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# Separated migrant young people

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## Am I a separated migrant child or young person? Yes, if you...

Travelled to the United Kingdom (UK) from a country that is not in Europe without your parents

Became one of our children – this means that you are/were in the care of Blackpool Council as a separated migrant child (16-18) and Blackpool Council act/ed as your parents.

Are a separated child/young person, because you arrived in the UK, when you were under 18, were separated from your parents and made a claim for asylum in your own right.

## Why do Blackpool Council care for me?

There is a specific way that children and young people who are separated become the responsibility of Blackpool Council. This is known as the [National Transfer Scheme \(NTS\) Protocol for unaccompanied asylum seeking children \(UASC\)](#).

The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) is like a big teamwork plan for helping children who come to the UK without their parents. The NTS ensure every child gets a safe place to live, people to care for them, and support for school and health.

## Age assessments

Sometimes, social workers need to check how old a young person is when they arrive in the UK and do not have documents to show their age. This is called an age assessment.

Age assessments are important because they help decide what care and support a young person needs.

## Claiming asylum

Care leavers who have immigration or asylum status with the Home Office need to fill in lots of forms.

These forms must be completed before you turn 18 and every few years after that.

It is very important to do these things on time. If you do not, it could make it harder for you to stay in the UK.

This can be hard and confusing, so your pathway plan must clearly explain:

- What you need to do
- When you need to do it
- Who will help you

If you are under 18, you will get the same help and support as other child in our care.

When you turn 18, you will still get care and support from us but this will be different to what you had when you are under 18 and will depend on where you are in your immigration claim. We will plan with you for three possible outcomes (also known as triple planning), which means:

- Helping you plan for a future in the UK if you are given some form of leave to remain
- Ongoing support while you wait for a decision
- Helping you make a back-up plan if you have been refused leave to remain in the UK and have exhausted all appeals

## Immigration legal support

When you arrive in the United Kingdom and become the responsibility of Blackpool Council, your social worker will find you an immigration solicitor.

### Immigration solicitor?

An immigration solicitor is a lawyer who helps people with immigration questions or problems. This might be about staying in the UK, getting the right documents, or understanding your legal status.

### Why this might matter to you

If you are care experienced and your immigration status is not clear, or you feel worried about it, an immigration solicitor can help. Their job is to protect your rights and help you feel safe and informed about your future.

### How an immigration solicitor can help you

They can:

- Explain your immigration status in a way that makes sense
- Help you apply to stay in the UK, claim asylum, or get settled status
- Make sure forms and paperwork are done properly
- Help collect documents and evidence you need
- Speak to the Home Office for you
- Help if a decision is late, wrong, or refused
- Support or represent you if there is an appeal or court hearing

### How they should treat you

An immigration solicitor will:

- Treat you with respect and care
- Explain things clearly and honestly
- Take time to answer your questions
- Work with your social worker or personal advisor (if you agree)

### Important to know

- You have a right to legal advice about immigration
- Many care experienced young people can get free legal help
- Asking for support does not mean you are in trouble

## School and work

In the UK you are entitled to attend school or college free of charge until the age of 19.

Depending on your asylum claim this could be extended to 21 or beyond to cover university education (some fees may apply).

If you are over the age of 16 you can access college close to where you are living. However, you will need to complete a course and gain qualifications in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). We will provide you with a laptop to support you in learning English.

While you are claiming asylum and waiting for a decision from the Home Office, you cannot work, however you can volunteer. Volunteering means helping or working for an organisation without getting paid.

Volunteering is a good way to:

- Meet new people

- Learn new skills
- Help your local community
- Get ready for jobs you may want to do in the future

If you would like to find volunteering opportunities near you, your personal advisor or support worker can help you look, or you can search online for local volunteering groups and charities.

If your immigration status allows and you want to go to University we will be able to help you. Check out [Blackpool Council childrens services | Your future](#) to see what we offer.

