

# **Charter for Care Leavers**

# Appendix 1

# Leaving Care Services

Local authorities have a legal duty to support young people making the transition from care to adulthood. There are leaving care services in all English local authorities but they are structured differently and known by different names.

Harrow' Leaving care Team falls within Children's Services, and the current structure means that all care leavers aged 16-18 are held by the Children Looked After Team and once they turn 18 they are transferred to the Leaving Care Team. However joint working starts when the young person turns 17 and a half.

The duties that local authorities have towards their care leavers are set out in the statutory guidance and regulations in Childrens Act 1989 amended by Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. This was replaced in April 2011 by Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers.

## What do leaving care teams do?

Like good parents, local authorities are responsible for giving advice, support and also financial assistance to young people leaving care.
The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 introduced the personal adviser role to support care leavers. Personal advisers develop Pathways Plans with care leavers to meet their support needs and help them prepare for independent living. All the current Social Worker's in the team carry out the Personal Advisor role as well as the social worker role too.

## Introduction and purpose of the Charter

A Charter is a set of principles and promises. This Charter sets out promises care leavers want the central and local government to make. Promises and principles help in decision making and do not replace laws; they give guidance to show how laws are designed to be interpreted.

The key principles in this Charter will remain constant through any changes in Legislation, Regulation and Guidance. Care leavers urge local authorities to use these principles when they make decisions about young peoples lives. The Charter for Care Leavers is designed to raise expectation, aspiration and understanding of what care leavers need and what the government and local authorities should do to be good Corporate Parents.

Harrow council has a responsibility to children and young people in its care and to its care leavers. This is represented by the term 'Corporate Parenting'. Harrow Council is the 'Corporate Parent' for all children and young people in its care and its care leavers, Because of this responsibility, Harrow Council make the commitments below:

#### We Promise:

- To respect and honour your identity
- To believe in you
- To listen to you
- To inform you
- To support you
- To find you a home
- To be a lifelong champion

## <u>Criteria</u>

The criteria of case transfer to the Leaving Care Team is the same as the "Eligibility Criteria" set out in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The Act divides young people Looked After into four main categories.

Category	Definition
Eligible	Young People aged 16 and 17 who were looked after for at least 13 weeks (continuous or in aggregate) since the age of 14 and are still looked after.
Relevant	Young People aged 16 and 17 who were eligible but have since ceased to be Looked After.
Former Relevant	Young People aged 18 to 21 (25 if in full time education) who have been either Eligible or Relevant.
Qualifying Young People	Young People aged 16 to 21 who were Looked After for any period of time after reaching 16 but before reaching 18.

## Pathway Planning

The initial Pathway Plan should be completed 3 months before the young person's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and then reviewed every 6 months. The pathway plan is an intricate part of formalizing and assessing the young persons need encouraging forward planning for services. The pathway plan should cover the following main areas:

- What the young person would like to do with their life
- What job they would like to do
- What training/education they may need
- What financial help they may need to achieve their ambitions
- Where the young person wants to live
- The young persons health needs
- Where the young person may want to work
- Who is around to support the young person
- Other things that may be important to the young person
- Practical life skills
- Specific support needs e.g. counseling
- Contingency plans for support if independent living breaks down

All young people will have a Pathway Plan in place which will be reviewed 6 monthly by the social worker, young person and all relevant people involved in the young persons life. This will include carers, health, education, housing and YOT / probation.

