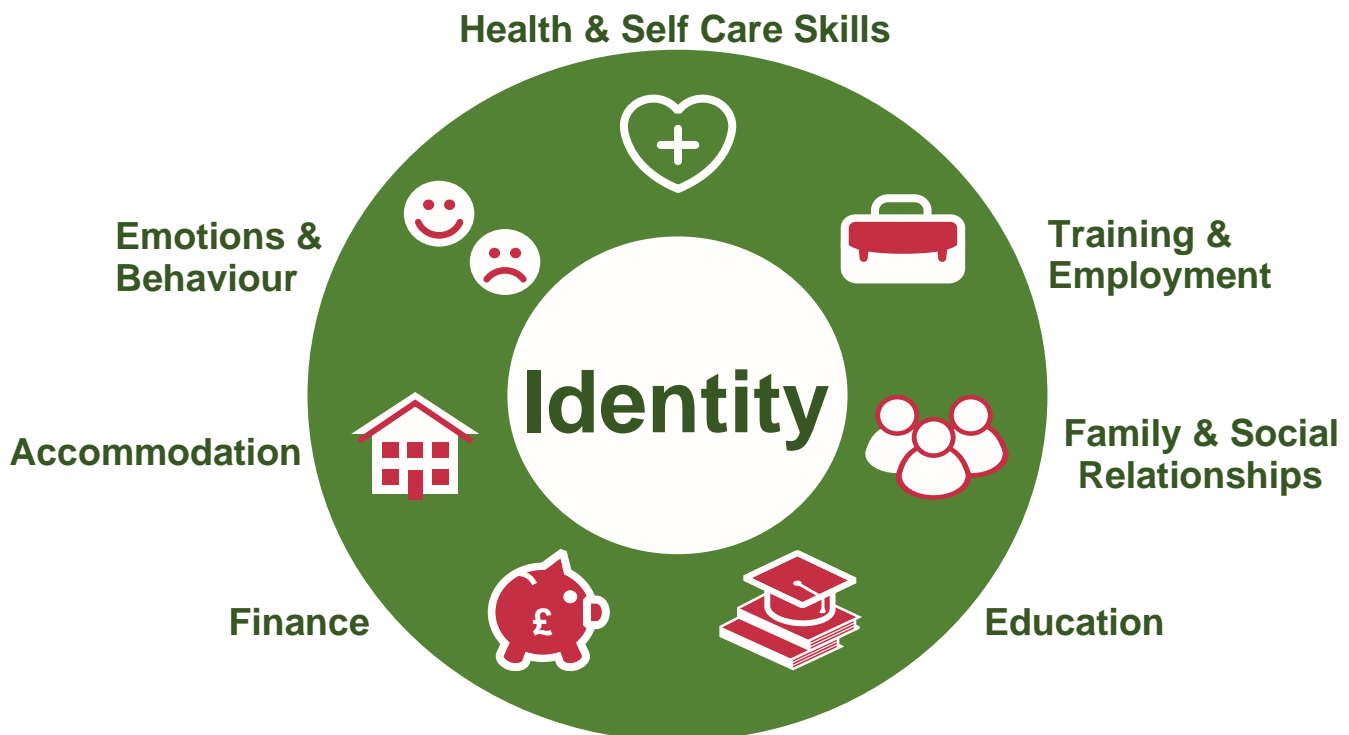
For your Pathway Plan to be effective it will be based on an up to date needs assessment; setting out the support that will be offered to you to achieve your aspirations. We aim to fully involve you in the development of your Plan and you will be offered support to complete a Review Form for any updates.

Who else will be involved?

With your agreement, we will seek the views of our partner agencies when completing your Pathway Plan. This may include Housing, Education, Training and Employment providers, Health Services, The Youth Offending Service and Youth Support Services to ensure we all work together to provide you with clear and consistent advice and support. We will also involve parents if it is appropriate.

What will be included in my pathway plan?

The following diagram sets out some of the areas covered in your plan:



When will my plan be completed?

Your initial Pathway Plan will be completed before you are 16 years and 3 months old.

What about changes to my plan?

