



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

& More Money

Part of
Solihull's
Local Offer

Contents

Page

1. Our Policy

- Personal Advisors – Pas & Your Pathway Plan 5 - 7

2. What financial support can I expect?

- Personal allowance 8
- Birthday allowance 9
- Setting up home allowance 9 – 10
- Festival allowance 10 - 11
- Winter fuel allowance 11
- Costs of identification documents 11
- Legal costs of immigration applications 11
- Support in pregnancy 13
- Other allowances 14
- Help to access benefits 14
- Help for young people returning 15

3. What support will I get with accommodation?

- Training flats 15
- Support for 16 and 17 year olds 16
- Support for 18 year olds 16
- 'Staying Put' 16 - 17
- Supported lodgings 18
- Shared housing 18
- Renting private accommodation 19
- Social housing 19 - 20
- Other options 20

4. What support will I get with employment, education and training?

- 16-19 year olds 21
- Laptops for education / training 21
- 18-21 year olds wanting to go to college. 22
- 18-21 year olds not in employment, education or training. 23
- 21-24 year olds wanting to go into employment, education or training. 23
- Support for young people aged 18-24 on an apprenticeship. 24
- Support for young people aged 18-21 at university 24 - 25
- Support for parents with child care costs. 25
- Further funding for education and training. 26
- Support after university 26 – 27
- Goodbye meal 27

5. What Support will I get with health matters?

- Dental care 28
- Eye care 29
- Prescriptions 29
- Support on a low income 30

6. Savings

- Your Savings 31 - 32

7. What do I do if I do not get support or the support I feel I need? 33

8. Useful Contacts 34 - 36

1. Our Policy

This leaflet tells you, as a young person who has been in care in Solihull, about the financial support available to you. This may change yearly so please ensure you get a copy of the up to date leaflet from your Personal Advisor (PA). We have also launched a Local Offer in 2019 which will give you more information on other support.

Once a young person becomes 18 years of age they are no longer legally in care. Although many young people leave care at 18, some young people may leave care before that. Our support now extends to your 25th birthday, so even if you are no longer in contact with us you can come back to us and ask for help and support.

To qualify for the support detailed in this leaflet, young people will have a legal status of Eligible, Relevant, and Former Relevant. You achieve this status if you have been in care for at least 13 weeks between their 14th birthday and ended after their 16th birthday, or for 13 weeks after their 16th birthday.

If you have been in a Private Fostering Arrangement, Special Guardianship or not looked after for 13 weeks; after your 10th birthday you could be Qualifying for support.

Other young people who have been in care but are Qualifying can also receive support, these young people may have been subject to a Special Guardianship Order, Residence Order, Child Arrangement Order or a Private Fostering Arrangement, so may also qualify for advice and assistance from us. For more information ask your social worker or PA, or contact the duty social worker (see section 8). Some of the provisions in this booklet may vary depending on immigration status.

Remember: Keep this booklet somewhere safe so you can look at it when you need to. If you are unsure about anything in this booklet, or want some more information please speak to your social worker or Personal Advisor (PA). The booklet was printed in January 2020 the up to date booklet is available on the getitsorted website.

Figures and details relate to policy as agreed in January 2020

If you are over 21 years of age and do not have an allocated social worker or PA, please contact the Duty Worker in the Child Asylum & 16 Plus Team on Tel: 0121 717 1467.

In Solihull, we want to ensure the support that we provide to you when you leave our care:

- Is what we would do for our own children (recognising that all families will have a budget to work within).
- Recognises you are an individual with individual needs.
- Supports you in taking sensible risks and taking responsibility for yourself as a young adult. We will offer you a 'second chance' if things do not work out first time round. Everyone makes some mistakes during their move to independence whether they have been in care or not.
- Helps you to access and maximise all the support available to you through a range of services. This will include accessing benefits, practical and financial support.
- Ensures all young people who have left our care are treated fairly.

The amount of financial and other support you will get as a care leaver will be dependent on your age and your individual circumstances.

Personal Advisors (PAs)

All care leavers 18 to 21/25 years of age will have a Personal Advisor – also known as a PA. Your PA is your allocated worker who will keep in touch with you and be responsible for reviewing and updating your Pathway Plan.

