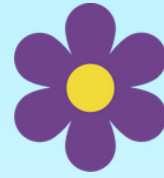


# Kent Pledge

## Our Promises to you



# Our pledge to Kent's children and young people in care



We understand that being in care and preparing to leave 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.

Our pledge includes a number of things we will do that will help make sure that your time in care is a positive experience.

## These are based around **six themes:**

- a sense of belonging
- an adult who is always there for you while you are in care
- a good education
- good memories for the future
- getting ready for being an adult
- championing your needs and interests.

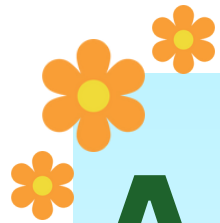
We are making a pledge to you because you are in the care of Kent County Council.

We will check our pledge to you often so that, when we can, we will improve on the commitments that we make and listen to your views.

Please ask your Social Worker for your pack of Kent Pledge Cards which give you a shorter, easier to read version of the Kent Pledge commitments.



Sarah Hammond  
Corporate Director - Children, Young  
People and Education



# A sense of belonging

## We will:

- find a home for you that is within your own family (this is called Kinship Care), or in your local community wherever it is safe to do this
  - help you keep in contact with family and friends and, when this is not possible, give you a clear reason why
  - make sure we take into account your views and, if appropriate your parents' views of the type of carers that you would want when choosing your placement and short break/respice care
- when we make decisions, take account of your age, background and beliefs, including your ethnic and cultural needs and any needs you may have because of a disability, especially communication needs
  - arrange for you to get your National Insurance number for your 16th birthday or as soon as possible after being entitled to have one
  - get you a passport by your 16th birthday if you are legally allowed to have one – sooner if you need one to go on holidays with your carers and take part in school activities.



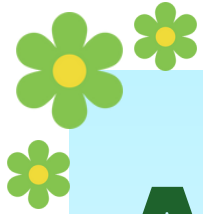


# An adult who is always there for you while you are in care

## We will:

- make sure that you have a named Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer and know how you can contact them
- make sure that you have at least one trusted adult in your life who will support you throughout your time in care
- make sure that you have a named nurse that you can contact if you have any questions about your health.



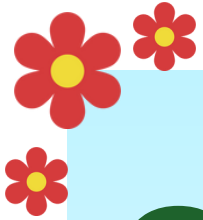


# A good education

## We will:

- meet with you to complete your Personal Education Plan so you can do your best
  - work with your school and the ‘designated’ teacher to help you succeed (all schools should choose a teacher who is in charge of all of the school’s services for those children in care who go to the school)
  - support your carers to take an active interest in your education and make good links with your school, including going to parents evenings and other school events
- provide a laptop or electronic device if you are in year 3 and above, or if you are aged over 16, still in care and where a laptop computer or electronic device is an essential requirement of your course
  - celebrate your achievements and successes
  - help you to make the best possible choices in education, employment or training beyond 16 and support you in your work or studies, including help going on to university if you choose to do this.



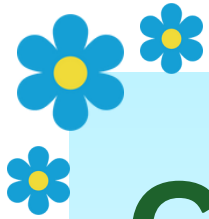


# Good memories for the future

## We will:

- provide opportunities for you to take part in hobbies and interests (including sports, art and music)
- help you create ways to remember important life events, people and places during your time in care. This could mean supporting you with making memory boxes and books
- support and encourage you to come along to our activities and young people's council meetings to meet new friends and make positive memories during your time in care.





# Championing your needs and interests

## We will:

- make sure that you are able to tell us your wishes, feelings and interests, taking into account any disabilities you have
- listen to your wishes and feelings before making decisions that affect you and support you if you need help to do this
- work with you and your family to make sure that plans for your care are up to date and meet your educational, health and care needs
- make sure that you know how to complain and how to get in touch with Young Lives Foundation (Kent's Children's Rights Service), who can give you support to help you make a complaint
- give you access to a solicitor (at our cost) if you want legal advice about your care order, or any other legal order affecting you, such as contact with certain people in your life.





# Getting ready for being an adult



## We will:

- support you to be as independent as possible when you turn 18
- make sure that we ask you about important decisions we make in your life
- make sure that your move to Adult Services, if you need them, is as smooth as possible
- make sure you are allocated a Personal Adviser when you are aged 17 ½ who will fully explain the Care Leavers Local Offer

The Care Leavers Local Offer outlines support offered to Kent Care Leavers. Please ask your Social Worker or Personal Adviser for a copy. Add link to Local Offer

# Contact Details:

To contact **Integrated Children's Services**, to find the phone number for your **Independent Reviewing Officer** (IRO) or your **Social Worker** or to ask for help, you can:

- email: [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk)
- call: **03000 41 11 11**
- text relay: **18001 03000 41 11 11**

The **Children's Services Complaints** Team is for children, young people and those closely connected with them. If you would like to make a complaint, give feedback about something that is going well or ask for advice about a problem, you can:

- write to Kent County Council, Children's Social Complaints, Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, TN24 8XU
- call: **03000 41 11 11**
- email: [cocomplaints@kent.gov.uk](mailto:cocomplaints@kent.gov.uk)
- text: **0786000 8025**, start your message with the word complaint.

We can help you put your complaint in writing or give you advice.

You can always speak to your Social Worker or Personal Adviser or you can ask for an advocate (this is a person who is independent of Kent County Council who can speak on your behalf and helps make sure your voice is heard).

You can contact the **Young Lives Foundation** by:

- call: **0808 164 0096**
- email: [advocacy@ylf.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@ylf.org.uk)
- website: [Young Lives Foundation](http://YoungLivesFoundation.org.uk)
- Facebook: [Young Lives Foundation - YLF](https://www.facebook.com/YoungLivesFoundation-YLF)  
Instagram: [ylfcharity](https://www.instagram.com/ylfcharity)

# Speak Up. Be Heard.

The Super Council, Our Children and Young People's Council (OCYPC) and Young Adult Council (YAC) are groups of young people in care or who have recently left care who meet regularly around the county.

The meetings give you the chance to meet others and have your say on how improvements could be made to help you and others.

To find out more speak to your Social Worker or Personal Adviser, or:

email: [VSK\\_Participation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:VSK_Participation@kent.gov.uk)