## Health and wellbeing

When you live in the UK, you can get medical care through the NHS, which is the National Health Service. Most health care is free, including medicine you get from a chemist. Your social worker or personal advisor (PA) will help you apply for free health care and make sure you can use the services you need.

To start, you should register with a local doctor and a dentist. Your social worker or PA can help you do this. If you need glasses, you can also register with an optician.

If you need help with language, your social worker or PA should book an interpreter for your health appointments. They should also explain why each appointment has been booked so you know what to expect.

If you need medical advice and it is not an emergency, you can call NHS 111. If you ask for an interpreter, they should try to arrange one for you. This may take some time, so you might need to wait.

The [NHS Website](#) has links to general health information in other languages. If you are awaiting asylum or appeal rights exhausted, you will be supported to complete what is known as an HC2 certificate for help with health costs.

Many young people who come to the UK have been through hard and scary things. These things may have happened before they left their home country or during their journey to the UK. These experiences can affect how we think, feel, and cope. Some young people say they have upsetting memories or bad dreams. Talking about these experiences can feel hard, but it can also help.

Your social worker or personal advisor (PA) can help you get support from a trained person who understands these feelings. This person can help you feel safer, manage your thoughts and feelings, and focus on the things that help keep you strong and steady.

There are also voluntary services that offer help and support without judging you. You can find more information in the “Where to get help” section on the [Young Mind’s website](#).

You can also access 24/7 help and advice. This service is provided by a company completely independent to the council called Health Assured. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) can assist with all of life's ups and downs and it is not just counselling for use in a crisis. The telephone helpline can help with any non-work related issues.

Contact can be made:

- **By Phone: 0800 028 0199** (or add prefix 0044 to call from outside UK – stating they are a UK based employee, calls will be charged) Access to Mincom is arranged via scheduling a consultation using the email address or contact facility on the webpage. You just need to mention they are a **Blackpool Care Leaver**.
- **By App** : Download the Health Assured **Wisdom** app via Google play or Apple store using the code **MH A051861** – Here you can access “live chat” facility or request a call back.

You can access this in your own language by signing in, going to Account and changing the language at the top of the screen.

## Religion, culture and social activities

Whatever religion you follow, we will offer practical support to help you practise your faith. This can include your holy book and any other faith items you need to observe your religion.

Your personal advisor (PA) will also help you find a place where you can practise your religion, such as a church, mosque, synagogue, or temple, and meet other people who share your faith.

We will support you to settle into the local community where you live. At the same time, we will help you find community groups where you can stay connected to the culture of your home country.

This could include things like sports clubs or social groups.

# Contacting family and friends in your home country

We know how important it is for you to stay in touch with your family and friends in your home country. We also know this can sometimes be hard to do. Talk with your social worker or personal advisor (PA) about this, as they may be able to help you. If you want to phone your home country, it is often cheaper to use an international pre-paid phone card. You can usually buy these from local shops.

## Finding family members

If you have lost contact with your family and would like help to find them, an organisation called The Red Cross may be able to help you. The Red Cross helps look for missing people and can also pass messages to people who are hard to reach. [Family reunion application guidance](#) | [British Red Cross](#)

## Extra help and support? - Useful contacts

For more information and support you can contact;

- [The Refugee Council](#) provide advice and support to help people settle into their new community
- [Freedom From Torture](#) provide specialist psychological therapy to help asylum seekers and refugees who have survived torture recover and rebuild their lives
- [The Red Cross](#) help refugees, asylum seekers and migrants
- [Young Asylum Guide – Right to Remain](#)
- [What Happens When You Claim Asylum – Right to Remain](#)
- [Mental health advice for young Muslims](#).
- The [Muslim Youth Helpline](#) also provide a range of compassionate services and support to improve the mental wellbeing of young Muslims.
- [Doing What Matters in Times of Stress](#) is a helpful guide to provide skills to cope with
- Samaritans Phonenumber open 24/7 call for free on 116 123. (E) email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

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