



CHILDREN  
& FAMILY  
SUPPORT

WATCH  
YOUR WORDS

## WARWICKSHIRE'S DICTIONARY OF CARE



Warwickshire  
County Council

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# WATCH YOUR WORDS

## WARWICKSHIRE'S DICTIONARY OF CARE

### Foreword

*Language is an incredibly powerful communication tool.*

We use it to communicate our ideas and thoughts, and to question the world around us. Therefore, it is so important that the language used with children, young people and their families is clear and supportive.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) wants all children and young people to feel heard and empowered with their voice. WCC has designed this guide to support staff to work with them by helping to break down language barriers.

*Please remember that this dictionary is not an exhaustive list of all language and words used. Do not be afraid to ask young people and families about the language they would prefer.*

**John Coleman**

Assistant Director for Children and Families

This dictionary can also be used by young people themselves.

Warwickshire's Dictionary of Care has been written in conjunction with care experienced young people. It features suggestions of alternative language and words that can be used to replace some of the more traditional or historical terms, which young people have told us are difficult to understand and/or are disliked by them.

There is also an acronym buster to help people navigate the shortened words (acronyms) often used.

This booklet has been co-produced by Care Experienced Apprentices and employees within the Participation Team and Quality & Impact Team at Warwickshire County Council

**"Words can influence us, inspire us or just as easily bring us to tears. Words change our relationships, our demeanour, our entire system of beliefs, and even our futures"**

**"Words can build up or tear down. ... Words influence others and build relationships at work and personally. They can tear down relationships. Simply put, language holds massive, colossal power to manifest change, whether it's good or bad"**

**"Think of us while you use words or write them. You can help have a good impact from what you say"**

**"I deserve to know my past, while reading my files, I don't deserve to see and read hurtful words about me. Even if I am a pain, would you say or write those things about your own children to read in their future?"**

**Remember to ask us what we want to hear. Everyone is different and words effect each of us in a different way"**

**"Think about the words you use and the meaning behind them. We all think and understand differently, what means something to you and the words you use can hurt or insult me"**

**"We look up to others and we are taught by others, you are one of the closes people to us and what you say matters"**

**"Teach us right, use words we should be saying about ourselves that raise us up!"**

**"Words can knock us down or give us confidence"**

## A

### **ABSCOND**

The act of running away

**Alternatives:** missing, run away

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### **ADVOCATE**

Independent person who helps to support, as well as provide practical advice, they can work on your behalf to ensure all the rules are being followed correctly, and you're getting everything you're entitled to

**Alternatives:** Someone independent to help understand and offer support

## B

### **BIOLOGICAL PARENT**

A parent who has conceived and whose genes are therefore transmitted to the child

**Alternatives:** birth mother/ father, mum/ dad

## C

### **CARE LEAVER**

A care leaver is a young person aged 16-25 years old who has been in care at some point since they were 14 years old, and were in care on or after their 16th birthday

**Alternatives:** Care Experienced

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### **CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

Any behaviour that someone displays that is a challenge for others to manage and/or puts the young person or others at risk

**Alternatives:** Having trouble coping, struggling to manage emotions, distressed feelings, strong minded, determined

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### **CONTACT**

A term used to describe the way children keep in touch with siblings, birth parents and other family members while they are in care

**Alternatives:** Family time, spending time with my family

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## D

### **DIFFICULT TO PLACE**

Difficulty in finding the right home for a young person

**Alternatives:** Extra support needed to find the right home

## F

### **FOSTER CARER**

Foster carers are people who officially take a child into their family for a period of time, without becoming the child's legal parents

**Alternatives:** Foster parents, foster mum and/or dad, call by their name

## I

### **INTERVENTION**

A term used to describe the action or process of intervening

**Alternatives:** Help, support, guidance

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### **INTENTIONALLY HOMELESS**

Deliberately doing something to cause you to lose your home.

