

Please feel free to get in touch with the team if you have any questions.

- Kingston: 020 8547 6901
- Richmond: 020 8831 6160



Children in Care Council Richmond

LEAVING CARE PLEDGE



achieving
for children



This pledge, which we have consulted on with the Children in Care Council, outlines Achieving for Children's (AfC) commitment to you. We offer a service to young people aged up to age 25 (or beyond if in education) who are children looked after or children leaving care. It centres around our Mission Statement.

"Achieving for Children, the joint children's services for Kingston and Richmond is passionate about ensuring the best possible outcomes for children and their families and will deliver the services they need to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives."

The local authority is also known as a corporate parent, which means that we are responsible for making sure that you are supported properly. This means that we want to make sure you have everything you need, which includes the following.

- You have positive relationships.
- Where you live is safe.
- You are given the opportunity to achieve your academic potential.
- You are given support to promote your religious and cultural identity (you feel confident about who you are).
- You are listened to, and are involved in important decisions about your life.
- You have the support to enable your successful transition into adulthood.
- You have people around you who you can trust and talk to, and help to make you feel good about life.

HOW WE AIM TO ACHIEVE THIS

HAVE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- You will be allocated a social worker up until your 18th birthday who will meet with you at least every six weeks. At this time, you will have the option to transfer to a personal adviser who will support your transition into adulthood. They will be in contact with you as a minimum every two months. They will provide you with a reliable, supportive and trusting relationship.
- You will have the option to talk to duty if your worker isn't available. Kingston: 020 8547 6901 and Richmond: 020 8831 6160.
- You can be supported to access counselling services to promote your emotional wellbeing.
- You can be provided with information to promote your sexual health and can be supported to access a CCard.

WHERE YOU LIVE IS SAFE

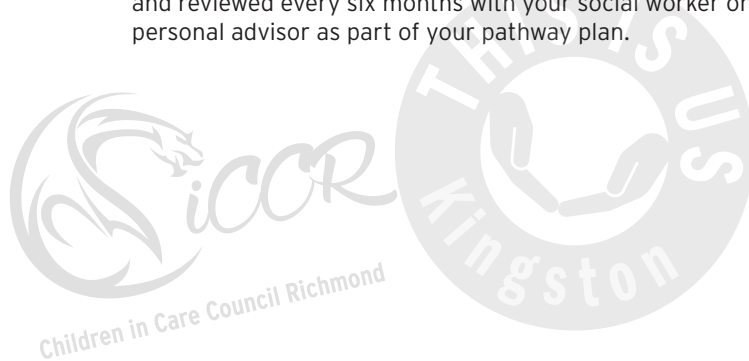
- The Leaving Care Team has a duty to provide accommodation for you to ensure you are safe and happy if you are an eligible, relevant or former relevant child. As part of this, you will be provided with practical, and where appropriate, financial support to identify suitable housing.
- As an adult, you will have the option to remain with your current foster carers under a 'staying put arrangement'.
- When you are deemed ready to be independent, we will support you to apply for permanent housing through the council if you are eligible.

The Leaving Care Team also supports you to live in a fully furnished property as part of your tenancy with a landlord in the private sector, by paying your first month's rent and deposit as part of your leaving care grant or setting up home allowance.

- Once you move, you will have the ability to seek on-going support from the Resettlement Team, and/or floating support worker as well as your social worker or personal adviser.
- You will be provided with a £2,000 leaving care grant or setting up home allowance to purchase household items to fully furnish your permanent accommodation.
- You are given the opportunity to achieve your academic potential.
- Until the end of Year 13, you will be eligible for a personal education plan every academic term.
- From 16 to 19, you will be eligible to receive the 16 to 19 Education Bursary totalling £1,200 a year in line with your attendance - this is paid by your college.
- You can request one-to-one tuition as deemed appropriate to enable you to achieve your academic targets.
- You can be referred to both the Virtual School and the 14-19 Team to support you to sustain or re-engage with education, training or employment, including apprenticeships. You can also access careers advice.
- We will support you with a UCAS application, and as a university student, you will receive a £2,000 Higher Education Bursary over the duration of your course.
- You can be referred to the Culture4Keeps programmes to access enrichment activities to support your learning, wellbeing and personal development.

YOU ARE GIVEN SUPPORT TO PROMOTE YOUR OWN IDENTITY

- You will be provided with relevant items to promote your religion.
- You will be given a £20 voucher once a year to celebrate religious festivals if you are not in foster care.
- You will be supported to maintain contact with your family if appropriate, including telephone contact if they live abroad.
- Life story work can be undertaken with your social worker or personal adviser to help you gain a better sense of yourself.
- You will be supported to apply for a National Insurance number and, where possible, a copy of your birth certificate.
- You will be supported to apply for a provisional driving license as one form of photographic ID, as appropriate.
- You will be provided with your health passport - this will be provided to you at your final children's looked after medical and reviewed every six months with your social worker or personal advisor as part of your pathway plan.



YOU ARE LISTENED TO, AND ARE INVOLVED IN IMPORTANT DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR LIFE

- Until you are 18, you will have a children's looked after review with an independent reviewing officer to listen to your views. You will also be given the opportunity to complete a Viewpoint consultation before your review.
- From 16 onwards, until your case closes, you will be have a pathway plan which is reviewed every six months; you will be involved in updating this plan. This is an opportunity to outline your strengths and areas of development, and to outline what you hope to achieve over the next six months. It will detail the support you will receive to help you achieve your goals.

YOU HAVE THE SUPPORT YOU REQUIRE TO ENABLE YOUR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD

- At age 16, you will be provided with the 16 to 21 leaving care financial policies.
- A budgeting assessment will be undertaken as part of all pathway plan reviews.
- At 16, you will be provided with the AfC leaving care independent living skills checklist to work through with your carer or keyworker in preparation for your 18th birthday.
- If your case transfers to Adult Services at 18, the Leaving Care Team will continue to joint work until you are 21 or beyond for the duration of your course if you agree.
- As you approach your 18th birthday you will be supported to claim welfare benefits or universal credit at least two weeks before your birthday, as it takes up to 10 working days to process a new claim.

- You will be able to attend the following workshops to promote your transition:

- MyBnk financial workshop
- Child sexual exploitation and sexual health workshop
- Tenancy information session
- Cook and Eat Programme.

YOU HAVE PEOPLE AROUND YOU WHO YOU CAN TRUST AND TALK TO, AND HELP TO MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD ABOUT LIFE

- You can choose to become part of the Children in Care Council to best meet the needs of children looked after and children leaving care.
- You will have the option to request an advocate through Coram Voice.
- You are able to make a formal complaint if you are not happy with the service.
- You can request access to your files, if appropriate.
- You can access the children looked after nurse, children looked after CAMHS worker, children looked after substance misuse worker or AfC child sexual exploitation worker, as required, to promote your safety and wellbeing.