

If the local authority does not agree with your decision to remove your child from care, your child's social worker may feel they need to take emergency action to safeguard your child by involving the police or applying for an emergency protection order from the court.



This does not affect your right to withdraw your consent to the s.20 agreement.



If your child is 16 or 17 years old, your child is able to consent to being accommodated by the local authority without your permission. Your child will also be able to leave the accommodation without your consent.

### Contact

You can contact the social worker assigned to your child:

Name:.....  
(social worker)

Tel:.....

or

**Contact Care Connect**

Tel: **01934 426 300**

Email:

**care.connect@n-somerset.gov.uk**

This document can be made available in a range of languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats.




This leaflet is intended to be helpful guidance but is not intended to replace independent legal advice. You have a right to seek legal advice about the matters raised in it if you wish.

## What does 'section 20' mean?


Your rights as a parent



Section 20 accommodation (under the Children Act 1989) is very different to your child being removed from your care against your will under a care order.




The local authority does not share parental responsibility for your child if you have agreed that your child should be in foster care under a section 20 agreement.




You retain all your legal rights if your child is accommodated under section 20 and will still make all the decisions in relation to your child. The day to day responsibility for the care of your child will pass to their foster carer.


Under section 20(8) any person who has parental responsibility is entitled to withdraw their consent to the S.20 agreement at any time.




This means you can remove your child from local authority accommodation at any time unless there are objections to this by someone who has a child arrangements order to say the child lives with him or her, a special guardianship order or has care of the child by a special order of the High Court.



If you sign a section 20 agreement you are consenting to your child living in local authority foster care (this can either be with a local authority foster parent or with a family member/friend if approved by the local authority).



Section 20 is based on co-operative working between the local authority, the young person and you because the court is not forcing your child to be looked after.



It is very important that you understand what the section 20 agreement means before you agree to sign it. You have the right to seek legal advice if you wish.