

A guide for Tameside Care Leavers



Children
at the heart of
Tameside





Contents

1. Welcome to your Local Offer!	3
2. Find out what support you can get	7
3. A place to call home	9
Finding your new home	10
Looking after your home	11
What if I want to live away from the Tameside area?	12
4. Your relationships and staying connected	13
Keeping in touch	13
Community and celebrations	13
If you're in trouble or in custody	15
5. Earning and learning	17
The Virtual Schools Team and Tameside Futures	17
The Leaving Care Service and your personal advisor	18
6. Physical and mental health	20
Physical health	20
Mental health	21
Leisure services	22
Sexual health and relationships	23
Support if you are expecting a baby or are a parent	24
7. Having fun, creativity and movement	25
8. Your rights, money and life admin	26



1

Welcome to your Local Offer!

This guide tells you about the help you can get as a care leaver in Tameside. It includes support with school, work, health, housing and things to do. The Leaving Care Service made this guide to help you find the information you need.

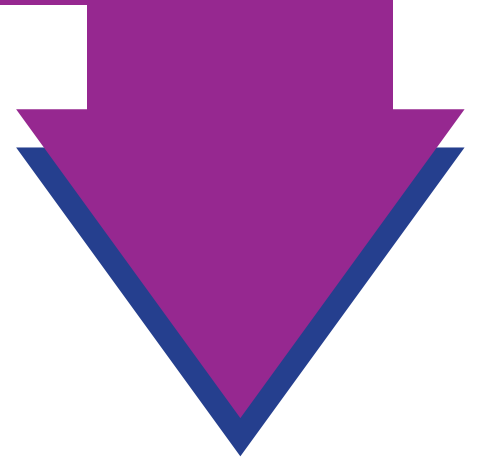
Below you can find some information about what will happen when you're getting ready to leave care.

Meeting your personal advisor

The Leaving Care Service will help you get ready for adult life. After your 16th birthday, you will have a personal advisor. They will help you plan for your future and connect you with the services you need. You will usually meet them for the first time with your social worker and will then see them every eight weeks, or more often if you need to.

Your personal advisor and the Leaving Care Team will support you until you are 21.

If you need extra support after this, we can continue to help you up to the age of 25. Before your 21st birthday, we will talk with you about what support you need (an assessment of need) and make a plan together.



1

Welcome to your Local Offer!

At Tameside, we know that everyone needs help from time to time, no matter their age. Being a care leaver doesn't stop at 25, and neither does our commitment to you.

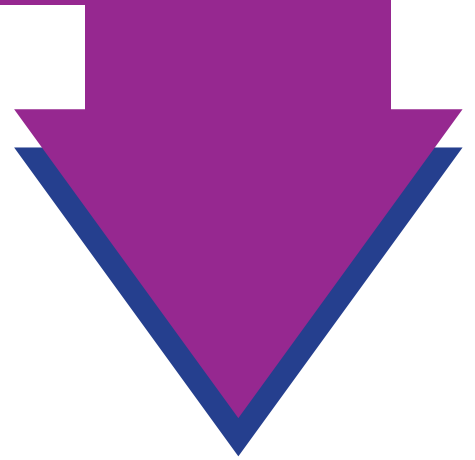
If you ever need advice, support, guidance, or just someone to talk to, please get in touch. Whether you left care recently or years ago, we want you to know that we are still here for you.

If you contact us after your support has ended, we will have a conversation with you about what you need and how we can help.

If you're in Higher Education

If you are studying at university or are in higher education, the Leaving Care Team will continue to support you throughout your course, or until the end of the academic year in which you turn 25.

Whatever your goals, we will continue to support you to achieve your ambitions and make the most of your future.



4





Your Pathway Plan will be updated and shared with you before your review meeting. While you are under the age of 18, your review will be chaired by your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). When you turn 18 and leave care, in some cases the IRO may continue in this role, or your review may be carried out with your personal advisor or another worker.



Welcome to your Local Offer!