Your PA will keep in touch with you at least every 8 weeks but more if this is needed. You can always contact your PA in between these times if you need advice and support. Your PA is responsible for co-ordinating all the people who offer you support which is detailed in your Pathway Plan.

The law has changed recently and once you are 21 years of age, you can say you no longer want support from your PA. However, you can come back to us at any point up to your 25th birthday and we will help you out. This can be about a whole range of issues including education, training, benefits and anything else you feel is important to you.

Your Pathway Plan

It is expected that as you are preparing to leave care, and after leaving care, you will be involved in agreeing and reviewing your Pathway Plan.

Your Pathway Plan is important as it will look at the things that are important to you in moving forward into independence, such as being ready to leave care, where you live, money management, looking after yourself, health, employment, education and training issues, and who are the trusted adults in your life. Your Pathway Plan is also your proof of the support that we have agreed to provide to you.

2. What financial support can I expect to receive?

Personal Allowance

If you are living independently, and are not entitled to Universal Credit, we will provide you with a personal allowance. Your PA will discuss your options with you, and if you are considered in need of a personal allowance, your PA will agree with you how this will be paid.

This applies to 16 and 17 year olds in supported accommodation (not those living with foster carers or in a residential home).

If you are eligible to receive all/or some of Universal Credit on your 18th birthday, your allocated worker will assist you to make a claim in good time. If there is a gap in this funding we will help to support you in cash or kind over the first 5 weeks of your first claim for benefits.

If you are at risk of being sanctioned then we will help to prevent this or if your money is stopped we will help you make a re-claim for your benefits.

Birthday Allowance

You will receive a birthday allowance each year until your 21st birthday. You may get money, payment direct to your bank account, or a gift card to the value of:

- £25 for your 16th and 17th birthday if you are living in supported accommodation.

(If you are 16 or 17 years old and still in foster care, or a residential home, your carer will provide your birthday present).

- £50 for your 18th birthday.
- £15 for your 19th and 20th birthday.
- £30 for your 21st birthday.

Setting Up Home Allowance

When you leave care to live independently, you will be eligible for a 'Setting Up Home' Allowance.

If you need it, you could receive up to £2,000. The allowance is made available as and when you are assessed as needing to access this money.

This allowance may be given to you in part lump sums or in agreed instalments over a number of months or years.

Please consider the following when spending your allowance:

- Buying second hand goods (but not second hand electrical items). You may get better quality furniture and soft furnishing at a cheaper price than what you can afford if you bought new.
- Looking at buying items on special offer or waiting for sales to get bigger discounts.
- Planning ahead, for example buying some items such as towels, bedding, crockery etc. whilst you

are still in care. You could use your short term savings for this.

- Using some of your savings, and any other grants available to you, to help towards some of these costs.
- We will provide £200 cash for you to purchase some small items. We will purchase larger items for you through online ordering system. To help you budget effectively there is a cap on certain items. Please discuss this with your allocated worker.

Remember

- When most young people leave home to live independently they cannot afford everything they need straight away and cannot always afford everything new.
- Setting Up Home Allowance will need to last until you are no longer eligible for a service from us, for example when you are 21 years of age or up to your 25th birthday.

Festival Allowance

If you are aged 16 or 17 years of age, and live in supported accommodation, you are entitled to a festival allowance of £50 per year.

This will be used to purchase an agreed gift or to cover festival expenses.

If you are aged 16 or 17 years, and still in foster care, or a residential home, your carer will provide a festival gift and provide support for your cultural needs.

If you are living in supported lodgings, we may, in consultation with you, pay your landlord, or carer, to have

some or all of the allowance paid to them so that they can provide special food and / or a gift for you to celebrate.

When you get your festival allowance, will depend on your religious beliefs and be agreed between you and your social worker or PA.

