

IT Equipment Provided to CiC Under the Kent Pledge Qualification Guidance

Virtual School Kent (VSK) are responsible for the administration of this scheme and will manage the conditions under which it is run. The purpose of this pledge by KCC to the children and young people in its care is to ensure the best possible ICT support for study opportunities during statutory school education, National Curriculum Years 3 to 11 (Key Stage 2 to Key stage 4) and young people aged 16 to 18 in Post 16 (participation years). The following guidance clarifies the conditions under which equipment is allocated.

- VSK will fund up to £275 or supply an IT device once the requirements of the child's IT needs have been discussed at their PEP and ensuring the qualifying criteria are met.
- IT devices are given to a child under the condition that they use them within the boundaries set out by their Foster Carer and Social Worker / PA and that they look after them responsibly. A written agreement must be signed either by the child themselves, if aged 13 or older, or the foster carer for younger aged children, before the equipment can be issued.
- Parental controls will be put in place following guidelines issued by VSK to the Foster Carer/Social Worker and will be governed by the Foster Carer / Social Worker until the young person is at least 16 years old.
- Applications for replacement devices will be considered at the PEP taking into account the age of the current equipment and after reviewing any changes in the needs of the child since the previous device was issued.
- It is the responsibility of the Social Worker, VSK officer and Foster Carer to ensure that when a child moves placement their IT equipment moves with them. The new Foster Carer will be required to complete an agreement form and this needs to be returned to VSK.
- Children will not be asked to return their IT device to KCC, even if they leave care, unless they break the conditions laid out in the agreement signed by either Foster Carer or child, in which case KCC reserves the right to take the IT device back.
- End of life IT devices must be disposed of in accordance with Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Legislation which includes Data Protection, Duty of Care and Hazardous Waste Regulations. For further details please visit the VSK website.

Children aged 7 – 13 years in NC Years 3 – 9 (Key Stage 2 & 3)

- For children coming into care in school years 3- 6, requirements for a device will be discussed at the first PEP in agreement with school staff, Foster Carer, Social Worker and VSK officer. If required, it will either be funded by VSK or a Chromebook will be issued on receipt of an application form. The child must have been in care for at least 1 month, is in full-time education and remains in care at the point of delivery.
- Approval for a device outside of these criteria will need approval from a VSK Deputy Head and reasons will need to be provided in the application.
- In certain circumstances related to safeguarding concerns, the Social Worker, with the agreement of their Team Manager, can direct that ICT support is withheld. VSK will respect this decision and a record of this and the reasons will be recorded on Liberi by the Social worker or VSK officer.
- At each subsequent PEP meeting, the use of the device will be reviewed to ensure that it still meets the child's needs.

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Children aged 14-16 in NC Years 10 & 11 (Key Stage 4)

- Children coming into care in school years 10 & 11 who may be studying for GCSEs will require a higher specification of IT device and therefore these children may be issued with a laptop. This will be discussed at the first PEP in agreement with school staff, Foster Carer, Social Worker and VSK officer and either funded by VSK or a Laptop will be issued on receipt of an application form. The child must have been in care for at least one month, be on roll with a school and remain in care at the point of delivery. In some cases a Chromebook may be more suitable.
- Any application for a device outside of these criteria will need approval from a VSK Deputy Head. Reasons for issuing or funding an IT device will need to be provided on the application form for consideration by a VSK Deputy Head.
- In certain circumstances related to safeguarding concerns, the social worker, with the agreement of their Team Manager, can direct that ICT support is withheld. VSK will respect this decision and a record of this and the reasons will be recorded on Liberi by the social worker or VSK officer.
- At each PEP meeting the use of the IT device will be reviewed to ensure that it still meets the child's needs.

Young People aged 16 – 18 years in NC Years 12 and 13 (Key Stage 5 / Post 16)

- For young people in P16 coming into care, requirements for a device will be discussed at the first PEP with relevant professionals who may include: school/college staff, Foster Carer, Social Worker or PA and VSK officer. This will be either funded by VSK, or an IT device appropriate to the young person's needs will be issued on receipt of an application form. The young person must have been in care for one month and should be engaged in an education course, or with a training provider or employer and it is clear that there is an identified need for an IT device. The young person must be in care or is a care leaver in Year 13* at the point of delivery.
- Any application for funding or IT device outside of these criteria for young people in Years 12-13 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will only be approved if it can be satisfactorily explained why an IT device is required and what purpose it will serve. Approval will be given by VSK Deputy Head. This will include apprentices who require a laptop.
- Young people who are approaching the end of Year 13 will only be considered if they are progressing onto Higher Education and do not qualify for a grant for equipment via their university student services.
- VSK will not consider retrospective applications from care leavers.
- Applications will not be considered for young people who are beyond school Year 13*.

Young people who are CiC due solely to their provision being 38- or 52-week residential special provision or Youth Custody will not be considered.

Warranty and Repairs

- Laptop and Chromebooks provided by VSK will be subject to a one-year warranty which will cover technical issues with the device. The provider will maintain a helpline so they can be contacted directly by the foster carer or other professional supporting the child. It will not cover damage or loss through negligence, accident, theft, or malicious action. In these cases, the foster carer / supporting professional should contact VSK and explain the circumstances

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under which damage or loss occurred. A VSK Deputy Head will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis and have the discretion to fund or part fund replacement or repair.

- There is no expectation that Foster Carers will protect these computers under their household insurance, but they may do so at their discretion, however, VSK will not be able to fund this.

*a ***care leaver in Year 13*** is a young person who will turn 18 during the current academic year i.e. between 1st September – 31st August