Your Pathway plan will then be updated and reviewed within every 6 months or within 28 working days of any significant change to your plan such as a change of address.

As an Eligible Young Person or Relevant Care Leaver your Pathway Plan will be written and available at your statutory review chaired by your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) - a review must take place before making a decision to confirm that a young person is ready to leave care.

For young people over 18, the review will be led by your Pathway Adviser and checked by their Practice Manager.

Care Leaver Entitlements

A copy of the Financial Policy is available on request from your Pathway Adviser. Our finance policy is rather big and covers all the possible scenarios that might come up in relation to money. The policy also lays out what you are entitled to at different ages. You can request a full copy of this, but your Pathway Advisor will know the policy well and be experienced in getting the information you need from it at different points in your journey with our team.

The finance policy covers all finance related to your transition to adulthood, but some main areas of support include;

- Further education support
- Higher education support
- Apprenticeship support
- Deposits for a house
- Setting up home allowance
- Festival allowances
- Birthday payments
- Tenancy top ups
- Benefit gap payments.
- UASC support
- Custody support
- Emergency and crisis support
- Driving lessons

Our finance policy also offers advice on other sources of funding that may be available to you from other places such as universities or charities.

Setting Up Home Allowance

When you move set up your first home you can access something called a setting up home allowance. This covers all the items you need to purchase for your first place of your own. Currently this allowance is £3000 (£2000 if you accessed the grant before 1st April 2023) and your Pathway Advisor will help you access this as and when you need it. You don't need to spend it all at once and you can access this fund up to the age of 25.

What is included in the Setting Up Home Allowance?

Setting up Home Allowance Goods/Services Spending Guide		
Services	Approximate Cost	Guide
First TV Licence		First annual TV Licence paid by CMBC Subsequent TV Licence to paid for by young person
Contents Insurance		To support first year of young person in independent living (Pathways Advisor to check level of cover) Please check with social landlords e.g., https://www.togetherhousing.co.uk/do-you-have-contents-insurance
Broadband Connection and first year cost		Comparison/Quotes from providers should be sought and agreed with Pathways Advisor/Service Manager
Health & Safety Check		Depending on type of tenancy, young people should be encouraged to book a home safety check through the fire service who can provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X 2 smoke detectors • X 1 carbon monoxide detector • Door security chain • Chubb lock • Fire blanket • First aid kit
Removal & Transport Costs		Comparison/Quotes from providers should be sought and agreed with Pathways Advisor/Service Manager
Cooker and Washing Machine Connection		Comparison/Quotes from providers should be sought and agreed with Pathways Advisor/Service Manager
<p><i>The items below should be purchased considering 'best value' for money and it is recommended that young people are supported to 'shop around'. Use companies such as Argos or Appliance World as a benchmark for competitive pricing.</i></p>		
Goods		

Living Room		
Sofa		
TV		
Coffee Table		
Curtains/Blind		
Curtain Poles		
Lamp		
Cushions		
Rug		
Goods Bedroom		
Bed Frame and Mattress		
Duvet Set		
Lamp		
Wardrobe		
Chest of Drawers		
Curtains/Blind		
Curtain Pole		
Goods Kitchen		
Cooker		
Washer		
Fridge/Freezer		
Kettle & Toaster Set		
Pan Set		
Oven trays/Tins		
Dinner Service (plates, dishes, cups)		
Bin & Washing up Set (Bowl, drainer)		
Iron		
Ironing Board		
Washing Maiden		
Curtains/Blind		
Goods Bathroom		
Laundry Basket		
Bathmat		
Towels		
Curtains/Blind		

Somewhere to Live

How can you help me find somewhere to live?

If you are living with Foster Carers and want to remain living with them after you are 18 you can ask your Social Worker or Pathway Advisor to request that this is considered by Calderdale Council and made into a “Staying Put” arrangement.

“Staying Put” arrangements could also be continued if you are attending Full Time Higher Education to ensure you have somewhere to stay during holidays.

