



# Wokingham's Pledge for children and young people in care



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# Wokingham's Pledge

## What is Wokingham's Pledge?

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 means that Wokingham and other local authorities have to write down a list of promises to their children in care to make sure they are good corporate parents. This list is called Wokingham's Pledge and was written by Wokingham Borough Council in consultation with children in care and care leavers.

## What does Wokingham's Pledge promise to do?

We will only promise you things we know we can do.

We will be honest with you at all times.

We promise to keep you safe.



## **We Promise to:**

### **Provide you with a safe, stable, happy place to live, where you belong and:**

- Try and provide a home of your choice
- Give you information about any home you are moving to
- Introduce you to your new carers before you move, unless it is an emergency move
- Ensure that your carer knows enough about you to be able to support you
- Not move you from your home unless there is an issue around your welfare –if there is we will explain clearly to you
- Check you are given good quality care
- Check that you are happy and settled.

## **We Promise to:**

### **Ensure your Social Worker works effectively with you:**

- Ensure you know who your social worker is and how to contact them
- Make sure you have the opportunity to talk to your social worker alone every time he / she visits you
- Ensure that when your social worker stops working with you, they say a proper goodbye and whenever possible, introduce you to your new social worker
- Fully involve you in care plans made for your future promoting your involvement in planning meetings and reviews, providing you with all minutes and reports from meetings you attend
- Care and plan for you as an individual person, involving you in decisions, taking account of your particular needs, especially those relating to your age, interests, disability, race, culture, religion and sexuality
- Ensure you have an up to date care plan
- Help you keep in contact with your family and friends providing a contact schedule that you will be given and if any contact with someone is not possible, then give you a clear reason why
- Help you understand your past and why you are in care including doing life story work with you
- Help you build a photo album of important people in your life and places you have been while in care and provide you with a 'treasure box' to keep all your special papers and possessions in.

## Make sure you get an excellent Education and:

- Make sure that you have a place at a school that will help you to do your best
- To ensure you remain at the same school but if this is not possible to involve you in the choice of your new school
- Take an active interest in what you do at school (e.g. attend parents' evenings)
- Support you in your education plan and in subject/career options
- Encourage and if necessary help you to do your homework
- Celebrate your achievements in education
- Provide you with a range of learning opportunities
- Ensure every child in care or young person has access to a computer and safe access to the internet
- Providing computers for children aged 11 years plus in full time education including those in further and/or higher education
- Ensure we help you reach your potential with qualifications, training or courses to choose your future path
- Ensure you have copies of school reports
- Ensure your PEPs are held termly and that you contribute to them.



## Help you have a Healthy lifestyle and:

- Provide you with contact details for a named nurse specifically involved with Children in Care
- Make sure you are registered at a Doctor's
- Provide you with access to information on all health issues
- Make sure you have regular dental and health check-ups
- Point you towards specialist groups and drop-ins
- Accompany you to appointments if you wish
- Do everything possible to make sure you've got the skills and knowledge to keep yourself healthy and happy now and in the future.



## To ensure you have fun and:

- Encourage you to take part in at least one leisure activity of your choice
- Provide information on local activities and events
- Support you to access sport and leisure facilities
- Help you record your achievements by providing an 'Achievement folder' for every child in care
- Take an active interest in your hobbies and celebrate your achievements
- Involve you in activities/holidays with your carers
- To give you the opportunity to go on a school holiday
- Celebrate dates that are important to you including birthdays and religious festivals.



## Listen to and value your opinions and:

- If you have a disability make sure that you have your own 'communication passport'
- Involve you in decisions and plans made about you and make sure you understand them
- Make sure you are involved in your reviews
- Offer you the opportunity to talk to your Independent Reviewing Officer before your review and give you their contact details
- Offer you the opportunity to be involved in participation and consultation groups such as the Children in Care Council
- Make sure you know who is responsible for you (including your corporate parents) and how to contact them
- Give you a timely response to any enquiry or request
- Make sure you have the opportunity to talk to your social worker alone every time he/she visits you and know how to contact them
- We will make sure you know your rights and what services you're entitled to
- You will have clear information and support about how to access all the help you need, including advocates, making complaints and contacting directors of children's services
- We will be honest with you.

## Help and support you on the road to adulthood and:

- Give you good preparation and planning for when you leave care, by providing information and advice, including drop-ins and groups
- Ensure you have your national Insurance number by your sixteenth birthday
- Find you work experience placements
- Help you find and settle into a new home emotionally, financially, securely and safely
- Help you access adult services if you need them
- Ensure you have access to an NHS dentist
- Help you to learn how to budget so you can afford bills and rent
- Help you learn to drive and be confident in using public transport
- Help you make the most of your chances for training, further education and employment including identifying funding
- We will make sure you have an up to date passport or understand the reasons why you don't
- If you get in trouble with the police we will make sure that the right adult is there to offer you help
- Make sure you have a Pathway Plan that you understand and that plans for your future
- Make sure you have a Personal Advisor when you need one.

## Who makes sure we keep our promises?

We don't always get it right so if you think Wokingham is breaking its promises, you can make your views known through:

- The Children in Care Council
- Regular reviews
- Your Social Worker
- The Children's Rights Officer
- A complaints procedure
- Your social worker or carer can put you in contact with any of them or help you with your complaint directly.

If you're a bit nervous about saying it yourself, you can ask for someone else to help or even to do it for you – these are known as “advocates”.

In addition, the CICC will be monitoring and reviewing the Pledge and they will let us know if they think we are not keeping our side of the bargain. Once a year, they will be suggesting changes to the Pledge if they think it's necessary.





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