Winter Fuel Allowance

During the first winter after you have left care, to live fully independently you may be eligible for a Winter Fuel Allowance from us. To qualify you must be:

- In receipt of benefits such as Universal Credit as a result of being on a low income.
- Under 21 years of age.
- Responsible for your own heating costs.
- This is an optional payment that will need to be agreed by a Manager. If you are eligible, you could receive £5 per week, for up to 8 weeks, between 1st January and end of February.
- You may be eligible for a Cold Weather Payment from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) if you are in receipt of Universal Credit AND have:
 - A disability.
 - A child under 5 years of age living with you.
 - A child with a disability.

Or

- Receive Child Tax Credit that includes a disability or severe disability. You may be eligible for a Cold Weather Payment of £25 a week if your local weather has been, on average, below zero degrees Celsius for 7 days in a row. You should get this payment automatically. Please check the DWP website or ask your PA for more information.

(See section 8 for useful contacts).

Costs of Identification Documents

You will need some form of formal identification, usually a passport, asylum registration card or driving licence, as well as your National Insurance Number, to start work with an employer, claim benefits or set up a bank account. This will prove who you say you are and help you to get into various places.

When you leave care to become independent, you should already have your birth certificate as well as a renewed passport or provisional driving licence. If you did not have a formal type of photographic identification when you left care, we will help you obtain or pay for you to obtain one type of identification whilst you are between 18 and your 21st birthday.

If you are an unaccompanied young person and don't have identification documents, your social worker or PA will help you to get the right documentation required to prove you are who you say you are.

Legal Costs of Immigration Applications

If you are a young person who cannot access legal aid to meet Solicitors' fees for an immigration application, we will consider assisting you with these (up to a maximum of £1,500) if this will be the best way to meet your identified needs. Ask your PA or Social Worker for more information.

Support in pregnancy

If you are pregnant and aged under 21 years, you may be eligible for some financial support if:

- You are on a low income or benefits.
- It is your first pregnancy.
- You are expecting more than one child.

We could offer you the following support whilst you are pregnant:

- Up to £70 for clothing when you know you are pregnant. It may also be possible to consider up to a further £70 when you are 6 months pregnant.
- Up to £50 for a hospital bag. This is for the things you and the baby will need when you go into hospital for the baby's birth, including the purchase of a first baby outfit and nappies.

Your PA or midwife will support you to claim a grant of £500 from the DWP, if you are eligible; this is to buy all the essential items you need for when your first baby is born.

If you are not eligible, we may be able to assist in purchasing essential equipment up to £500 this is a one off payment and for the first birth only.

Your PA may also be able to offer support to access funding from other organisations for you and your baby.

Other Allowances

Your social worker or PA will support you to access all the benefits you are eligible for.

In exceptional situations we may be able to provide you with a one off payment, or regular financial help if you are aged 16 to 17, and are considered a Relevant young person, or aged 18 to 21 and a Former Relevant young person. This will be:

- Limited to £150 per year maximum.

To meet your essential needs only - such as public transport costs to promote contact with family members or previous carers.

- To meet essential cultural or religious needs.
- To prevent you experiencing sanctions with benefits.
- To provide you a gift on the birth of your child

Where there is no other funding available, with agreement by the Team Manager and the Head of Service they can consider additional discretionary financial support in exceptional cases. These will be looked at on a case by case basis.

Help to access benefits

We will offer you advice regarding benefits and grants or signpost you to benefit experts to make sure you are maximising all the benefits which you are entitled to.

Please ask your social worker or PA for more information.

Help for young people returning to us aged 21-25

If you no longer have a PA, you can now come back to us if you have an issue you think we can help with (up to your 25th birthday). We will also want to remain in contact and act as a good parent and will listen to you and offer advice and guidance.

We also have a small amount of money to support you if you are in a difficult situation. This money is very limited and will only be given in times of crisis.

3. What support will I get with Accommodation?

We are committed to making sure that once you leave our care, you have suitable accommodation that meets your needs.

Your social worker and/or PA will work with you to agree plans for when you are no longer in care. This will include plans for your accommodation and will be written into your Pathway Plan.

We know not all young people will be ready to live in their own place and have their own tenancy straightaway.

Training Flats

Before leaving care, we hope that you have spent time in one of our training flats to help you prepare for living on your own. Your social worker or PA can discuss this with you.

Support for 16 and 17 year olds

Many young people will remain in care until they are 18 years of age. If you leave care before your 18th birthday, your social worker will need to know you are ready to leave care and agree that it is the best plan for you.

