

The Warwickshire Pledge

Our promise to Children & Young People Looked After

Make sure workers who work with you are there for you while you are in care....

We will,

- make sure that you know who your *social worker* is
- give you contact details for your social worker and who to contact if your social worker is not around
- let you know how often you will see your social worker
- not change your social worker unless it is absolutely necessary
- make sure you have an up to date "*care plan*" which explains how we will support you
- make sure you have an *independent reviewing officer* to help you check that the care plan is carried out properly
- make sure that you know about and have access to an *independent visitor* if you need one
- make sure you know about *advocacy services* and how they can help you to explain your views to other adults
- make sure all workers are positive, organised, truthful and less formal

Make sure you have a voice and take part.....

We will,

- treat you with respect
- always keep you informed and updated
- help you understand the reasons you are looked after
- explain what is going on in a way that you understand
- listen to your views, opinions and suggestions and tell you how they make a difference
- give you choices
- involve you in the decisions made about your life
- meet your religious and cultural needs
- make sure we take into account any additional needs or disabilities
- ask you through questionnaires and surveys about your experiences in care
- create opportunities for you to take part in the *Children in Care Council*
- create opportunities for you to help recruit staff
- create opportunities for you to help train staff and foster carers

Make sure you stay in touch with people important to you....

We will,

- support you to stay in touch with people who are important to you, when this is not possible, give you a clear reason why
- help to keep things safe that are valuable to you
- help you to understand what **life story** work is and your life story

Make sure we provide a stable and safe place to live....

We will,

- work with you to find a place to live
- make sure you get to meet your carer before you move there, except in an emergency
- tell you all about the foster carer and where they live
- tell the foster carer the things they need to know to look after you
- make sure that the foster carer is trained and supported to care for you
- listen to you about what makes a good foster carer
- give you a say on what you think about where you live as part of the **Foster Carer Annual Review**
- support you to stay in one place and not move you unless it is absolutely necessary
- check with you regularly that you feel safe and are happy with where you live
- keep you safe from bullying by giving you confidence and ideas on how to deal with bullying if it happens
- take action if you tell us that you are being bullied
- help you learn how to keep yourself safe
- support you to return to your family when the time is right
- explain who you can talk to if you are not happy with where you live
- get you a **passport** if you are entitled to one so that you have the opportunity to go on holidays

Make sure we support you to join in and have different experiences....

We will,

- help you to take part in activities, like sports and clubs
- give you opportunities to have fun and to try new things
- support your hobbies and interests
- let you know about the **Baradell Award and Tiffin Club** where you can apply for money to pay for activities that you are interested in.....things you dream about wanting to do
- give you opportunities to do volunteer work
- encourage you to go on the **National Citizenship Programme** and similar programmes

Make sure we work with you to aim high and achieve your goals and targets in education.....

We will,

- *make sure that pre-school children can go to **early years education**, where this is good for you*
- *make sure you attend school or college where you are happy*
- *support you to attend and do well at school*
- *help you to make the best possible educational choices for you*
- *expect your foster carer and your social worker to take an active interest in your education*
- *work with you to create your **Personal Education Plan** which is there to help you do well at school*
- *arrange for extra tuition if you need it*
- *help you learn English if it is not your first language*
- *make sure you have somewhere to study and do homework and have access to a computer*
- *make sure that you are part of decisions about what your **pupil premium** is spent on*
- *encourage you to take part in activities out of school hours*
- *make sure you know your **Designated Teacher**, this is the person in school that can help you with any problems*
- *support you if you choose to remain in education right through to University*
- *celebrate your achievements and successes*

Make sure we support you to stay physically and emotionally healthy.....

We will,

- *provide you with clear information about your health*
- *encourage you to make healthy and positive choices for yourself*
- *provide you with information and advice on healthy eating, exercise, drugs, alcohol and sexual health*
- *encourage you to have regular health and dental check ups*
- *make sure that your carer takes you to see the doctor or other health appointments when you need them*
- *make sure that you always have someone that you can talk to about your physical and emotional health and well being*
- *provide contact details for the **Named Nurse** for children looked after*

Make sure we support you to prepare for the future and adult life.....

We will,

- *make sure you receive pocket money*
- *open a **savings account or ISA** for you if you have been in care for over a year*
- *provide you with a worker to help prepare you for adult life and keep a check on your progress*
- *help you to find somewhere to live and set up a home with the right level of support*
- *make sure you know how much money you are entitled to*
- *make sure you have a **bank account** for when you live independently*
- *plan with you about when to leave care, this is called **Pathway Planning***
- *help you plan to **live independently** by supporting you to practice managing your money, cooking, cleaning, food shopping, paying bills, etc*
- *help you to think about **education, employment or training** that is right for you*
- *give those going to **higher education** a yearly grant plus other support*
- *create opportunities for **work experience** within the Council*
- *create opportunities for **apprenticeships** within the Council*
- *for your 16th birthday arrange for you to get your **National Insurance** number*
- *provide you a **health passport** so that you have your health history on your 18th birthday*

Keep your best interest at heart.....

