

## Children and Young People Request

## Somerset County Council promises to

Involve me, listen to me, and take action for me.

When you can't do what I want tell me why.

Give me a named worker and their contact details. Keep in touch with me and return my calls.

If my worker is away then who do I talk to? Give me a name and a number.

Give me information about pocket money, clothing allowances, access to computers and my rights.

Give me a living away from Home Guide and a Leaving Care guide.

### Listening and informing

*Involve you in all the decisions that affect your life, by asking what you want, listening to what you tell us, and taking action.*

*Do as much as we can to help and support you, but when we can't do everything you want, we will make sure that we explain why*

*Give you a named worker in Children's Social Care, and their contact details. Your worker will keep in touch with you on a regular basis and, if you leave a message for them, they will get back to you within one working day, or arrange for someone else to do so if they are out of the office.*

*When you first meet with your named worker, they will give you their manager's contact details so that, if your named worker is going to be away from the office for several days or more, you have someone you can contact who will know you.*

*Tell you about the care system and leaving care system you are part of, and what happens and when it may happen. This will include what you are entitled to, for example pocket money, clothing allowances, access to computers, your rights and general information about Somerset Children's Social Care - Living Away from Home guide and the Leaving Care guide.*

Find the best and safest place possible for me to live and listen to what I want.

Make sure foster carers know how to look after me.

If I move address, you will try to keep me at the same school (if that's what I want).

### Where I live

*Find the best and safest place possible for you to live, depending on your views and needs, so you can live somewhere where you feel comfortable. We will do this by always considering who else is living at the same address before any placement is made, and whether or not you think the area is safe for you. This applies to both children in care and those young people making the transition to adulthood, that will be moving on from care into more independent living.*

*We will train foster carers about how best to care for you and make sure they treat you fairly.*

*If you move address, we will try to keep you at the same school (if that's what you want).*

If I am living outside of Somerset, help me keep in contact with the people who are important to me.

Help me stay in touch with people who are important to me. If I can't, tell me why. Be as honest as you can.

### Contact with important people

*If you are living outside of Somerset, we will help you live your life as normally as possible and will work with you to help you keep in contact with the people who are important to you.*

*Help you stay in touch with your family, friends and all other people who are important to you. If you are not allowed to see someone, your worker will tell you the reasons why and make sure you understand them. Depending on your age, this may involve talking through some of the legal reasons as to why you may not be allowed to stay in touch with certain members of your family or friends. We will make sure that we are as open and honest with you as possible and anything we discuss with you will be done in a sensitive way.*

Involve me in producing my Care Plan, that meets my needs and review this regularly.

Give me a copy and make sure I understand it.

Help me do the best I can in education. Arrange for me to have extra support if I need it.

Make sure I have access to a computer to help with school work.

Involve me in my Personal Education Plan (PEP) - give me a copy and make sure there is money to pay for the things in my PEP.

Encourage me outside of education, support me in interests and hobbies and recognise my achievements.

Prepare me for leaving school by supporting me to find a job or apply for college or university.

Make sure I am as healthy as possible and provide me with regular health checks.

Let me choose whether I have a male or female nurse.

Involve me in my health plan and give me a copy.

### Care planning, education and health

*Involve you in producing a Care Plan that meets your needs and is updated whenever there are any significant changes. It will be reviewed every six months as a minimum. You will be given a copy of your own plan, plus any updates, as well as notes from the reviews.*

*Help you do the best you can in education, by ensuring you have an education placement that meets your needs. We will also arrange for you to have extra support if you need it.*

*Make sure you have access to a computer to help with school work.*

*Involve you in producing a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which will be part of your Care Plan. It will be updated regularly and a copy given to you. We will ensure that there is money available to pay for the things in your PEP.*

*Encourage you to fulfil your potential outside education, by supporting you in your interests and hobbies. We will recognise all your successes and achievements and celebrate them with you, for example at the annual Children in Care Awards event.*

*Prepare you for, and support you in, finding a job, or going to college or university. The preparation will start before you leave school and you will receive advice about your future plans whilst at school.*

*Make sure you are as healthy as possible, by providing nutritious and tasty food and making sure you get regular health and dental check-ups. We will ensure that there is the option of you meeting with a male or female nurse for your health checks. We will also make sure that there is support available if you need someone to accompany you or act on your behalf in making your health and dental appointments.*

*Involve you in producing a Health Plan, which will be reviewed regularly and form part of your Care Plan, and copied to you.*

Give me a named Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and their contact details. Make sure they involve me in my meetings and reviews, ask me who I want there and offer an advocate to support me.

Give me a choice in where we hold my review meetings.

### Looked After Reviews

*Provide a named Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and give you their contact details. Your IRO will involve you fully in the reviews of your Care Plan - and the first two reviews of your Pathway Plan - and ask who you want to be there. They will also ensure that you are offered the opportunity to speak to an advocate, who can go with you to the reviews.*

*Hold the review meetings in a quiet and private setting where you feel comfortable, and make sure that tea, coffee and biscuits are available for everyone who attends.*

Help me to prepare for my adult life and independent living.

Help me produce my Pathway Plan and tell me the support you will give me.

Stay in touch with me until I am at least 21 (or 24 if I am still in education).

### Leaving care and preparation for independence

*Throughout your time in care we will help you prepare for adult life for when you move on from care into more independent living. You will not have to do this before you are 18 year's old unless you want to.*

*Work with you to produce a Pathway Plan, which will set out your plans for the future and the support we will give you.*

*Stay in touch with you until you are at least 21 (or 24 if you are still in education).*

Work hard to sort out any problems or concerns I have.

Make sure I know how to make a complaint, and that if I do, it is taken seriously and resolved.

### Sorting out problems and making complaints

*Work hard to sort out any problems or concerns you have about any aspect of your life.*

*Give you information about how to complain if things go wrong, and you don't think we are doing what we should. All complaints will be taken seriously and worked through until they are resolved.*

As representatives of Somerset County Council and its Children's Services, we fully commit the Council to its role as the Corporate Parent for all the Children and Young People in its care. In doing so, we acknowledge the request from the Somerset in Care Council, and promise to uphold our pledge in response to this as set out above.



'Somerset in Care Council.  
A voice for the views of Young People in Care'

Sheila Wheeler,  
Chief Executive Officer

Peter Lewis,  
Interim Director of Children's Services

Frances Nicholson,  
Cabinet Member for Children and Families