If you are aged 16 or 17 years and have left care, and are not living with family or friends, you are likely to live in supported accommodation. This is a way of ensuring you get the support you need before you are completely independent.

You will receive a personal allowance for us and, if required, we can also help with clothing of an allowance up to £250 during this time.

Support for 18 year olds

Many young people will leave care at 18 years of age. Whenever you leave care, there should be a clear plan in place, which is part of your Pathway Plan. This will include; where you will live and the support you will need to meet your needs.

Your social worker or PA will explore a number of accommodation options with you. These are likely to include:

‘Staying Put’

We know that if you have been in a settled foster home, the best plan may be for you to remain living there until you have finished education, or achieved other goals that will help you to move smoothly to adulthood and independence. This may also include having somewhere familiar for you to return in holiday periods if you are at university.

If you want to remain living with your carers, this should be possible if your carers are willing and able to have you continuing to live with them and it is in your interest to stay.

If it is decided that you can remain with your carers, you may be able to stay living there until you are 21 years old.

This will be reviewed every six months at least, and depending on the arrangement being part of the 6 monthly reviews of your Pathway Plan, and you meeting expectations within your Pathway Plan.

The Housing benefit element of Universal Credit will be used to contribute towards some of your “rent” costs. This is needed for you to remain living with your carers.

If you are eligible to receive the Housing Benefit element of Universal Credit or the rent cost element of Universal Credit you must pay all of it to your carer.

In addition to this, you will have to pay a weekly contribution to your carer from your wages, your Personal Allowance, Universal Credit, student grant or loan.

We will pay the remaining balance to make up the total payment of your “rent” to the carer.

If you are in higher education, you will be expected to make a greater contribution to the weekly accommodation cost of the staying put arrangement from your grants and bursary, in addition to your weekly contribution.

Your foster carers will need to become approved ‘supported lodgings providers’ and their role and your relationship will change. The new arrangements will be discussed with you and recorded in an agreed plan.

Supported Lodgings

If it is not possible for you to stay with your carer, but it is felt that you are not ready to move into your own place, your social worker or PA will discuss what other options are available to you. This may include living in Supported Lodgings.

Supported Lodgings are similar to 'Staying Put' with your carers, but it means you move somewhere new to live. You will still be living in a family home and having the additional support that comes with being part of a family.

You will need to pay a contribution of £26.63 (2019 rate) weekly from your Personal Allowance, Universal Credit or wages as your contribution towards your "rent" and pay all of your Housing Benefit, rent cost element of Universal Credit or a proportion of your student loan or grant to your carer.

If you are working and earning an income, you will be expected to make a contribution towards your 'Staying Put' or Supported Lodgings arrangement. Your social worker or PA will discuss this with you.

Shared Housing

This is where you live with other young people in similar circumstances to yourself.

This is usually a shared property in which you will have your own room, but might have to share communal areas e.g. kitchen and bathroom.

This type of accommodation usually has staff who support young people on site and can provide 24/7 support.

Shared housing is funded by Housing Benefit and usually a small contribution by you.

Renting Private Accommodation

This is something which we would not recommend, but if you want to rent a private property, it is likely your Landlord will require a deposit and rent in advance or sometimes a guarantor before they will agree to a tenancy.

The Team Manager will consider lending you the advance for the deposit and rent if:

- There are exceptional circumstances, i.e. this is the only option available at the time for you.
- A rental deposit protection scheme is used by the Landlord.
- You agree to return the advanced deposit and rent within a year of the payment being made, or by your 21st / 25th birthday (whichever is latest).

How and when you will pay this back will be agreed in writing at the time with your PA before we will agree the deposit / rent advance.

The Team Manager will usually only act as a guarantor for university accommodation.

Social Housing

When you are ready for your own tenancy you can (with our support) apply to Solihull Community Housing or your local Housing Department if you live outside of Solihull.

You will need to register your application and then you will be given a pin number, which will allow you to bid on line for properties which you are deemed eligible for.

If successful you will be invited to view the property.

When you visit, please take someone with you to the viewing. It is always helpful to have a second pair of eyes.

