



**LOCAL OFFER
FOR
MIDDLESBROUGH
CARE LEAVERS**

**SEPTEMBER
2018**

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INTRODUCTION

The Local Offer for Care Leavers in Middlesbrough is designed to tell you about your entitlements and the support available to you.

It's really important that you know where to go for advice, support and guidance so that you can feel safe and supported during the transition into adulthood and independence.

The Local Offer was created following consultation with Young People like yourself and will be reviewed every 6 months to ensure the information is up to date and the support offered is relevant to the needs of our Young People.

In order to access this support, you must have been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 including some point at your 16th or 17th birthday.

If you are unsure about whether you are entitled to support mentioned in the Local Offer please speak to your Personal Adviser.

SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS

Allocated Personal Adviser

Due to the changes in the Children and Social Care Act 2017 you are now able to receive support from your Personal Adviser until the age of 25.

Your Personal Adviser is there to help you through your transition into adulthood and independence. You will have a Pathway Plan which will set out your support needs and plans for the future. This will be reviewed every 6 months by your Personal Adviser to ensure you are on track and identify any areas of need. The support you receive after 21 will depend on your current situation and needs.

If you do feel ready to close from Pathways at 21 but have support needs in the future you can come back to us (until age 25); we will then assess the level of support you need.

We will try to make sure you keep the same Personal Adviser but this is not always possible.

RELATIONSHIPS

We understand that feeling supported and having good healthy relationships is important to every person.

Below is the support available to you.

- We promote family contact (where appropriate) and in some circumstances Pathways can financially support you to travel to contact with immediate family members.
- Support and advice to help you regain or maintain contact with friends, family or previous carers.
- Advice and referrals to more specialist agencies in your local area who can help you learn about positive and healthy relationships.
- You might need someone to act on your behalf, known as an advocate. These are people who can speak for you during meetings and make sure your opinion is heard. Independent advocates are separate from children's services. If you need an independent advocate please speak to your Personal Adviser or carer.





EDUCATION AND TRAINING

We want to see all of our Young People thriving and learning new skills and knowledge.

Below is the support available to you.

- Support from a Work Readiness Practitioner based within the team who can offer you information, advice and guidance regarding your education and training needs.
- The Work Readiness Practitioner is an Apprenticeship Champion who can support you into Apprenticeships. They can also support you to apply for extra financial assistance when on an Apprenticeship.
- We can offer you support to attend open days with colleges/training providers.
- As a Care Leaver, you can access bursary payments from your college or training provider. If the college or training provider does not provide a bursary Pathways will pay you a daily incentive depending on attendance.
- If you are planning to attend University then Pathways can support you to consider your options, attend Open Days, complete UCAS applications, student finance forms and access suitable accommodation.
- Your Personal Adviser will complete a financial assessment with you in order to ensure you are accessing all financial support that you are entitled to.
- If you need uniforms or equipment to complete your course then Pathways will complete a financial assessment to consider providing this if the college/training provider does not offer this.

EMPLOYMENT

Working is a great way to earn money, increase confidence and help you get to where you want to be in your adult life.

Below is the support available to you.

- A dedicated Work Readiness Practitioner based within the team who will support you to become work ready by offering careers advice, interview support and CV writing.
- We will keep you up to date on local job fairs and support you to attend these.
- Support to purchase interview clothes when you are attending an interview.
- Support to travel to an interview, or your place of work until you feel confident in getting there alone.
- Middlesbrough Council can provide a guaranteed interview for their apprenticeships and jobs for care leavers who fit the essential criteria.
- Additional financial support to ensure that there is a financial benefit to working.
- Support to understand your rights and entitlements when employed.
- If there is a particular career you are interested in Middlesbrough Council departments can offer volunteering opportunities to gain experience.
- We can help you access voluntary work at James Cook Hospital and other voluntary organisations.
- We can help you to inform the Job Centre of any changes in your circumstances.
- If you have any Special Educational Needs we will make sure you receive any additional help you require.





EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

We recognise that taking care of your emotional wellbeing is very important. Emotional health is as important as physical health.

Below is the support available to you.

- Support to speak to your local Doctor and attend appointments to discuss your emotional wellbeing, especially if you are unsure of what to say.
- Referrals to other agencies dependent upon what type of emotional support is needed. Your Personal Adviser can attend with you or just take you to the initial appointments, what ever is best for you.
- A dedicated worker who can offer additional support regarding your emotional wellbeing is available within the Pathways Team that you can access until the age of 25yrs .
- Details for telephone helplines, apps and websites that are free to access can be provided should you prefer to access support this way. A computer is available in the Pathways office that you can use to access these sites.
- If you have a mental health diagnosis we can support you and others around you to understand this.
- You can be provided with a "Pledge Card" to have free access to all Middlesbrough Council leisure services. This include gyms, fitness classes, yoga, swimming pools as we know that physical activity is beneficial to having good mental health.
- Your own "Health Passport" will be offered to you. This provides all key information about your health from your childhood to present time.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Being healthy is important.

Below is the support available to you.