**Alternatives:** Struggling to manage different things required to run a home, resulting in homelessness

## L

### **LAC or LOOKED AFTER**

Term used to describe a child who is in the care of the local authority for more than 24 hours

**Alternatives:** Child in care

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### **LAC REVIEW**

a meeting to ensure that appropriate plans are in place to safeguard and promote the overall welfare of the child in care in the most effective way and achieve long term care arrangements

**Alternatives:** All About Me Review

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# P

## **PATHWAY PLAN**

A document that records needs, identifies actions to be taken, and resources that need to be put in place to support young people during their transition to adulthood

**Alternatives:** Pathway to Change

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## **PEERS**

A person of the same age, the same social position, or having the same abilities as other people in a group

**Alternatives:** People similar to you, friends, people in the same circle

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## **PLACEMENT**

A term used to describe the action of placing someone or something somewhere

**Alternatives:** Home, where you live, family

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# R

## **RESPITE**

Planned or emergency temporary care

**Alternatives:** Sleepover, a break for children, chill time, playdate

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## **RESTRAINED**

Physical restraint which involves one or more person holding a person, moving the person, or blocking their movement to stop them leaving

**Alternatives:** Physical help to stay safe

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## **REUNIFICATION**

The reunion of children in foster care returning to live with their birth parents or guardians

**Alternatives:** Going back to live with family

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# S

## **STATUTORY VISIT**

Visits that social workers are required to do, where the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or where they are a Child in Care

**Alternatives:** visit to see how you are doing, visit at home

# T

## **TRANSITION**

A change from one form or type to another

**Alternatives:** a time of change, moving on

# V

## **VICTIM**

A term used to describe a person who has been harmed, killed, or injured due to a crime being committed

**Alternatives:** person who has been harmed, survivor

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## **VULNERABLE**

Someone who is weak and without protection, with the result that they are easily hurt physically or emotionally.

**Alternatives:** Needs extra support through no fault of their own.

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# Victim Blaming Language

A victim of exploitation is never to blame for the abuse they have experienced.

Ensuring appropriate use of language is a vital step towards reducing victim blaming of children.

The following table gives a small example of victim blaming language and includes some alternative phrases.

<p><b>“Putting themselves at risk”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child or young person may have been groomed</li> <li>• The child or young person is at an increased vulnerability of being abused and/or exploited</li> <li>• The child or young person is not in a protective environment</li> </ul>
<p><b>“Promiscuous”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child or young person is vulnerable to being sexually exploited</li> <li>• The child or young person is being sexually exploited</li> </ul>
<p><b>“Having contact with adults via the internet”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult males and/or females may have been contacting the child or young person</li> <li>• The child or young person may have been groomed</li> <li>• There are concerns that others may be using online technology to access or abuse the child or young person</li> </ul>
<p><b>“Drug running”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child or young person is being criminally exploited</li> <li>• The child or young person is being trafficked for purpose of criminal exploitation</li> </ul>
<p><b>“Involved in CSE”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child or young person is vulnerable to being sexually exploited</li> <li>• The child or young person is being sexually exploited</li> </ul>
<p><b>“She’s 15 and has a 30-year-old boyfriend”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The young person says that they are in a relationship with a person and there are concerns about that person’s age, the imbalance of power, exploitation and/or offending</li> </ul>

## Remember to consider...

Is the language you are using empowering to children?

Would you be comfortable with someone who has experienced exploitation hearing or seeing your communication?

# Acronym Buster

There are many shortened versions of words (acronyms) used not only in Warwickshire County Council but within social care more generally. The acronyms can sometimes mean different things to different people. Below is a guide that should help you understand what the acronym stands for and the meaning behind it.

<b>ADM</b>	Agency Decision Maker	The person who makes the decisions as to whether a proposed Care Plan for Adoption, Early Permanence and Foster to Adopt and Permanent Fostering is the right decision for the child.
<b>AMR</b>	All About Me Review	A meeting to ensure that appropriate plans are in place to safeguard and promote the overall welfare of the child in care in the most effective way and achieve long term care.
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	The services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural, or mental health difficulties.
<b>CAO</b>	Child Arrangement Order	An order made by the Court which details the arrangements for a child, including where the child will live and how they will spend time with each parent.
<b>CE</b>	Child Exploitation	The manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18s.
<b>CSE</b>	Child Sexual Exploitation	When a young person is encouraged, or forced, to take part in sexual activity in exchange for something.
<b>CDM</b>	Children Decision Making Meeting	A meeting held regularly to ensure clear planning for children and young people; to ensure that children where possible are maintained within their own family and where not possible that planning is initiated to achieve early permanency arrangements.
<b>CIN</b>	Child in Need	A child will be "in need" if he or she cannot achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development. A child will also be in need if he or she is disabled.
<b>CO</b>	Care Order	An order made by the family court when the local authority can prove that a child or young person living in their area is not being looked after properly.

