



Things to know about care



Name _____



Buckinghamshire
Council

Contents



Useful names and numbers.....3

What being in care means.....4

Who will I meet.....5

Where will I live?.....6

Can I see my family?.....7

What is Life Story work?.....7

What is a Care Plan.....8

Who else can help me?.....9

Who keeps me healthy?.....11

What if I'm feeling sad?.....12

Who helps me at school?.....13

What is We Do Care?.....14

What if I am not happy about something?.....15

Useful names and numbers



My Social Worker is: _____

Telephone: _____

My Independent Reviewing Officer is:

Telephone: _____

My Virtual School Worker is: _____

Telephone: _____



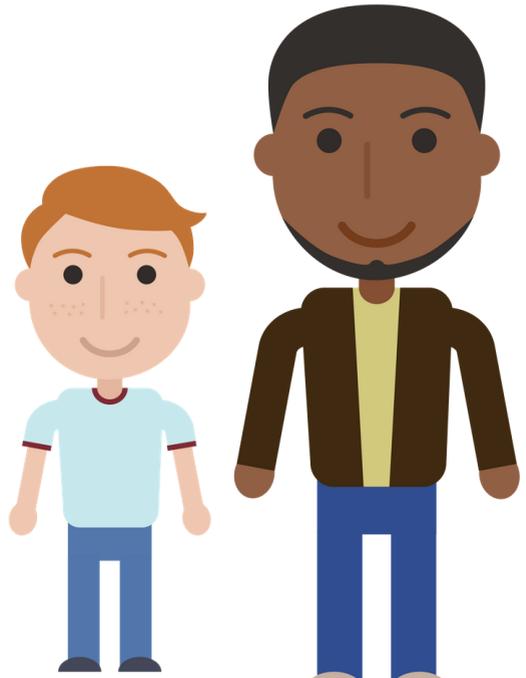
What being in care means



Being in care means you are being looked after by people who work for the council.

Children are in care for all different reasons. It may be because your parents can't look after you, even though they want to, or because it is not safe to stay at home.

All children in care have a Social Worker. If you want to know more about why you are in care, you can ask your Social Worker.



Who will I meet?



When you are in care you will meet new people. Here is some information about two people who can help you.

Social Worker

Your Social Worker will visit you in your new home and make sure you are ok. They will visit you when you first move and make times to visit you while you are there. You can ask to see them more if you need to.

You can ask to speak to them on your own about how you are feeling, or anything else like family, school or your carers.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Your IRO is someone who will check if you are happy with the plans made for you. They will arrange meetings which you can go to, and they will help you to say what you think and whether you are happy about the way you are cared for.

These meetings are called Care Review Meetings. This is where you and other people talk about how you are looked after to make sure you are ok. You can ask for someone to help you at the meeting if you are worried about going.

Where will I live?



The council will try to make sure:

- You live near your family
- You can carry on going to the same school
- You stay with your brothers and sisters
- You live with someone in your family or a friend

Sometimes the council can't do all these things, and your Social Worker should explain to you the reasons why.

You may live with family or friends, with foster carers, or in a children's home.

Foster carers look after children in their own home. They have been trained and checked by the council to make sure they will make good carers.

In a children's home you may live with a group of other children and adults who look after all the children. There will be one person who looks after you called your Key Worker. You will have your own bedroom and share bathrooms, lounge and kitchen.

Can I see my family?



When you are in care it is important for you to be able to visit or speak to your family.

Your Social Worker will speak to you and your family to decide when and where you will meet.

You should say how you feel about seeing your family and plans being made. If you don't want to see your family, tell your Social Worker.

What is Life Story work?



Life story work is when you and your worker or carer spend time talking about or making things about you and your family.

There are all different ways you can do this. It could be using photos, drawing pictures, decorating a book or writing a story. You keep this so that you will always be able to remember the things that are important to you, and add to it if you want to.

What is a Care Plan?



When you are in care you will have a Care Plan.

A Care Plan is all about how you will be looked after. You should be asked what you think about your Care Plan and what you want in your life. You should know what your Care Plan says, and be given a copy of it if you want one.

If you haven't seen it, ask your Social Worker and they will show you.

Before you move in with a new carer, the council will tell them how to look after you. This is called a Placement Plan. You should also be asked what you think about your Placement Plan. If you want to know more about it, ask your Social Worker.



Who else can help me?



You can get help from NYAS - the National Youth Advocacy Service. They have people called Advocates and Independent Visitors who can help you in different ways.



Advocate

An Advocate is someone who makes sure you are listened to and can help you say how you feel about anything in your life. They can also go to meetings with you. They are 'independent', which means they don't work for the council. Also if you are not happy with the way you are cared for, you can speak to your Advocate who can then speak to the council for you.



Independent Visitor

An Independent Visitor (IV) is an adult who can visit you every month like a friend, to do fun things together. You or your Social Worker can ask NYAS if there is an IV who can meet you. Sometimes there is a wait while they look for the right person for you.



How do I get help from NYAS?

You can contact NYAS by calling their helpline: **0808 808 1001** or go to their website **www.nyas.net**

You can also ask any adult working with you to contact NYAS for you.

Who keeps me healthy?



Your health is very important. You will get to see a doctor or a nurse every year for a check-up.

The doctor or nurse will make sure you are healthy. They will weigh and measure you and they might listen to your heart.

You will be able to ask the doctor or nurse questions about your health.

You can see the doctor or nurse alone. If you want, your Social Worker or carer can come with you.



What if I am feeling sad?



Your mental health is very important too. Mental health is how we feel. Sometimes moving into care can make you feel sad or angry. If you feel like this, there are things you and other people can do to help you feel better.

You can speak to your Social Worker, doctor, carer or teacher who can help you. They may ask for help for you from CAMHS (this stands for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). CAMHS is a service that can help you deal with difficult feelings and help you to feel better.



You can call ChildLine: **0800 1111** or chat to them online: **www.childline.org.uk**

Children who call ChildLine can talk about anything, big or small. ChildLine is free, confidential (this means private) and you can call any time, day or night.

Who helps me at school?



The Virtual School is a team of teachers who help your school and your teachers to look after you when you are in care.

Once a term you, your carers, Social Worker, teachers and the Virtual School will get together to make a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for you. The plan is all about you and your school life.

You should be given the chance to say what is good and what is hard at school, and this will help the Virtual School to make your plan.





Buckinghamshire Children in Care Council

What is We Do Care?

Have your say and have fun!

We Do Care is Buckinghamshire's Children in Care Council.

We Do Care gives children in care the chance to say how they feel about the care they are given and makes sure they are listened to by people who work for the Council and other services.

'We Do Care Juniors' group is for children in care aged 5-12. We Do Care Juniors organise fun activities like bowling, going to the cinema, visiting a farm and arts and crafts.

If you would like to join in We Do Care activities, try new things and meet other children in care, your carer or Social Worker can call **01296 382583** or email **wedocare@buckinghamshire.gov.uk**



What if I am not happy about something?



If you are not happy about anything to do with your care, you can talk to your Social Worker or Independent Reviewing Officer. If you don't want to do this, you can contact NYAS (the National Youth Advocacy Service).

You can call their helpline: **0808 808 1001** or visit their website: **www.nyas.net**

You can also ask any adult working with you to contact NYAS for you.

You can also make a complaint. A complaint is when you tell people about something you are not happy about.

You can make a complaint to the council by calling **01296 387844**.

You can also make a complaint by emailing **complimentsandcomplaints@buckinghamshire.gov.uk**