- We will support you to register with a Doctor, Dentist and Optician.
- We can provide you with up to date information on nearby health services.
- C Cards can be used at Pathways to access free condoms, pregnancy and chlamydia testing and support to explore contraception options available for you (including support to make appointments with sexual health clinics).
- A LAC Nurse is based at Pathways. They can offer additional health information, and advice if needed and can complete basic health checks.
- The LAC Nurse will provide you with the Health Passport which provides information on your health history, immunisations and useful health contact numbers.
- Support will be offered to apply for reduced prescription costs (NHS Low Income Scheme) where needed.
- Change Grow Live have made a commitment to Care Leavers by allowing young people open to Pathways to access substance misuse recovery and support via their Young Person's service until age 25 in Middlesbrough.
- Advice and guidance on sexuality and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT+) support services.
- Access to healthy eating advice and guidance via one to one sessions or group work (Fresh Start).
- A Pledge Card which provides Care Leavers with free access to Middlesbrough Council Leisure facilities, including gym, swimming and exercise classes. The Pledge card also allows you to take a friend for free.



ACCOMMODATION

We care about you being in safe and secure accommodation.

Below is the support available to you.

- Promotion of "Staying Put" to allow you to stay in your home with your foster carers post 18 under a Staying Put arrangement.
- Access to "Supported Lodgings Provision". This is where you have your own room in a providers home. They will work with you to support you as a young adult until you are ready to move on to other accommodation.
- A Joint Working Protocol with Thirteen Group (Housing & Homeless) is in place to ensure we all work together to provide you with suitable accommodation options.
- Access to 2 Crash Pads for the sole use of Care Leavers who may need emergency accommodation. Additional support is included with the Crash Pad.
- If you access a Crash Pad you are provided with essential items you may need including your own pillow, quilt & covers, pots & cutlery and a small food pack.
- All Care Leavers living in Middlesbrough are Council Tax exempt up to the age of 21 (with plans to progress to the age of 25 over the next 3 years).
- Access to a dedicated housing worker within Pathways to offer additional advice and support to you around accommodation.
- Access to vacation accommodation for Care Leavers at University out of area to enable them to return to Middlesbrough or their home town during holiday periods.
- Middlesbrough Council Revenue and Benefit Department have agreed to pay a Discretionary Housing Payment to cover the cost of a shortfall in rent up to a level of £100 per week in total (including Housing Benefit / Universal Credit entitlement) if your housing benefit entitlement changes while living in your home (in Middlesbrough) up to the age of 25.
- Middlesbrough Council Revenue and Benefit Department have agreed pay for removal van costs for those Care Leavers who receive either Housing Benefit or Universal Credit when you move into safe, secure independent living up to the age of 25.
- Access to your Setting Up Home allowance to furnish a tenancy of your own.
- Access to the "Fresh Start" group which supports you to look at your independent living skills and help build confidence in preparation for adulthood and independent living.



FINANCES

Pathways provide financial support and advice to help you prepare for your transition to adulthood and independence.

Below is the support available to you.

- Access to financial support on an individual basis depending on your needs.
- All Care Leavers living in Middlesbrough are council tax exempt up to the age of 21 (with plans to progress to the age of 25 over the next 3 years).
- There is an allocated worker for Care Leavers based within the Job Centre (Middlesbrough) who can support you in making benefit claims and offer additional support and advice if needed.
- Computer and Internet access is available in the Pathways office in order to make benefit claims online.
- Access to your Setting Up Home allowance to furnish a tenancy of your own.
- You will be offered support to open a bank account.
- We will pay for one form of photographic ID.
- Access to money management advice and support for you to develop your budgeting skills.
- Access to a personal allowance to top up your wages to ensure you are better off financially by working (based on financial assessment of need).
- Financial assistance is provided for University Students (based on financial assessment of need).
- As a Care Leaver, you can access bursary payments from your college or training provider. If the college or training provider does not provide a bursary Pathways will pay you a daily incentive depending on attendance.

PARTICIPATION

We want our young people to be active members of society and to have all the chances in life other young adults have.

Below is the support available to you.

- A Pledge card is offered which provides Care Leavers with free access to Middlesbrough Council Leisure facilities, including gyms, swimming and exercise classes. The Pledge card also allows you to take a named friend for free.
- We provide regular trips to venues and activities that Young People enjoy such as theme parks, residential stays and outdoor activities such as football.
- There is a Children in Care Council (CICC) that you can be part of. The group provides an opportunity for our Young People to “have a voice” and influence decisions made about services to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
- Information and advice on groups and clubs in your local area.
- Support to enrol on the Electoral Register to allow you to be able to vote in elections.
- Support is offered to access voluntary roles within other departments, charities and other organisations.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Pathways office	01642 354100
Pathways duty mobile	07717 516725
HEALTH & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	
NHS Advice	111
Non emergency Police	101
Samaritans	116 123
Childline	0800 1111
SUPPORT	
NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)	0808 808 1001
Rees Care Leavers Foundation	www.reesfoundation.org/contact/
Become	0800 023 2033 / www.becomecharity.org.uk
Gov UK	www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-leavers-charter
FINANCES	
National Insurance number helpline	0300 200 3500
Benefit Claims	0800 0556688
Universal Credit	0800 328 5644
Buttle UK	www.buttleuk.org/contact-us
HOUSING / ACCOMMODATION	
Shelter	0808 800 4444 / 0808 1644 660 (emergency)
LOCAL RESOURCES	
CGL	01642 876323
My Sisters Place	01642 241864
Route 2	01642 249456
Thirteen Group Housing	0300 111 1000
Community Support Scheme	0808 1789278