# Leaving Care Charter – summary of entitlements

	d After Children Aged 14+	The independent skills folder started at the 14. Regular monitoring I SW's and consumer your people are not independent the age of 1	to be e age of oy CLA arers to ng ready to t living at					
Looked	Two weeks additional subsistence prior to Summer Term Break: Paid to help find employment training positive activities	Travel and Lunch Money : Paid to those attending independent living courses	Education: Lunch money term time £3.00 per day to those attending Collage	Travel Costs to Education: Free Oyster cards provided via the GLA education programme, covers Zones 1 to 6. Additional £4.50 provided by LCT if college outside Zone 6	Education Equipment, Books and Stationery: Funded by UASC and CLA teams	Joint working with LCT worker at 17.5 Ensuring the life skills folder is completed. Joint assessment by LCT and CLA worker about readiness for independence before nomination.	Γ	
After Children and Leaving Care Aged 16-17	Education Attainment: £50 for each GCSE. £25 for year long course completed or passed. £10 for every education course attended for 6 x weeks or more. 90%+ attendance required	Gym membership (Healthy Living): 100% costs special pricing arrangement in place. Regular attendance required.	Provisional Driving Licence: These payments are dependent being in Education Employment or Training for one year with 90% attendance. License and Theory Test funded. No funding for subsequent tests available.	<b>Travel costs:</b> Funded up to 6 x year to visit family, carers or significant others funding available if outside Zone 6	Additional Personal Development: Such as music lessons, courses. Funding available must form part of Pathway Plan	Winter Clothing Allowance: • Winter clothing allowance £150.00 • Summer Clothing Allowance £100 • Birthday Allowance £147 • Festival Allowance £147.00	се	

	Accommodation		Health		<u>Leisure</u>			
		<u>Finance</u>			Young people			
	Only those in full-		Young		wanting			
	time higher	All young	people that	ETE	financial support	Independent Living	Contact	Case Closure
	education will	people in	require		<u>with a</u>			
	continue to	higher	support with	Young people	sport, hobby or	Housing:	All young people	Young people will
	receive a service	education (not	health,	will be	leisure	LOCATA nomination when	in higher	stop receiving a
	from Leaving	including	sexual	supported with	activity will need to	Young are assessed as	education will be	service at the age
	Care Services	University) will	health,	full-time higher	discuss this with	ready to live	supported with	of 25 whether they
	post 21.	be give a	mental	education until	their	independently. Support	travel costs to see	have completed
		weekly	health,	the age of 25.	social worker first.	from Metropolitan Support	their family six	their course or not.
	Those in	supplement	disabilities			Trust for the first six	times a year.	
	supported	from the	and drug	Young people		months of the new	-	If the young person
	lodgings may	Leaving Care	and alcohol	must already be		tenancy. Support with		completes their
	remain here until	Team and their	will be	attending a		benefits claims. Early		course sooner their
	they have	accommodation	referred to	course at the		identification of rent		case will be closed
	completed their	costs paid for	the	age of 21 years.		arrears to avoid eviction		one month after
	course or until	them.	appropriate			notice by liaising with the		their completion
	their 25th		services	Young people		Housing benefits officer.		date.
	Birthday	Those in higher		wishing to				
	(whichever	education (not	YP that	return to higher		Leaving Care Grant:		
	comes first).	including	become	education post		Recommended		
		university)	pregnant	21 after their		Independent Living Grant		
Care	Those in semi-	must apply for	may be	case has		to increase from £1500 to		
leavers	independence will	the college	referred for	already been		£2000 for all young people		
	be expected to	bursary.	a pre-birth	closed must be		ready to move to		
Aged	move to hall of		assessment	assessed by a		independent living		
21+	residence or	Those in	and may	Leaving Care				
	private shared	university must	have to be	Worker first.		Those young people in		
	accommodation.	apply for a	placed in an			full-time college will		
		student loan to	assessment	Young people		receive a weekly		
	Those in their	pay for their	unit if there	may request		supplement from Leaving		
	own tenancy will	tuition fees and	are	support with		Care but must apply		
	have to commute	accommodation	concerns.	books and		Housing Benefit and		
	and will need to	costs. LCT will		college /		Council Tax exemption		
	use their student	pay for		university		forms.		
	load to pay their	accommodation		equipment but				
	rent.	during the term		must be		Those young people in		
		breaks.		discussed with		university that are		
	Those living in			their social		commuting will need to		
	halls of residence	Young people		worker first.		use their student loan to		
	will be supported	in their 1st year				pay their rent and must		
	<u>with</u>	of University		.Young people		complete a council tax		
	accommodation	will receive a		attending		exemption form.		
	during the term	one off bursary		college will				
	holidays if	of £2000.		receive £3 a day		All young people will be		
	required.			for lunch and		responsible for paying all		
				support with		their utility bills.		
				travel costs to				
				college, a				
				maximum of				

		£18.80 a week. Those in university will not receive lunch or travel and must use		
		<u>their student</u> loan.		