When you are 17 and 6 months you will be referred to young person housing team and you will meet with a young person housing worker to look at your options for when you turn 18. As part of your preparation for adult life you will be supported to complete a key choice Housing Application and/or to secure private rented accommodation in line with your wishes and your Pathway Plan. We will offer you support to make a housing benefit claim if you are on a low income or not in work.

Care leavers can now claim the one-bedroom higher rate housing allowance rate. Your PA will help you to make this claim and explain the process to you.

Your Pathways Advisor and housing worker will help you to understand benefit payments and navigate the complicated processes around accessing the right finances to pay your rent and support your transition into living in your own place. There is lots to think about at this point in your journey so it's important to use the support that's around you and work closely with your Pathway Advisor. They are really experienced and will be there to guide you through everything.

Further Education

How can you support me with my further education?

As an Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant Care Leaver you may be able to get financial support of £1200 a year direct from your School, Further Education College or Learning Provider. The 16-19 bursary is guaranteed for care leavers aged 16-19, and discretionary learner support can support older students. If you are over 19 you can access some financial support from Pathways. The Pathways Team will confirm your Care Leaver status with your Education or Training provider, but you may wish to talk to your School, College or learning provider to find out more.

Employment and Training

A significant concern raised by young people leaving care is that the focus is on preparing them for “a life in benefits” when it should focus on supporting you to achieve your goals and aspirations.

Our priority is to support you into some form of long-term employment and training .

We will support you to access education and training opportunities with local colleges, training providers. We can also support you to access employment through our partnership with [C & K Careers](#), and the Calderdale Council's [Employment Hub](#).

Calderdale Council runs an Apprenticeship scheme specifically for young people who are supported by the Pathway Service. Your Social Worker or Pathway Advisor will discuss these opportunities with you. The Council operate a **'guaranteed interview'** for care experienced young people as the Council are committed to supporting you as a corporate parent to reach your potential.

Some additional financial support may be available for training courses and apprenticeships which your Social Worker or Pathway Advisor will discuss with you.

Your Pathway Advisor will be there to connect you up with the people that can help you to find education, training or employment.

Support and somewhere to meet

The Orange Box Young Peoples Centre

The Pathways Service are based at the Orange Box Young People's Centre. This building has many other services for young people based in it. It has pool tables, games, a café, a climbing wall, and skate park, all accessible to you. The orange box is a safe space with easy access to get support and advice when you need it. There are a number of services based in the building so you can access support when you need it. This includes Youth Justice Service, Branching Out (Substance Misuse Service), DWP drop-in, Health drop-in, Employment Hub, CK careers and Project Challenge, as well as youth work teams are all based in the same building. We also have someone available Monday to Friday 10-4 if you need to drop in and talk with us. Check out the orange box here [Orange Box young people's centre, Halifax, Calderdale \(orangeboxhalifax.org\)](http://orangeboxhalifax.org)

Do you want to share your experience and help improve the services for young people/ young adults?



UnO is a group created by young people for young people who are Looked After or Care Leavers. This group has been created to enable young people the opportunity to 'have their say' on the services provided by the Local Authority and help make the right changes, meet other young people, and have a space to relax.

The group meets once a month on a Monday evening, 6pm-8pm; we are currently based at Youth Works in the Orange Box.

We also have a range of organised events, activities and get togethers throughout the year that we will let you know about.

Activities and events

Walk and Talk: We are now running a regular Walk and talk group, where we go out into the local countryside to get a bit of exercise, talk, and take a break from the hustle and bustle of everyday normal activities. It's also a time to get to know us as a team and meet other care leavers.

Care Leavers Week: During Care Leavers week each year we invite care leavers to come and help us plan events that celebrate care leavers and raise awareness of issues that are important to you.

Movie and Pizza Nights: We have regular movie nights throughout the course of the year which care leavers are encouraged to attend. These sessions take place at the Orange Box, and it is an opportunity for you to connect with other care leavers and share your experiences of the service whilst relaxing and enjoying a movie and some food.

5 Aside Football: We have recently started a monthly 5 aside football team. If you are a keen footballer or want to improve your fitness then just as your Pathway Adviser and they will support you to attend the session.

Benefits

What if I need to claim benefits?