If the property is suitable, your PA will help you to move in and sort out furniture etc.

Other options

You may feel that 'Staying Put' with your carers, moving to supported lodgings or having your own tenancy will not be right for you at 18.

Being involved in reviewing your Pathway Plan, will give you the opportunity to talk with your social worker or PA about this.

Your Social Worker or PA will talk with you about the options you have, and provide support to you in finding somewhere to live that will meet your needs.

If at any point, below the age of 25, you become homeless we will work with you and the local Housing Team to find you a place to stay.

4. What support will I get with education, training or employment?

We want you to be able to continue your education, employment or training.

Remember

If you have already started to receive funding from us for further education (up to 'A' levels), or higher education, this will continue as already agreed, until you have completed the course.

16-19 year olds

If you are still in education or in training, your college may be able to advise you whether you are eligible for a 16 - 19 Bursary. Career Advisors will have more information about this.

Laptop

If you need a laptop for your course we will make sure you have one before your 18th birthday. This would normally be funded by your pupil premium if you are year 11 or as part of a festival payment before your 18th birthday if you are in care.

If you are not able to access one of these payments, then we could consider providing funding up to £350.

18 to 21 year olds wanting to go to college

You will have the following support available to you:-

- Personal Advisor (PA) – is your allocated worker who will keep in touch with you and review your Pathway Plan to ensure you are getting the support you need.
- Assistance with some expenses for education, training and employment if needed. You may be eligible for an annual payment of up to:
 - £600 – bus pass, term time only
 - £300 – fees for a course
 - £80 – educational materials, equipment etc.
- Universal Credit should be available if you have been in care and remain separated from your family and are in:
 - Full time further / non advanced education. (This is up to A' Level standard or equivalent/12 hours or more).

OR

- In directed training for 12 hours a week or more.

Universal Credit should continue to be paid to you if you become 21 during the course, until the course is completed.

18 to 21 year olds not in employment, education or training

If you are not in employment, education or training and are finding it difficult to get back into anything, you may be eligible for an additional £10 for each week from the Local Authority to help enable and encourage you to attend college or work depending on your situation.

This will be with the agreement of the Team Manager for a limited period of time.

If you are eligible to receive the 16-19 Bursary from your college you will not be eligible for the £10.

21 to 24 year olds wanting to go into education or training

We have a duty to assess your circumstances and offer you support, if this is needed, once you have left our care, until you are 25, in respect of help to access employment, education or training.

We will undertake an assessment of educational need and you will be given advice and support to consider your options. This may also include:

- Using any savings you have to support you during this time.
- Combining work and study.
- Applying for financial support from charities and trusts.
- Considering if you are eligible for funding from your employer.

If we do provide you with support after 21 years of age, we will also provide you with a PA who will update your Pathway Plan with you and keep in touch.

Support for young people aged 18 to 24 years on an apprenticeship

If you are on an apprenticeship, and you are paid below the national minimum wage, you may be eligible for an allowance to top up your wage to the minimum national wage level.

Support for young people aged 18-21 years at university

If you have already started to receive funding for University from us, this will continue until you have completed your current course within the plan agreed.

If you are eligible for support at University you will receive the following support:

- A PA to review and update your Pathway Plan and keep in touch with you.
- Bursary – this will total £2,000 to cover the whole of the course. It will be paid in instalments annually across the duration of your course.

For example, if you are on a 3 year course you will receive £667 per year, or if you are on a 4 year course you will receive £500 per year.

This can be paid monthly or termly direct to your bank account, but could be paid as an annual lump sum as agreed with your PA and detailed in your Pathway Plan.

- A maximum of £100 per week towards accommodation costs during your official university holiday periods if this is needed. This payment is not available for the summer after your official course end date.
- Support from your PA to claim other grants or bursaries.

You will, like most university students, be expected to access student loans for living expenses and course fees, to use your savings to support your study in addition to the support we provide, and to work part time to make up any shortfall.

When you graduate, we will provide up to £250 to help celebrate your big day if no one else is able to help.

Support for parents with child care costs

If you want to access training or education, you should find out what child care support is on offer from your employer, training provider, college or university.

