

**KENT
PLEDGE**



“We **promise** to support you as you grow and become an adult and make sure that we ask you about important decisions we make in your life”



- Visit the Kent Cares Town website for more information about being in care
www.kentcares town.lea.kent.sch.uk

● **What do you think?**

If you have any comments about this pack or ideas of how it could be improved you can let us know by sending an email to VSK_Participation@kent.gov.uk



what does being in
care
actually mean?



kent.gov.uk



We understand that being in care and leaving care isn't always easy.

and that it can bring extra challenges and pressures for you. If we are going to get it right for you we need to make a real difference to help you do your best and have success in your life." - Kent Pledge (see the full Kent Pledge inside).

Sometimes your parents are unable to look after you so Kent County Council and your social worker will decide that it is better for you to be looked after away from home. They will find a suitable foster family for you, this may even be a relative or someone you know, and this is called being in care. There is lots more detail about being in care in the Children's guide to fostering included in this pack.

Your Foster Carer

When you are looked after by Kent County Council you will be placed with foster carers that are appropriate for you and are able to encourage and support you. Foster carers are ordinary people, some have families of their own. There is lots more information about them in the Children's Fostering Guide included with this pack.

Social Worker

As a child in care you will have a social worker who will visit you at least once every six weeks. Their main focus is to support you in your foster placement and to make sure that you are happy and healthy. They will be in contact with all of the other professionals involved with your care. If you feel unhappy about something your social worker is someone you can trust who will be there to help and support you through any difficulties. If you ever feel unhappy or unsure about your social worker any of the adults mentioned in this leaflet would be more than happy to listen, understand and take the appropriate actions.

Care Plan

All of the decisions about your care that have been made by you and the team supporting you are put together to make up your care plan. You will hear the adults around you referring to this often as it ensures that the decisions about your care are clear and accessible.

IRO

(Independent Reviewing Officer)

An independent Reviewing officer is someone who will chair meetings which relate to your care. They will ensure that decisions which are made about your care are put in to place. You can find more about them in the IRO Information leaflet inside.

Virtual School Kent

The Virtual School is a team of teachers and staff who work to support the education of children in care and care leavers. The school does not exist in real terms, or as a building. You do not actually attend it, but it is there to give you extra help and support whilst you are at school.

VSK Participation Team

The VSK Participation Team is a team of apprentices and support officers who encourage and facilitate the participation of children in care to give them a say in how their services are provided. They also organise activity days during the school holidays and are involved in the running of the 'Our Children and Young Peoples Council' and our 'Young Adults Council'. If you'd like to find out more included in this pack is the VSK Participation Team Information leaflet as well as the Children in Care Council information.

Designated Teacher

Your designated teacher is someone at your school who understands the things which affect children and young people in care. They are there to help you set targets and support you in your education, if you are having any difficulties at school you can speak to your designated teacher who can offer help and support.

Advocate

An advocate is an independent person who can speak on your behalf to communicate your thoughts and feelings at meetings and to the other people involved in your care. Sometimes they can be helpful if you find it difficult to put your point across, you can find more information in the Advocacy Support Leaflet.

Specialist Nurse for Children in Care

The specialist nurse for children in care is a qualified nurse who works with children in care. They will conduct a health assessment to make sure you are fit and healthy. They will also be able to offer health and well-being advice as well as diet and healthy living advice. Alongside this the specialist nurse can also offer emotional support and advice.