<b>CP</b>	Child Protection	Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
<b>CPP</b>	Child Protection Plan	The child protection plan is a document that sets out how social workers will check on the child's welfare, what changes are needed to reduce the risk to the child and what support will be offered to the family.
<b>CPN</b>	Community Psychiatric Nurse	A mental health nurse who works in the community.
<b>DASH</b>	Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour based violence	An assessment tool used by the Police to identify and assess victims of domestic abuse, stalking and honour-based violence.
<b>DA/ DV</b>	Domestic Abuse/ Domestic Violence	Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour on the part of the abuser designed to control his/her partner.
<b>DBS</b>	Disclosure Barring Service	Helps organisations undertake security checks of those working for them, ensuring that their customers are protected from harm.
<b>DSL</b>	Designated Safeguarding Lead	The person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues in school. The person fulfilling this role must be a senior member of the school's leadership team, and the DSL role must be set out in the post holder's job description.
<b>EP</b>	Educational Psychologist	A professional psychologist with specialist knowledge and expertise in areas related to child development and the educational system.
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation	Involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
<b>FSW</b>	Family Support Worker	Family support workers offer emotional and practical support to families who are going through long or short-term difficulties. They are usually employed by local authorities.
<b>HSB</b>	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	Developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people, and which may be harmful or abusive. It's harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as those it is directed towards.

<b>HELAC</b>	Health Assessment for Looked After Children	A statutory health assessment that is required to be completed for all children within 28 days of entering care. It is completed by a paediatrician or an appropriately trained medical practitioner.
<b>HV</b>	Home visit	Visit taking place at someone's home.
<b>HV</b>	Health Visitor	Health visitors are registered nurses or midwives who have had additional training in public health nursing. They provide support to all families and will support from pregnancy until children are five years old.
<b>ICO</b>	Interim Care Order	This means that the local authority makes decisions about a child rather than their own parents for the short term before the family court makes a final order. The child will get a social worker to make the decisions day to day.
<b>ICPC</b>	Initial Child Protection Conference	A child protection case conference is held if the child is at risk of significant harm, so that all the relevant professionals can share information, identify risks, and outline what needs to be done to protect the child.
<b>IRO</b>	Independent Reviewing Officer	IROs are Social Workers. All local authorities have a duty to appoint an IRO to every child in care. IROs are required to oversee and scrutinise the Care Plan of the child/ young person and ensure that everyone who is involved in that child's/ young person's life fulfils his or her responsibilities.
<b>ISW</b>	Independent Social Worker	Typically self-employed, an Independent Social Worker takes on cases from local authorities or the children's courts, carrying out specialist assessments or providing an expert opinion where one is required. ISWs generally have significant experience and knowledge.
<b>LAC</b>	Looked After Child	A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked after child. Looked after children are also often referred to as <b>children in care</b> , a term which many children and young people prefer.
<b>LADO</b>	Local Authority Designated Officer	The person who should be notified when it has been alleged that someone who works with children has behaved in a way which has harmed or might harm a child. Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child.

<b>MAC</b>	Multi Agency Contact (referral form for MASH)	A form which is used by partners to raise safeguarding concerns.
<b>MACE/ MACE</b>	Multi Agency Child Exploitation Meeting	It is essential that the MACE process is implemented to effectively respond to concerns where a child/young person is groomed or targeted for exploitation. MACE is the established framework in Warwickshire for responding to the contextual challenges of exploitation in all forms
<b>MAPPA</b>	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements	The process through which various agencies such as the police, the Prison Service and Probation work together to protect the public by managing the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community.
<b>MARAC</b>	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference	A meeting where agencies talk about the risk of future harm to people experiencing domestic abuse and if necessary their children, and draw up an action plan to help manage that risk.
<b>MASH</b>	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	The MASH (now known as Children and Families Front Door) deal with new safeguarding concerns, where someone is concerned about the safety or well-being of a child or adult or thinks they might be at risk of harm. For example, a teacher may believe that one of their pupils is at risk of harm at home, or a doctor may think an older person is being neglected.
<b>NAI</b>	Non accidental injury	A term that is used to describe a number of different physical injuries or abuse to a child. The term describes any injury that is said to have been inflicted. This means that it cannot simply be an injury that occurred unintentionally or unexpectedly.
<b>NEET</b>	Not in Employment, Education or Training	Young persons not engaged in education, employment, or training, expressed as the acronym.
<b>NFA</b>	No Further Action	No further action will be taken by agencies.
<b>PA</b>	Personal Advisor	A PA will continue working with you until you turn 21, or up to the age 25 if you are in full-time education, or if you have made a request for additional support and advice.