Leaving your care placement

When you leave care depends on what is right for you, but if you live in residential care, this is usually when you are 17 and 18 years old. You might then move into supported accommodation, a bedsit or your own flat! Your personal advisor will help you find the right home for you.

If you live with foster carers, we will talk with you, your carers and other important people about your future plans as early as possible. This includes whether you would like to stay living with your foster carers after you turn 18, this is called 'Staying Put'.

'Staying Put' gives young people who have a strong relationship with their foster carers the chance to stay living with them after they turn 18. This support can usually continue until you are 21, and in some circumstances, such as if you are attending university, it may continue until you are 25.



2

Find out what support you can get

It can be hard to know what support you should be getting, as it can be different depending on which type of care leaver you are, your age and where you are living.

All care leavers in Tameside will be within one of the four care leaver categories: eligible, relevant, former relevant, and qualifying.

We have explained each type of care leaver below to help, but you can also ask your social worker or personal advisor to explain. You can also use the questions on the Coram Voice website to help work it out: www.coramvoice.org.uk/myrights/my-rights-when-i-am-leaving-care/am-i-a-care-leaver/



Eligible

You are aged 16 or 17 years old and are currently looked after. You have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since your 14th birthday, including at least one day when you were aged 16 or 17. It does not matter whether those 13 weeks were all at once or at separate times.

Relevant

You are aged 16 or 17 years and are no longer being looked after but were previously an eligible care leaver.





Find out what support you can get

Former Relevant

You are aged 18 to 24 and used to be an eligible or relevant care leavers just before you turned 18.

Qualifying

You are aged 16 to 21 (or up to 25 if you are in education or training) and are no longer being looked after, but your situation does not match the descriptions of eligible, relevant or former relevant Care Leavers.

There are many reasons why you might not match the other descriptions. It could be because you were looked after for less than 13 weeks after your 14th birthday, you have been living at home with your parents for at least six months or you were looked after immediately before a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) was made and are now over age 16.

Not all support in this Local Offer is available to everyone. What you can access can depend on what type of care leaver you are. Look out for where it says “**[who this applies to]**” next to different types of support throughout this document. This will tell you which type of care leavers can get that help.



A place to call home

Your social worker and personal advisor will help you find the right home for you, whether that's supported accommodation, or your own flat!

As part of getting ready for adult life, we will talk with you about your housing options and help you decide what is best for you. Your personal advisor can help you complete housing applications, attend housing appointments, and explore accommodation options that match your Pathway Plan. We can also support you to apply for Housing Benefit if you are eligible.

As a care leaver, you do not have to pay Council Tax in Greater Manchester until you are 25 years old. Your worker can tell you more about this. If you live outside Greater Manchester, speak to your worker about what support may be available in your area. If you live outside of Greater Manchester, we will do our best to help you apply for an exemption, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Your social worker and personal advisor can help you get a £3,000 Home Allowance to buy things for your home. As part of this they can also help with moving costs and your first TV licence **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**.



A place to call home

Finding your new home

You can apply for social housing from age 16 and join one or both of the housing registers in Tameside to improve your chances of finding a home. Your social worker or personal advisor can help you apply. To find out more, go to: www.tameside.gov.uk/housing/housing-and-homelessness/finding-somewhere-to-live



Once you have found your home, you will get some money to help you settle in. This includes:

- a Setting Up Home Allowance of up to £3,000 when you are getting your first home **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**
- money to help you move your belongings **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**
- your first TV Licence **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**
- help with paying your deposit and rent before you move in if private rented accommodation is the best option for you

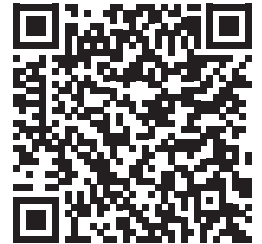


A place to call home

Looking after your home

Moving into your own home is a big step. There is extra support available to help you settle in and look after your home:

- Shared Lives a supported living option if you need extra help in adult life, for example, if you have a learning disability or additional needs. To find out more, go to: www.tameside.gov.uk/AdultServices/Shared-Lives-Approved-Carers
- If you're a care leaver aged 18 to 25 and live in Greater Manchester, you may be able to get a Council Tax discount up to 100% [who this applies to: former relevant care leavers can receive a 100% Council Tax discount]. To find out more, go to: www.tameside.gov.uk/counciltaxandbenefits/revenues/council-tax-discounts/council-tax-discounts/care-leavers-discount
- As a care leaver, you can access free replacement bins, free additional waste collections and bulky waste disposal, as well as support with moving larger household items, such as fridges and cookers.



