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Qualifying young people

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Understand if you are a qualifying young person and what this means for you...

If you are 16/17 years old

If you are 16/17 years old and are a qualifying child then the local authority who last cared for you is responsible for offering advice and guidance.

However, if you were cared for in a private children's home, local health board/special health authority, care home, independent hospital or any home provided by the NHS for 3 months with no breaks; the local authority you ask for help and support is responsible for understanding what support you may need.

The responsible local authority **must**:

Complete an 'assessment of need' – this means that they need to understand what help and support you might need. A member of children's service's will carry out this assessment with you and those who are important to you to get a better understanding of what we can do to support you. You should take part in this assessment to make sure you get the right help or;

If you already have support from children's services and there is a current assessment (within 6 to 12 months) this assessment may be used to decide what support you will be offered.

The outcomes of this could be:

- You are allocated a personal advisor who will complete a pathway plan with you. A pathway plan is your document and outlines what the local authority will do to support you
- You do not need the support via a personal advisor and pathway plan, but will be offered advice, guidance and support to address anything that you are struggling with, this could be with support from a range of professionals
- Keeping in touch with you every 3 months to remind of the offer to you as a qualifying young person, where you consent to us doing this
- Offering support from Advocacy or the Employee Assistance Programme

If you do not want a service from the leaving care team, you are over the age of 16 and have capacity to make this decision then we will respect your wishes. However, we will write to you every three months to let you know that we are still here if you need us and remind you of this offer until the age of 18.

You can request an 'assessment of need' at any time by calling 01253 478320 and asking for the duty personal advisor or an adolescent service manager.

If you are 18+

Section 24 of the Children Act 1989 states that the following groups of children are 'Qualifying Children and Young People' – Persons Qualifying for Advice and Assistance – Aged 16 to 21:

- You were subject to a Special Guardianship Order, or if you are 18 you were subject to an SGO (you were in our care immediately

before the SGO was made)

- You were in our carer at any point after the age of 16 but you are no longer in our care (minimum of 24 hours)
- You were in our care at any point after you turned 16, but you were not in our care for more than 13 weeks
- You were previously in our care however, this stopped and you went to live with your parent or someone who had parental responsibility. After you had been at home for 6 months you became a qualifying care leaver
- You were privately fostered (is or was privately fostered aged 16 or 17);
- You were cared for by or on behalf of a voluntary organisation
- You were cared for in a private children's home
 - Cared for by any local health board/special health authority or by a local authority in the exercise of an education function [residential special school] for 3 months with no break in the care provided
 - Cared for in a care home or independent hospital or in any accommodation provided by or via NHS England, an integrated care board, National Health trust, NHS foundation trust for a period of 3 months with no breaks
 - The three months can start prior to the young person's 16th birthday

What this means for you

If you are over 18 years old and are a qualifying young person then the local authority who last cared for you is responsible for offering advice and guidance.

However, if you were cared for in a private children's home, local health board/special health authority, care home, independent hospital or any home provided by the NHS for 3 months with no breaks; the local authority you ask for help and support is responsible for understanding what support you may need – this may not be Blackpool.

The local authority **must**:

- Provide or pay for accommodation during college or university holidays, if you are studying full-time away from home. This can be at any time between the ages of 18 and 24
- Offer you advice and guidance where you have asked for this

The local authority can:

Complete an 'assessment of need' – this means that they need to understand what help and support you might need. A member of the leaving care team will carry out this assessment with you and those who are important to you to get a better understanding of what we can do to support you. You should take part in this assessment to make sure you get the right help or;

The outcomes of this could be:

- You are allocated a personal advisor who will complete a pathway plan with you. A pathway plan is your document and outlines what the local authority will do to support you
- You do not need the support via a personal advisor and pathway plan, but will be offered advice, guidance and support to address anything that you are struggling with, this could be with support from a range of professionals
- We will keep in touch with you every (3 to 6 months) to remind of the offer to you as a qualifying young person, where you consent to us doing this
- Offering support from Advocacy or the Employee Assistance Programme

If you are 18 and over and tell us that you do not want a service from us then we will provide you with our offer and contact details and cease contact with you. However, if you want or need our help and support at any time, please get in touch and we will be there to help you.

You can request an 'assessment of need' at any time by calling 01253 478320 and asking for the duty personal advisor or an adolescent service manager.

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