If they are not able to offer support, then talk to your PA about what support we may be able to offer to help you.

If needed you could make an application to the Head of Service to request funding towards the cost of childcare whilst you study.

All 3 year olds are entitled to free nursery hours from Early Years Services, unless you have no recourse to public funds in some areas they also offer free provision for 2 year olds. Check with the Local Authority in your area, or ask your PA.

Further funding for young people regarding education and training.

Solihull Council has a small budget to allocate financial support for individual young people aged 16 to 25 years, who have left our care, to support them in accessing education, training and employment.

If required we will undertake an assessment of educational need to confirm what, if anything can be provided. This support, if approved, will then be detailed in the pathway plan.

Remember

- Requests for support will need to be made in good time to help you plan ahead and confirm what support you will receive.
- Please do not rely on the funding until this has been agreed and you have had approval in writing.
- You may apply to the Head of Service for support to complete further education courses such as GCSE's.

Support after university

- We can continue to offer you advice and support if you need it until you are 25 years old for education, employment or training.
- However, when you have completed your university course, if you do not have paid work, you will be expected to claim benefits unless you are considering going on to a post graduate course.

- If you want to go on to complete a post graduate course, we will offer you support and assistance to help identify financial support for you to continue your education, and will advise you on how to access this.
- We are not able to pay your fees or living expenses.

You will need to consider how you can support yourself financially in post graduate studies by:

- Combining work and study
- Using savings

If you are considering doing a post graduate course it is best to start considering options about 18 months beforehand to ensure you know:

- What funding - i.e. studentships and grants - is available for the different courses you are considering.
- How you will fund your fees and living costs whilst completing the course.

Goodbye meal

When you and your PA have agreed that support will stop (at aged 21 or before your 25th birthday), we will take you out for a meal (up to £15) to celebrate this mile stone and wish you all the best.

5. What support will I get with health matters?

If you have specific health needs, your PA will discuss with you how these can be met as part of your Pathway Plan and offer you advice and support on how to access health services.

We are working with health services in Solihull to ensure they are able to meet the needs of young people, who have left care, and that young people are able to access available health services as and when they need them.

Your PA will support you to ensure you are registered with a GP and Dentist when you leave care. If you want to change your GP or Dentist after leaving care, your PA will be able to advise you about this.

Dental care

You may be eligible for some financial support from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) towards dental checks / treatment if you are:

- Aged 16 to 18 and in full time education.
- Pregnant, or have had a baby in the last 12 months.
- Having treatment as an in-patient or out patient at an NHS hospital.
- Receiving Universal Credit.
- On a low income and have a Health Credit Certificate (Known as HC2 or HC3 certificate).

Eye care

You may also be eligible for free eye tests and vouchers towards glasses / contact lenses if you are:

- Aged 16 to 18 and in full time education.
- Receiving Universal Credit.
- On a low income and have a Health Credit Certificate (this is known as HC2 or HC3 certificate).

For more details look on the DWP website (see section 8 for contact details).

Prescriptions

We can give you advice and support about paying for prescriptions, but we are not able to pay for the costs of prescriptions for you to get medication. You are eligible for free prescriptions if you are:

- Aged 16, 17 or 18 and in full time education.
- Pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months (you will need an exemption certificate).
- Have a listed medical condition (need certificate from your GP)
- Receiving treatment in hospital
- Receiving Income Support, Income-Based Employment and Support / Job Seekers Allowance covered by Universal Credit.

(See DWP website for more details and to confirm current financial support that may be available).

Support on a low income

If you are on a low income or a student in higher education post 19 years of age, you can apply for a Health Credit Certificate known as HC2 or HC3.

This will reduce the cost of, or provide free dental and eye checks / treatment as well as prescription charges.

This is dependent on your income and needs at the time you apply for support.

A certificate can last from 6 months to 5 years depending on your circumstances. To find out more, ask your GP, dentist, optician or ask your PA to help you apply.

Also look at the DWP website for more information.

6. Savings

Your Savings

When you leave care, you should have a short term savings account with savings your carer and you have made whilst you were in care.

Some of this may have been used to buy things before you moved to independence.