On your 18th Birthday, your Pathway Advisor will be available to support you to make a claim for Universal Credit. You can apply online at <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim> or by phoning: Tel: 0800 328 5644 or ask at your Job Centre to make a paper claim. You can see what you might be entitled to by looking on the [Government Benefits website](#)

If you are in full time further education, your Pathway Advisor will assist you to claim Income Support. You will need to be able to provide confirmation of your attendance from your education provider.

If you are ill or disabled, your Social Worker or Pathway Advisor will be able to support you to make a claim for Employment and Support Allowance and/or Personal Independence Payment. You can find out more by calling the Benefit Enquiry Line on Tel: 0800 88 22 00

If you are pregnant or a parent your Pathway Advisor will be able to support you to claim Income Support, Maternity Allowance (dependent on previous employment), Healthy Start Vouchers, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits.

Financial Advice

What if I still need financial advice and assistance?

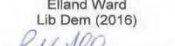
As a Former Relevant Care Leaver you can ask the Pathways Service for financial help in emergencies. In very exceptional circumstances this will include small amounts of cash for specific items.

You can access further advice and assistance by requesting an appointment at [Calderdale CAB \(Citizen's Advice Bureau\)](#).

You can visit www.calderdalecab.org.uk for more information.

Care Leavers Pledge

Calderdale Council has made a commitment to supporting young people and all elected Councillors have signed the pledge.

<p> Simon Young Luddendenfoot Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Jill Smith-Moorhouse Luddendenfoot Ward Conservative (2018)</p> <p> Nicole May Luddendenfoot Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Peter Caffrey Northowram & Shelf Ward Conservative (2016)</p> <p> Stephen Baines MBE Northowram & Shelf Ward Conservative (2018)</p> <p> Roger Taylor Northowram & Shelf Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Ann Martin Brighouse Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Howard Blagbrough Brighouse Ward Conservative (2018)</p> <p> Scott Benton Brighouse Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Malcolm James Greetland & Stainland Ward Lib Dem (2016)</p> <p> Marilyn Greenwood Greetland & Stainland Ward Lib Dem (2018)</p> <p> Chris Pearson Greetland & Stainland Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Anne Collins Ovenden Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Helen Rivron Ovenden Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Bryan Smith Ovenden Ward Labour (2019)</p> <p> Adam Wilkinson Sowerby Bridge Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Martin Burton Warley Ward Labour (2016)</p>	<p> Geraldine Carter Ryburn Ward Conservative (2016)</p> <p> Robert Holden Ryburn Ward Conservative (2018)</p> <p> Robert Thornber Ryburn Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Steve Sweetley Todmorden Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Susan Press Todmorden Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Jayne Booth Todmorden Ward Labour (2019)</p> <p> Janet Batty Calder Ward Lib Dem (2016)</p> <p> Dot Foster Sowerby Bridge Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Michelle Foster Warley Ward Labour (2018)</p>	<p> Ali Miles Calder Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Dave Young Calder Ward Labour (2019)</p> <p> Graham Hall Hipperholme & Lightcliffe Ward Conservative (2016)</p> <p> Colin Raistrick Hipperholme & Lightcliffe Ward Independent (2018)</p> <p> David Kirton Hipperholme & Lightcliffe Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Jenny Lynn Park Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Ferman Ali Park Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Mike Payne Sowerby Bridge Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> James Baker Warley Ward Lib Dem (2019)</p>	<p> Faisal Shoukat Park Ward Labour (2019)</p> <p> John Hardy Skircoat Ward Conservative (2016)</p> <p> Andrew Tagg Skircoat Ward Conservative (2018)</p> <p> Marcus Thompson Skircoat Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Megan Swift Town Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Bob Metcalfe Town Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Tim Swift Town Ward Labour (2019)</p> <p> Patricia Allen Elland Ward Lib Dem (2016)</p> <p> Angie Gallagher Elland Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> John Ford Elland Ward Conservative (2019)</p> <p> Lisa Lambert Illingworth & Mixenden Ward Labour (2016)</p> <p> Daniel Sutherland Illingworth & Mixenden Ward Labour (2018)</p> <p> Barry Collins Illingworth & Mixenden Ward Labour (2019)</p> <p> Ann McAllister Rastrick Ward Conservative (2016)</p> <p> Christine Beal Rastrick Ward Conservative (2018)</p> <p> Chris Piliari (JP) Rastrick Ward Conservative (2019)</p>
--	--	--	--



Children's Rights and Advocacy Service

The Children's Rights, Advocacy & Independent Visitor Service is for children and young people who are Looked After by Calderdale Council and also Care Leavers, aged 0-25years.