A place to call home

What if I want to live away from the Tameside area?

If you have links to another area and would like to move there, we will do our best to help you. Finding accommodation in another area can sometimes take longer or be more difficult, but we will support you through the process.

If you move to an area close to Tameside, we will continue to work with you as normal. If you move further away, we will help you connect with services and support in your new area. Wherever you choose to live, Tameside will continue to have responsibilities to support you as a care leaver.



4

Your relationships and staying connected

We know how important it is to have trusted adults, friendships, support and safe spaces where you feel you belong.

Keeping in touch

Your personal advisor can help you stay in touch or reconnect with important people in your life, including family and former foster carers. They may also be able to help with travel costs so you can visit family who live further away **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**.

Community and celebrations

The Leaving Care Service offers fun groups and activities that you can take part in, as well as ways to help you celebrate birthdays and festivals.

Tea Club is a relaxed drop-in which runs every Monday from 4pm till 6pm, if you'd like to get involved, please speak to your personal advisor. This is a great chance to learn how to cook on a budget while having fun and meeting other people.

We will help you celebrate your birthday and festivals with a gift or some money **[who this applies to: former relevant young people and eligible or relevant young people]**.

What you can get depends on your age. Have a look below to find out what's available for you.



4

Your relationships and staying connected



Under 18s will receive a **birthday allowance** of **£80**. Half of the birthday money will be spent with your worker.



Under 18s will receive a **Christmas allowance or festival allowance** (but not both but can be half for each festival) of **£100**.



Upon **reaching your 18th birthday**, you will be entitled to a **birthday allowance totalling £100**. Half of the birthday money will be spent with your worker.



Over 18s will receive a **birthday present** to the value of **£25**. This is often used for a meal with your worker.



Over 18s will receive a **Christmas allowance or festival allowance** (not both but can be half for each festival) of **£25**.



4

Your relationships and staying connected



Upon **reaching your 21st birthday, or when work ends with your worker**, you will be entitled to an allowance **totalling £25** to spend with your worker for a meal/present.

Please note: If you are under 18 and living with foster carers or in a children's home, the support you receive for birthdays and Christmas may be different.

If you're in trouble or in custody

If you're involved with the Youth Justice Service or Probation, we'll work with them to make sure you're supported.

If you are **on remand**, you can receive credit each month to contact your family, friends or legal advisors **[who this applies to: eligible and relevant young people and former relevant young people where free legal calls are unavailable]**.

If you are **in custody and under 18**, you will get an allowance of £12.50 each week.

If you are in education or training, you will get money from where you study, and we will make sure you receive £12.50 each week in total.



4

Your relationships and staying connected

If you are **serving a sentence**, we will visit you at least every eight weeks, help you get ready for learning or work and make sure you get your birthday and/or festival gifts.

We will also help you find somewhere suitable to live before you leave custody.

If you are **detained in hospital**, we will also visit you at least every eight weeks and help prepare housing and support for when you leave **[who this applies to: former relevant, eligible and relevant young people]**.

If you are a **separated young person**, we will support you with your asylum journey, help you access the services you need, and continue to work with you through your Pathway Plan. We will make sure you receive the right support for your individual needs, using an interpreter when needed and will visit you at least every eight weeks to check on your wellbeing and progress **[who this applies to: former relevant, eligible and relevant young people]**.



5

Earning and learning

After Year 11, we will help you take the next step that's right for you, whether that's education, training or a job.

The Virtual Schools Team and Tameside Futures

The Virtual School Team can support you to understand all the options available to you and make sure your voice is heard in decisions.