	Accommodation	<u>Finance</u>	<u>Health</u>	ETE	Leisure	Independent Living	<u>Contact</u>	Case Closure
Care leavers \ged 21+	Only those in full- time higher education will continue to receive a service from Leaving Care Services post 21.Those in 	All young people in higher education (not including University) will be give a weekly supplement from the Leaving Care Team and their accommodation costs paid for them. Those in higher education (not including university) must apply for the college bursary. Those in university must apply for a student loan to pay for their tuition fees and accommodation costs. LCT will pay for accommodation during the term breaks. Young people in their 1 <sup>st</sup> year of University will receive a one off bursary of £2000.	Young people that require support with health, sexual health, mental health, mental health, disabilities and drug and alcohol will be referred to the appropriate services YP that become pregnant may be referred for a pre-birth assessment and may have to be placed in an assessment unit if there are concerns.	Young people will be supported with full-time higher education until the age of 25. Young people must already be attending a course at the age of 21 years. Young people wishing to return to higher education post 21 after their case has already been closed must be assessed by a Leaving Care Worker first. Young people may request support with books and	Young people wanting financial support with a sport, hobby or leisure activity will need to discuss this with their social worker first.	Housing: LOCATA nomination when Young are assessed as ready to live independently. Support from Metropolitan Support Trust for the first six months of the new tenancy. Support with benefits claims. Early identification of rent arrears to avoid eviction notice by liaising with the Housing benefits officer. Leaving Care Grant: Recommended Independent Living Grant to increase from £1500 to £2000 for all young people ready to move to independent living	All young people in higher education will be supported with travel costs to see their family six times a year.	Young people will stop receiving a service at the age of 25 whether they have completed their course or not. If the young person completes their course sooner their case will be closed one month after their completion date.

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to commute and	college /	in full-time college	
will need to use	university	will receive a weekly	
their student load	equipment but	supplement from	
to pay their rent.	must be	Leaving Care but	
	discussed with	must apply	
Those living in	their social	Housing Benefit and	
halls of residence	worker first.	Council Tax	
will be supported		exemption forms.	
with	.Young people		
accommodation	attending college	Those young people	
during the term	will receive £3 a	in university that are	
holidays if	day for lunch	commuting will need	
required.	and support with	to use their student	
	travel costs to	loan to pay their rent	
	college, a	and must complete a	
	maximum of	council tax	
	£18.80 a week.	exemption form.	
	210.00 a week.	exemption form.	
	Those in	All young people will	
	university will not	be responsible for	
	receive lunch or	paying all their utility	
	travel and must	bills.	
	use their student	DIIIS.	
	loan.		

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# **Support Services**

Complaints - 0800 136 104 / 020 8424 1503

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) - 020 8424 0999

Advocacy Services - 020 8868 5629

Independent Visitors – Speak to your social worker

Mentoring - Speak to your social worker

Citizens Advice Bureau - 0844 826 9711

DSS - 0845 604 3719

Housing Benefit / Council Tax- 020 8901 2610

Counselling Services – GP / or speak to your social worker

Drug and Alcohol Services - Compass 0208 861 2787 / Each 020 8861 3884

Mental Health Services - Honeypot Lane 020 8951 3770/ Atkins House 020 8422 9443 / Mind 020 8426 0929

Sexual Health Services – Caryl Thomas Clinic 020 8863 9004 / NPH (GUM clinic) 020 8869 3142