<b>PEP</b>	Personalised Education Plan	A PEP is a statutory requirement to ensure that a record is maintained regarding the child's educational progress and thus it forms an integral part of the child's overall care plan.
<b>PLO</b>	Public Law Outline	PLO is a reference to the procedure that the Local Authority must follow. The Local Authority has a duty, should they have sufficient concerns about any child in their area and the care that they are receiving from their parents or carers, to investigate these concerns.
<b>PO</b>	Placement order	An order which allows the local authority to place a child with suitable adopters following care proceedings (even if the parents do not agree).
<b>PP</b>	Police Protection	The police have the power to remove a child to a place of safety in an emergency.
<b>PR</b>	Parental Responsibility	Parental responsibility gives the right to make important decisions about a child's life like, who looks after them, where they live and how they are educated.
<b>PSO</b>	Prohibited Steps Order	A Prohibited Steps Order is a type of Court Order used by one parent to stop another parent from making certain decisions about their child's upbringing.
<b>PWP</b>	Placement with Parents	A Prohibited Steps Order is a type of Court Order used by one parent to stop another parent from making certain decisions about their child's upbringing.
<b>PVP</b>	Protecting Vulnerable Persons	A team within the Police who are responsible for investigating incidents involving vulnerable people.
<b>RCPC</b>	Review Child Protection Conference	A review child protection case conference is held if the child is at risk of significant harm, so that all the relevant professionals can share information, identify risks, and outline what needs to be done to protect the child.
<b>S20</b>	Section 20	Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 provides the local authority with the power to provide accommodation for children without a court order when they do not have somewhere suitable to live. It is widely known as voluntary accommodation because the parents must agree to the child being accommodated.

<b>SENCO</b>	Special Educational Needs Coordinator	The schoolteacher who is responsible for assessing, planning, and monitoring the progress of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
<b>SEND or SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities	A child or young person aged from 0 to 25 years who has special educational needs or disability.
<b>SGO</b>	Special Guardianship Order	Special Guardianship is a formal court order which places a child or young person with someone permanently and gives this person parental responsibility for the child.
<b>SIBS</b>	Sexually inappropriate behaviour	Developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people, and which may be harmful or abusive. It's harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as those it is directed towards
<b>SO</b>	Supervision Order	A legal order that gives the local authority the legal power monitor the child's needs and progress while the child lives at home or somewhere else.
<b>SW</b>	Social Worker	A professional who supports adults, children, families, and communities to improve their lives.
<b>TAC</b>	Team Around the Child	A meeting led by the child/ young person and their family supported by professionals, where there is a risk of breakdown in the home environment that does not require safeguarding intervention or is not due to abuse.  The meeting brings together family and relevant practitioners to address the needs of the child or young person.
<b>TM</b>	Team Manager	A manager within a team.
<b>UASC</b>	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a local authority.
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service	The Youth Justice Service is a team that works with young people aged between 10 and 17 years who have offended or are likely to do so.
<b>YP</b>	Young Person	Anyone under the age of 18.

# Have your say in shaping the Children & Families Service at Warwickshire County Council.

## Ways you can get involved:

- **Children in Care Council (11 – 17 years)**
  - Email [cicc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cicc@warwickshire.gov.uk) to find out more or visit: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenincare](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenincare)
- **Care Experienced / Care Leavers Forum (18 – 24 years)**
  - If you would like to get involved email [lissphillips@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lissphillips@warwickshire.gov.uk)

Have your voice heard and help improve the lives of children and young people across the county.













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