It is important when you have left care that you try and continue to save in case of emergencies, or for something special you may want.

If you do not have a bank account, your PA can advise and support you to get one set up. A bank account is not only important to have for savings but also to pay your wages or benefits into.

If you were in care for more than 12 months you should have some long terms savings.

These will have been invested into a Junior ISA or a Child Trust Fund.

When you become 18 years of age these accounts will become Adult ISA's or Adult Trust Funds and you will be able to access this money.

Your social worker or PA will make sure you have information about the money in your account and help you plan how to make best use of this money.

Remember

Your savings are there to support you in your move to independence and adulthood.

This may include buying items for your own place, driving lessons and supplementing the financial support available to you if you continue in education or training.

It is important that you think before you spend your savings, as once you have spent them it may be a while before you are able to add to your savings again.

Savings over £16,000

Some young people may have a lot of savings.

This includes money in bank accounts or ISAs or Trust Funds, and can also include inheritance or compensation given by the Courts, as well as being lucky enough to win competitions or the lottery.

If you have savings of £16,000 or more you will not be eligible for Housing Benefit, Income Support or Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit.

You can put £15,600 of these savings every year in any tax free saving account such as an ISA or Trust Fund.

If you have a lot of savings, it is important to get appropriate financial advice. Your PA will be able to advise you about ensuring you seek appropriate financial advice for your savings.

If you are 16 or 17 years old and receiving a personal allowance from us, we will encourage you to save a small amount each week in a short term bank account. This will help to provide items you may need as an independent adult, but which are not covered by your 'Setting Up Home' Allowance.

7. What if I do not get support or the support I feel I need?

Sometimes we may not provide you with the support you feel you need, or we may not agree to provide you with a particular service or funding you have requested.

There may be a number of reasons for this so it important you understand the reasons for you not getting the support you feel you need.

Your PA should:

- Record any decision not to provide you with a service or funding and the reasons why.
- Tell you about the reasons for this decision (and give you details of the complaints and appeals process if you would like this).

If you are unhappy about a decision, you need to firstly try to talk to your PA before making a complaint as they may be able to help you understand more about why this decision has been made or why the support is not available.

If you decide you want to make a complaint, you may want to have an Advocate to support you in making the complaint. Contact details for making a complaint and / or getting an Advocate involved to support you are in section 8.

Childrens Services will be reviewing the financial support available for care leavers every year.

Please let us know your views on the policy and any suggestions you may have. We will consider these when reviewing the policy.

8. Useful Information and Contacts

Solihull Children's Services

Child Asylum & 16+ Team

Chelmunds Place,

Chelmunds Cross Village Centre,

858 Chester Road,

Craig Croft, Chelmsley Wood

Solihull, B37 7TR

Email address: Lacadmin@Solihull.gov.uk

Opening Times

Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.20pm

Friday 8.45am to 4.30pm

Closed Bank Holidays

Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

For emergencies you can contact EDT outside of office hours, weekends and bank holidays

Telephone 0121 605 6060

Advocacy for children and young people in care and care leavers aged up to 25 years.

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

To get information, advice or advocacy contact them on

Telephone: 0808-8081001 (calls free from landlines)

Compliments and Complaints

If you are not happy about the services you have received from Childrens Services you can make a complaint.

Try and talk to your social worker / PA before making a complaint as they may be able to help you resolve it straight away.

To make a complaint about the services you receive please make contact by:

Writing to:

Solihull MBC

Business & Quality Team (Complaints)

Manor Square

Solihull B91 9QS

Or

Telephone no: 0121 704 8296

Email: **statutorycomplaints@solihull.gov.uk**

To find out more look on the website:

www.solihull.gov.uk

Other Support Services:

National Care Advisory Service – NCAS

NCAS is an organisation that provides useful information and support to looked after children and care leavers whilst in care and once they have left care to improve their life chances).

Email: ncas@catch-22.org.uk

Telephone no: 02073364824

Website: www.catch-22.org.uk

Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

Look at the following websites for up to date information on financial support available to people on benefits or low incomes

www.dwp.gov.uk www.gov.uk

Solihull Community Housing

Daytime and out of hours: 0121 717 1515