The service is part of the Calderdale Councils Young People's Service but it is not part of Calderdale Children's Care Service.

Children's Rights and Advocacy

We can

- Make sure you know what your rights are
- Tell you about other services that might be able to help you
- Help you sort out disagreements
- Help with something that you are unhappy about

If you feel that someone is making decisions about you without listening to what you have to say, an advocate can:

- Help your voice be heard
- Make sure that you are being treated fairly
- Support you in meetings
- Support you to have your say about things that affect you
- Help you understand what is happening and why
- Help you make a complaint
- Help you to speak out for yourself

Confidentiality

Everything you tell us will be kept confidential. The only time we will pass on anything you say is:

- If you ask us to
- If we think that you or another person is at risk
- If we are concerned that a crime may be committed

Accessibility

Children's Rights Advocacy & Independent Visitor Service can be contacted Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm.

Visits / appointments can take place outside of these times by prior arrangement.

How to contact us:

Angela Gill, Sarah Maligranda, Sarah Philips

Telephone: 07712 305060 or 07712 305059 or 07541 61271501422
288253

CRAAdmin@calderdale.gov.uk

Orange Box

Useful Contacts

Pathway Service

Calderdale Pathways (Leaving Care) Service
Orange Box Young People's Centre
1 Blackledge
Halifax
HX1 1AF
Tel: 07774123270
Team Email: pathwayservice@calderdale.gov.uk

Customer First

Email: customerfirst@calderdale.gov.uk
Tel: 0845 245 6000

Out of Hours Service: (EDT) Tel: (emergencies only) 01422 288001

Housing:

Young People's Housing Team:
Tel: 07766465470
Housing Options Service
Email: housingoptions@calderdale.gov.uk
Tel: 01422 392460

Universal Credit Online Application:

<https://www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start> Tel: 0800 328 5644

Citizens Advice Bureau:

<http://www.calderdalecab.org.uk>
Shelter: www.shelter.org.uk Tel: 03445 152315

Refugee Action:

Tel: 0800 917 2719 (free from landlines)
Normal landline rate
Tel: 0161 441 4141

General Enquiries:

23-37 Edge Street, Manchester, M4 1HW Client Advice
Tel: 0161 831 5420

Compliments, Complaints, and suggestions

We need to know what you think about our services so that we can improve them. Your comments, good or bad, will help us to know how to change things for the better.

What if I want to make a complaint?

If you have got a problem with Children's Social Care Services or if you are unhappy about something that is happening to you, this can usually be sorted out by speaking to someone you trust like your Social Worker, Pathway Advisor, Key Worker or Foster Carer.

But if they cannot put things right for you, then you can make a complaint in one of the following ways: You can find a feedback form online on the [Council website](#). On request a complaints form can be sent to you. Complaints forms can also be found at Council offices including The Orange Box and Customer First.

You can also complete a feedback form online and return it by email, post or take it to:

Email: complaintsandcompliments@calderdale.gov.uk

Tel: 01422 288001

Or write to us at:

Social Care Complaints Manager

Calderdale Council - Complaints and Compliments Team

Freepost RTGL-EXHR-SRLH

Halifax Customer First 1st

Floor, 19 Horton Street Halifax HX1 1QE.

Legislation, Guidance, Regulations

Children Act Guidance and Regulations Vol. 3 Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers including the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 revised January 2015

Care Leavers Charter DfE 2012

Staying Put Guidance DfE, DWP and HMRC 2013

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010

The Children Act 1989

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

The Children Act 2004

The Children (Leaving Care) (England) Regulations 2001

National Standards for Leaving Care March 2004

Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children July 2014

The Children and Social care Act 2017