Tameside Futures helps young people aged 16-24 explore their options, find their first job or move jobs. You can contact the team by calling 0161 342 3111, emailing tamesidefutures@tameside.gov.uk or by filling in the form on their website: www.tameside.gov.uk/employmentandtraining/opportunities-notice-board/tameside-futures



Earning and learning

The Leaving Care Service and your personal advisor

We can help with the cost of travel to education, training or work if you cannot get help from another travel scheme. We can also pay for a Bee Network travel pass if you need it to get to education, training or work.

Education and training

Your personal advisor can help you get money for education and training. This includes the Further Education - Educational Maintenance Bursary if you stay in education after Year 11, £3000 if you start an eligible apprenticeship, £2,000 if you go to university, and Student Finance to help pay for things like food, rent and course costs at university. They can also help you get a laptop, pay for your cap and gown when you graduate (if not free as a care leaver) and pay for your travel for up to three universities when you are deciding where to go.

If you are going to university, your personal advisor can help you get accommodation support for up to three years (or four years in certain situations). This will be set at the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate where you live and study **[who this applies to: former relevant Care Leavers, support for qualifying young people differs and will be considered individually]**.

Financial support for Higher Education will depend on your situation and any other money you receive. We may ask you to share information about your attendance and how your course is going, including your achievements so we can make sure you get the right support from the Leaving Care Team.



5

Earning and learning

Work

If you decide to look for a job, we can pay for your interview travel costs. You can also get up to £75 to spend on smart clothing for interviews or work.

Volunteering

Your personal advisor can help you find volunteering roles will get a Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance, this includes £40 per week for full-time volunteering or £20 per week for part-time volunteering up to a maximum of £1,200 / £600 a year. You can get this up to the end of the school year after your 18th birthday.

You can also find lots of useful information in the DWP Care Leaver Covenant Offer at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-work-and-pensions-care-leaver-covenant-offer/department-for-work-and-pensions-care-leaver-covenant-offer>



6

Physical and mental health

Physical health

The **Cared for Children's Nursing Team** can help you understand how to look after your health and get the help you need. To find out more, go to: www.tamesideandglossopicft.nhs.uk/services/care-childrens-team

Your personal advisor will help you register with a GP, dentist and optician and understand your options if you are moving from **Tameside Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)** to Adult Services. They will also help you apply to get free prescriptions.

You can also check out Be Well Tameside for extra support for things like weight management and stopping smoking: www.tameside.gov.uk/bewelltameside



6

Physical and mental health

Mental health

Tameside Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) can provide extended support if you are looked after and aged 16-17 and can also help find the right support for you after you turn 18.

The **Leaving Care Service** runs a group called **Lightening the Load: One Step at a Time** which meets for friendly walks to boost mental health. You can ask your personal advisor or social worker for more information.

If you need to talk to someone right now, you can call the Samaritans for free on 116 123. To find out more, go to: www.samaritans.org

If you need support with drug and alcohol problems, Change, Grow, Live are here to help. To find out more, go to: www.changegrowlive.org



6

Physical and mental health

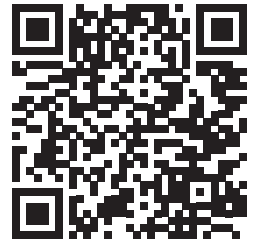
Leisure services

You can get a free or cheaper Tameside Active Plus Pass or Pure Gym membership.

To find more information about the Tameside Active Plus Pass, go to: www.activetameside.com/active-plus-pass

To find out more information about the activities run by Active Tameside, go to: www.activetameside.com/activity

[who this applies to: eligible and relevant young people aged 16-17 and former relevant care leavers up to age 25].



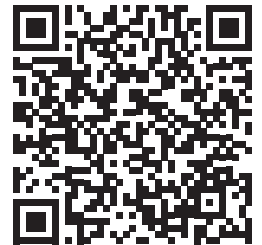
Physical and mental health

Sexual health and relationships

YOUthink is a team of youth workers supporting young people aged 13-25 with their sexual health.

You can email the YOUthink Team at:
YOUthinkadvice@tameside.gov.uk

You can follow YOUthink on TikTok [@youthink_tameside](https://www.tiktok.com/@youthink_tameside)



Locala is your local sexual health service. You can call them on 0161 507 9460, use their non-emergency text service to speak to a Sexual Health Nurse on 07312 263032 or go to their Under 18's 'Queue and Wait' clinic every Tuesday 3:30pm-6:30pm at The Orange Rooms, Ashton Primary Care Centre, 193 Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 7SR. You don't need to book an appointment for this!



Physical and mental health

Support if you are expecting a baby or are a parent

If you're 18-21 and living in your own place, the Leaving Care Service can give you £200 extra on top of your Setting Up Home Allowance to help prepare a bedroom for your baby **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**.

Your personal advisor can also connect you with help and services, including:

- Healthy Start vouchers:
www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/
- Money through the Sure Start Maternity Grant:
www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant
- The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) Home Visiting Service
- Your local Family Hub, where you can find lots of great courses and groups through Tameside's Early Help Offer:
www.tameside.gov.uk/children-and-families/family-hubs



7

Having fun, creativity and movement

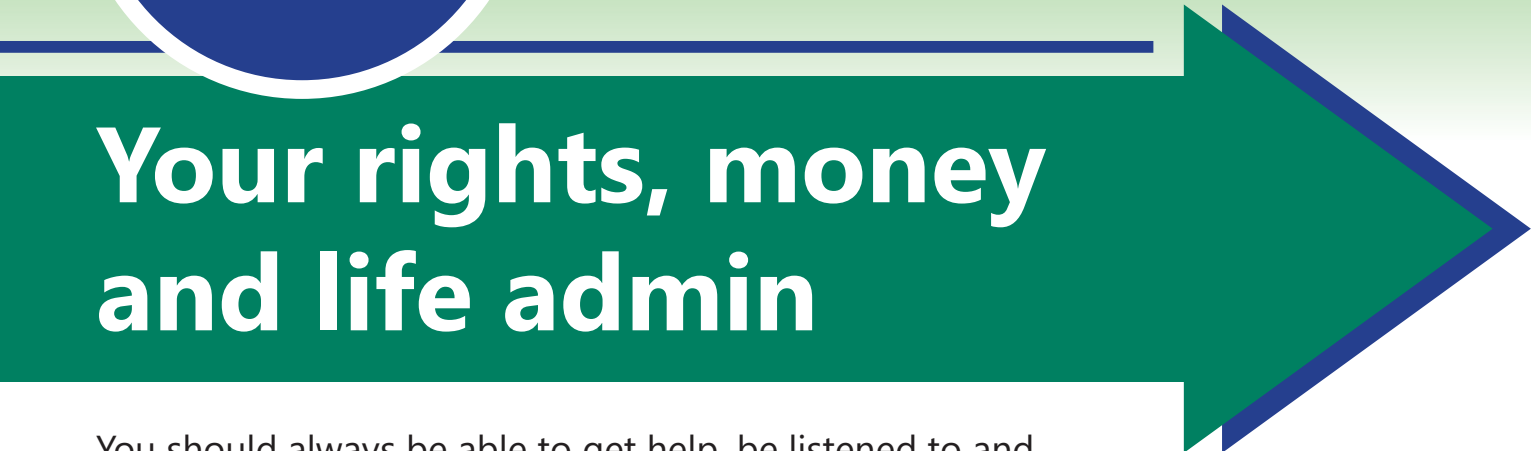
Whether you love sport, music, art or just want a space to chill and connect with others, we'll help you find things you enjoy.

- All care leavers in Tameside can get free bus travel Greater Manchester until the age **of 25**
- The Leaving Care Service can pay for your driving license, first theory and practical test and 10 lessons **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**
- Your personal advisor can help you find clubs, volunteering opportunities and social events
- You can find free or low-cost sports clubs on the Active Tameside Sports Network at: www.tamesidesportsnetwork.co.uk
- You can get "Pay What You Can" or "Free" meals at Broadoak Community Café which is open every Wednesday and Friday from 9:30am-1:30pm
- Tameside Music Service offers subsidised or free lessons for young people, you can find out more at: www.tamesidemusicservice.com
- Tameside Libraries have a range of services from help with computer skills to business events and social activities. To find out more, go to: www.tameside.gov.uk/librariesandleisure/libraries



25





Your rights, money and life admin

You should always be able to get help, be listened to and

You should always be able to get help, be listened to and understand what is happening in your life.

Supports with benefits and finding a job

Tameside Leaving Care Service has an agreement with the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) called "The DWP Protocol". This makes sure that you get the right benefits advice and employment support when moving into adulthood.

Your personal advisor can help you apply for benefits, find a job, book Jobcentre appointments and go with you if needed. They will also help you get things like your National Insurance number and a bank account or post office account that you will need to apply for benefits and a job.

To find out more about what benefits you could get, go to:
www.gov.uk/browse/benefits



Your rights, money and life admin

General money support

Your personal advisor and social worker will help you with money. This includes:

- Opening a bank account.
- Paying for your ID Documents, including your first adult passport [**who this applies to:** former relevant, eligible and relevant young people].
- Getting a living allowance of up to £75.65 per week [**who this applies to:** eligible relevant young people and those unable to access DWP payments].
- 16 and 17 year olds - £5.77 per week clothing allowance (£300.00 per year)
- You will receive a clothing allowance to help you buy clothes. This can be paid to you weekly, monthly or every three months. The money can be paid directly to you, or your social worker, personal advisor or Support Worker can help you buy clothes if you would like support. How your clothing allowance is paid and used will be agreed with you and written in your Pathway Plan. This will be based on what support you need and reviewed regularly.
- How to spend your Setting Up Home Allowance [**who this applies to:** eligible, relevant and former relevant young people].



Your rights, money and life admin

- Accessing your Junior ISA (Individual Savings Account): If you were cared for 12 months or more, you may have a Junior ISA, a savings account set up by the government with £200 paid into it. We can help you find out if you have a Junior ISA, access your account details if they have been lost, understand how and when you can access the money. Speak to your social worker or personal advisor if you would like support with your Junior ISA. Helping you set up Universal Credit (a type of benefits) from 28 days before your 18th birthday and making sure you have enough money while you wait to get it **[who this applies to: former relevant young people]**.
- If things are really tough, we might be able to help with topping up your gas and electric or with food support from local foodbanks or community pantries.



Your rights, money and life admin

Your right to be heard

If you want help speaking up, or if you think a decision is unfair, someone from the Advocacy Focus can help you tell people what you think and make sure your views are listened to.

You can contact Advocacy Focus by calling 0300 323 0965 emailing admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk or visit www.advocacyfocus.org.uk



Getting your files

You can ask to see any records or information we hold about you. This is called a Subject Access Request (SAR). Your personal advisor can help you complete the form, understand and review the records and think about how to store them safely.

If you have a worry or concern...

If something has made you unhappy, try talking to your social worker, personal advisor or the service first. They may be able to fix the problem. If they cannot, or you don't feel comfortable speaking to them, you can make a free and private complaint to the council at: www.tameside.gov.uk/complaints



How to find us



Leaving Care Service
Ashton Old Library
Old Street
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 7SG
0161 342 4477



Our office times are:

Monday to Wednesday - 08:30-17:00
Thursday - 08:30-16:30
Friday - 08:30-16:00

If you can't reach your personal advisor, you can use the number above to speak with one of our Duty personal advisor's or the Duty Team Manager. We're always here to help!

Emergency number

In an emergency if you need to speak to someone urgently outside of these hours, you can contact the Tameside Emergency Duty Team on 0161 342 2222.

Get involved

You can help us improve services for care leavers in Tameside by checking this offer and working with us to create resources and plan events. If you'd like to get involved, speak to your personal advisor.



More information can be found at:

<https://www.tameside.gov.uk/socialcareservices/children/participation-in-tameside>



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

