

SUPPORTING CARE LEAVERS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

A GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICE IN COLLEGES
ACHIEVING THE BUTTLE UK QUALITY MARK

Glossary of terms

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SUPPORTING CARE LEAVERS IN FURTHER EDUCATION: A GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICE IN COLLEGES ACHIEVING THE BUTTLE UK QUALITY MARK

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary provides short explanations of terms that are associated with care leavers, the care system and Further Education colleges. The terms here are those used in England and may vary slightly across the other 3 nations.

Designated person/member of staff

This is the person in a college who has responsibility for helping care leavers with any curricula or wellbeing issues. This person can help the care leaver themselves or signpost them to other sources of support. Each college has its own definition of who should undertake this role, for example, it could be a member of staff who has pastoral care as their role, a subject teacher or a member of the additional learning support team. The college should make sure that all care leavers are aware of who this person is, how they can help and how to contact them at any time.

Pathway Plan

The Pathway Plan is drawn up for a young person living in care at 15/16 and then revisited at 18 by the young person's Personal Adviser. This is a vehicle for Social Workers to talk to the young person they are responsible for about their current situation and plans for the future. It covers a range of topics including finding somewhere to live, what kind of learning or work they would like to engage with, their health, their relationships and support mechanisms, their own identity, financial support available and how they will support themselves. The Pathway Plan should be revisited at least every 6 months but preferably whenever the young person needs support.

Personal Adviser

This person is appointed by the local authority at 17/18 to support the young person leaving care to make choices about learning and work and to signpost to further support externally. They should review the Pathway Plan at this point. The Personal Adviser currently can be a trusted member of the young person's family or a friend but is more commonly employed by the Local Authority in this role. In some cases the Social Worker responsible for the young person at 16 continues as Personal Adviser.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

This is the plan drawn up for learning at school. These plans are designed to establish clear targets and actions to respond effectively to each child's needs and provide a continuous record of their achievements.

In addition, a Personal Education Plan is an opportunity to listen to children, record their hopes and worries and clearly show their stated aspirations. Ideally, the PEP should feed into the development of a Pathway Plan at 16.

Virtual School / Virtual Head Teachers

All the children looked after by a local authority in England are classed as pupils in a Virtual School. The Virtual School will have a virtual head teacher. This is someone appointed by the local authority to promote the educational achievement of all the children looked after by that council. The children are on a 'virtual' school roll, even though they are physically spread across the schools in an area.

The idea is that each local council employs an experienced teacher to oversee the educational progress of all children under the care of that local authority. A single school may have only one or two children in care on their registers and be unfamiliar with the issues.

The Virtual Head will have the specialist knowledge to provide extra support to designated teachers. They also have a 'bigger picture' remit to work with all professionals in the Children's Services department of the council and with all schools in the area on initiatives to promote the education of children in care.