We will,

- *only promise things we can do*
- *respect your personal beliefs and values*
- *respect your privacy*
- *remember your birthday and important days*
- *make sure you have the same opportunities as everyone else*
- *stay in touch with you and keep the door open for you so you can call us if you need us*
- *tell you how to make a complaint if you are not happy or satisfied with what we do*
- *support you to try again if things don't work out or go wrong*
- *not give up on you*

Act as your champion.....

We will,

- *be the best **Corporate Parents** we can be*
- *keep a check on and test to see if the promises in the Pledge are being kept*
- *take action where we are not doing good enough*
- *use the **Corporate Parenting Panel** to improve circumstances for children looked after*
- *support **Elected Members** to lead the way and make life better for children who are looked after in Warwickshire*

Glossary – some words we used that may need explaining

Social Worker	<i>a person who works for social services or for a private business providing help and support for people who need it</i>
Care Plan	<i>This is the plan for you while you are in care. It will include things about your education, health, where you live, your interests and other things</i>
Independent Reviewing Officer	<i>A worker who will meet you twice a year to make sure your care plan is right for you</i>
Advocacy Services or Advocate	<i>A person who can help you understand what you can and can't do. They can also help you make sure that your views are explained to other adults</i>
Independent Visitor	<i>This is a volunteer who is not connected to the council, who can support children in care like a mentor (a friend to hang out with)</i>
Children in Care Council	<i>A group of elected young people who meet monthly and talk with workers to explain how things could be made better for children and young people in care</i>
Life Story Work	<i>Life story work is about the story of a child's life history to allow the child to understand their past</i>
Foster Carer Annual Review	<i>Held once a year this is a method for checking a foster carer's progress. The review also helps to decide whether a foster carer is still suitable for the job as carer</i>
Passport	<i>This document shows who you are and allows you to travel to other countries</i>
Baradell Fund	<i>The Barradell Award is a pot of money to encourage looked after young people to take part in social activities and to celebrate their achievements</i>
Tiffin Fund	<i>The Tiffin Club provides extra money for education and career/business support for young people looked after</i>
Early Years Education	<i>Early years education is an education through play for very young children before they are old enough to go to school</i>
Personal Education Plan	<i>This is a meeting that takes place at school to discuss a plan to help a child or young person in care to get the best education possible. The government has made this law</i>
Pupil Premium	<i>The pupil premium is extra money for schools to improve the standard of education for young people who need it</i>
Designated Teacher	<i>This is a teacher in school that has responsibility for helping children in care do well with their school life and studies</i>
Named Nurse	<i>This is a nurse whose job it is to check and improve the health of children looked after</i>

Savings Account	<i>Savings accounts are great for storing money you want to keep in a bank for a long time, without using it. It can earn you interest (a little extra money)</i>
ISA	<i>This works in much the same way as a savings account, except you do not pay tax on the interest you earn.</i>
Bank Account	<i>Bank accounts give you easy access to your money. You receive a debit card and this means you can take money out of cash machines and pay for things in shops</i>
Pathway Planning	<i>Every looked after young person must have a pathway plan, usually starting around your 16th birthday. It's the law. Your pathway plan says how the council will help you prepare to live independently</i>
Live Independently	<i>This is about helping teenagers to learn new skills so that they can make the changes needed to live life as a responsible adult</i>
Education, Employment & Training	<i>This means you should be studying, working or learning, sometimes called EET</i>
Higher Education	<i>This generally means studying at a college or university</i>
Work Experience	<i>This is like being a volunteer in a work place to help you to get a feel for professional working environments</i>
Apprenticeship	<i>This is a job with training. Being an apprentice means that you get a qualification and skills whilst you are working and earning a wage</i>
National Insurance	<i>You need a national insurance number before you can start working. You pay National Insurance contributions to get certain benefits, including the State Pension</i>
Health Passport	<i>This is a booklet that will have information about your health in it</i>
Corporate Parents	<i>This means that the council, elected members, workers, and organisations must provide the best possible care they can for children and young people who are looked after by the council</i>
Corporate Parenting Panel	<i>This group of 6 elected members meets to help improve services and create better results for children and young people looked after and young people leaving care</i>
Elected Members	<i>This is a person who has been chosen by the public to become a member of a local government council, like Warwickshire</i>

The Warwickshire Pledge

Our promise to Children & Young People Looked After

I understand that being in care and leaving care isn't always easy and that it can bring extra challenges and pressures for you.

If we are going to get it right for you we need to make a real difference to help you do your best and have success in your life.

My pledge to you includes a number of things we will do that will help make sure that your time in care is a positive experience.

These are based around ten themes:

We will,

1. Make sure workers who work with you are there for you while you are in care
2. Make sure you have a voice and take part
3. Make sure you stay in touch with people important to you
4. Make sure we provide a stable and safe place to live
5. Make sure we support you to join in and have different experiences
6. Make sure we work with you to aim high and achieve your goals and targets in education
7. Make sure we support you to stay physically and emotionally healthy
8. Make sure we support you to prepare for the future and adult life
9. Keep your best interest at heart
10. Act as your champion

Print Name:

Sign Name:

Date: