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Children & Social Work Act 2017



What is the Local Offer?



**Advice and** Support from a **Personal Adviser** 



Your right to be heard and taken seriously



Help with Accommodation/ Housing



Support with Education, **Training and Employment** 

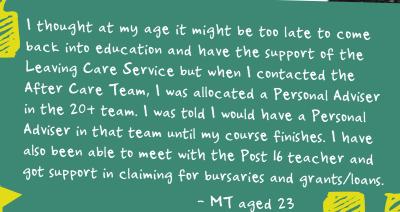
**Support for** your Health and wellbeing

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### THE SUPPORT WE MUST GIVE YOU BY LAW

The Children and Social Work Act 2017, which took effect from 1st April 2018 has placed important new duties on local authorities and partner agencies in relation to care leavers. It includes a requirement to publish a **Local Offer** as well as;

- Offering Personal Adviser support to all care leavers up to the age of 25 if they want this (not just those in education)
- The right to be heard and taken seriously
- Accommodation if you leave care before turning 18
- The option to stay 'stay put' with your former foster carer
- Support to engage in education, employment or training

### Ealing fully supports the seven corporate parenting principles set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

- 1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of
- 2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- 3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- 4. To help those children and young people gain access to and make the best use of services
- 5. To promote high aspirations and to seek to secure the best outcomes for those children
- 6. For those children and young people to be safe and have stability in their homes, lives, relationships and education or work
- 7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and living independently



### WHAT IS THE LOCAL OFFER?

RELIEF

We know that it is a big step when you move out of care and start living on your own or with others. Just because you are leaving care, or have already left care, we won't stop caring about you. We want to make sure that you feel safe and supported and know where and who to go to for advice and help.

This Local Offer is all about the services and support available to you as a care leaver. It includes information about what we must provide to you by law as well as the extra support we will offer. It applies to you whether you currently live in the borough or not but are an Ealing care leaver.

Ealing Council has a strong commitment to acting as good 'corporate parents' and provide the services that can help you achieve your goals in life, including our award-winning Horizons Centre. We regularly hear from our children in care and care leavers at the Corporate Parent Committee, chaired by the Leader of the Council, and through our Children in Care Councils that represent children and young people's views up to age 25. We will continue to listen to your views to make sure the services we offer are what you need.

Ealing's Horizons Shout Out Council (HSC) for care leavers have helped us to produce this Local Offer. If you need help with reading or understanding anything just ask your Personal Advisor in the Leaving Care Service, we can provide the information in the most accessible way for you.

You can also find out more about services and support in the 'Life is what you make it' pack, produced in partnership with the HSC and now updated for 2018/19. It can also be found online on the Young Ealing website www.youngealing.co.uk

To be able to get the support set out in this leaflet, you must have been in care for at least 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16 (including your 16th birthday) or for 13 weeks after your 16th birthday. If you are not sure whether you qualify for support, then you can ask your Personal Advisor.



# Advice and Support from a Personal Adviser

Personal Advisers are there to help you prepare to live independently.

They can give you the information, advice and support you need to successfully manage the journey to independence.

In Ealing Personal Advisers may be from the Leaving Care Team, 20+ Team or the Horizons Centre. Ealing's After Care Service for young people from ages 21-25 is based at the Horizons Centre.

AGE 16/17

The Personal Adviser will be from the **Leaving Care Team.** They will be a qualified Social Worker unless you are no longer a looked after young person.

Visit every 2 months

AGE 10 21

The Personal Adviser will be from the **Leaving Care Team** or **20+ team** dependant on your needs.

Visit every 2 months

AGE

AGE

IN EDUCATION

Personal Adviser from the **20+ team** 

Contact every 2 months



AGE 21-25

### **After Care Service at Horizons**

This is an 'opt in' system to request a Personal Adviser for advice, signposting and support.

Your needs will be assessed as to whether you are supported by a Personal Adviser in the **Aftercare service**, **20** + **team** or if you have complex and enduring needs the **Leaving Care team**.

There will be **regular aftercare Drop in sessions** running throughout the year at Horizons. Some will be structured sessions with guest speakers.

If when you contact us you have a multiple, complex issues to deal with and you need extra support, we will carry out a pathway plan needs assessment and you may be allocated a **Social Worker** or **Leaving Care Worker** until things have resolved for you and you can be supported via the **After Care Service** again.

You might, for example, need extra support because:

- You have special educational needs, a disability or mental health issue.
- > You are an unaccompanied asylum seeker and your immigration status is unclear.
- > You are in or leaving custody or you have had contact with the criminal justice system;
- You are a young parent;
- > You are going through a particularly challenging time in your personal life.

Your Pathway Plan is written by your Personal Adviser in consultation with you and important people in your life. It sets out your needs, views and future goals, as well as exactly what support you will receive from us. We will review your Pathway Plan with you regularly. We will try to let you keep the same Personal Adviser to work with, though this may not always be possible.

# Your right to be heard & taken seriously

We will provide opportunities and help so that you get your views heard. We will listen carefully to your wishes for the future and take these seriously as we plan with you for leaving care. If you feel you are not being heard or taken seriously, you can raise this issue by:

- You can talk to your Personal Adviser
- You can contact our Customer Care Team. The team can listen to your concerns and try to help sort these out if they can. They can help you access independent advocacy and assist you through the formal Complaints process if you wish to complain. Email: complaints\_childrens\_services@ealing.gov.uk or Freephone: 08009173174 or Tel: 020 8825 8100
- You have the right to support from an independent advocate. Independent advocates can inform you about your rights and help you to be heard in meetings. Ealing has an arrangement in place with 'Coram Voice' a voluntary agency, who can link you up with an independent advocate. You can contact Coram Voice Advocacy service directly if there is something important to you that you are not happy about: Freephone: 0808 800 5792 Email: help@coramvoice.org.uk Web: www.coramvoice.org.uk

### OTHER WAYS YOU CAN GET YOUR VOICE HEARD

Ealing always wants to hear from you. There are all sorts of ways you can get your views across and help us develop our services to better meet children and

young people's needs. One way is by taking part in our surveys for Looked after Children and Care Leavers. Another way is by joining one of our three **Children in Care Councils** representing different age groups:

- Junior Council (aged 7-11 yrs old).
- Corporate Kids Club (11-15yrs old)
- Horizons Shout Out Council (16+).

We really want to keep growing the numbers in these councils as they make such a difference to how we deliver services and campaign actively to change the way things are done to benefit looked after children and care leavers. Please contact Horizons for more information. They will be delighted to hear from you!

### **Corporate Parent Committee**

Each of the Children in Care Council's presents to Ealing's Corporate Parent Committee four times a year. This is a meeting of Councillors, chaired by the Leader of Ealing Council, as well as senior managers. The Committee receives reports on how various services are doing e.g. education, health, social care. It is a great way for the voices of our care leavers to be heard at the highest levels and help improve things.

### My Education (ME) Mentoring

If you want to be a mentor for other young people we have a mentoring service based at Horizons and we are always looking for additional mentors to support younger children in the care system

If you want to get involved you can find out more from the Horizons Centre Tel: 020 8537 4940.

# Help with accommodation/ housing

We will encourage you to stay in care until you are 18. Most young people still live at home with their families at this age. If you choose to leave care before age 18, the law says we must ensure that you have suitable accommodation.

> We know how important it is that you know where you will live once you leave care. Your Personal Adviser will discuss options with you. We will consider your age; personal circumstances; your wishes; and your needs as set out in your Pathway Plan. Your Personal Adviser will help you to find suitable accommodation and provide support to you as you move on.

#### **Options:**

- If this is what you and your foster carers want, support you to remain with your foster carers under a 'Staying Put' arrangement until you are 21
- Supported accommodation if you are assessed as needing this in your pathway plan
- Support to identify and access different independent housing options including social housing or a private tenancy.

Care leavers aged 18-20 years are treated as a priority need group in homelessness legislation and Ealing Homeless Persons Unit can be approached directly or you can ask your Personal Adviser or the Aftercare service for help should you need to.

We are working together with housing services to strengthen our corporate parenting response to care leavers housing needs.



If you need a hand I go come to Horizons



### Ealing will also offer

Care Leavers who are not eligible for social housing can access a one-off one month's rent and one month's deposit to secure private rented accommodation where this is needed (up to aged 21). We will also consider paying reasonable agency fees if needed upon a request to the Care Leavers Funding Panel.

A one-off 'setting up home/leaving care grant' of £2000 if you move into an independent living situation. Details of what this should pay for is set out in the Care Leavers Finance Policy.

Care leavers up to aged 21 living in and out of borough are exempt from paying council tax. You must claim all relevant benefits if you are entitled to them.

Care leavers between the ages of 21-25 years living in Ealing will be exempt from Council Tax from April 2019. All avalable benefit and council tax claims must be made.

Help for you to claim housing benefit/universal credit and fill out housing forms.



Personal Adviser or Horizons After Care Duty

Advice about holding down a tenancy, including avoiding rent or Council Tax arrears, paying bills and budgeting.

Help in a Housing Crisis e.g. threat or loss of tenancy

Contact Personal Adviser or After Care Duty at Horizons – Tell us urgently!

You can also contact Ealing's Housing Advice service on **020 8825 8888** 

Who to contact

Personal Adviser to make application to Care Leavers Funding Panel

Personal Adviser

Personal Adviser or After Care Service at Horizons or Ealing Council Tax Support Scheme

Personal Adviser or After Care Service at Horizons or Ealing Council Tax Support Scheme

You can also contact a welfare benefits adviser at Horizons - check the centre for details.

> Horizons Centre and ask about the Pre-Tenancy Training Course

Customer Service Centre, Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road, Ealing W5 2HL

Opening hours: Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm

If you are in Higher Education, a discretionary Ealing Education Grant, which can then be used to fund your vacation accommodation if we are not directly providing this for you.



Personal Adviser or Post 16 Teacher





# Support with education, training and employment

We want you to achieve your goals in life! We will ask you how you are doing and be ready to celebrate your progress and achievements at our annual Education Awards Ceremony. Many of our former care leavers have gone to achieve amazing things and being in care has not held them back.

There are lots of options available to you in education, training and employment. Whatever you decide is the path for you, we will offer you the right advice and support. Different kinds of financial help and practical support will be available to you depending on the route you choose. Some things to note:

- If you are in education or training from the ages of 16-19 you may be eligible for up to £1200 from the Governments 16-19 Bursary Fund. Ask your Personal Adviser or the Post 16 teacher about this.

  www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund
- You may also be eligible for a
   Discretionary Learner Support
   Fund payment if you are at
   college/in training and facing
   financial difficulty. Ask your
   college/training provider for
   more information.
  - If you are considering returning to education after 21 you are entitled to support from Ealing's Leaving Care Services.
     To access support ontact your Personal Adviser or the After Care Service.
  - Ealing may be able to help with finance for some of the extra costs concerned with taking up education, training and employment, depending upon your circumstances.

# TRAINING, APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORK BASED OPPORTUNITIES

Ealing can also offer you a range of opportunities for training, apprenticeships or volunteering/work. You can contact your Personal Adviser or the After Care Service to find out more or get in touch with Ealing Connexions Service.

#### Traineeships

Traineeships are pre-employment programmes – they are for you if you are not yet ready to enter employment and training and want to improve your employability skills or work experience. Traineeships last from six weeks to six months - with content tailored to your individual career needs. Traineeships can offer essential work preparation training, literacy & numeracy skills and work experience is provided so that you can learn real workplace skills. You will normally gain Level 1 or Entry Level qualifications such as awards, certificates or diplomas. You will usually learn about a work related subject (eg. motor vehicle, customer service etc). within your traineeship. You will also study Personal & Social development and improve on your English, IT & Maths. Traineeships prepare young people for future careers by helping them become 'work ready'. They were introduced for 16-23 year olds and young people with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) plan up to academic age 25.





### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available at level 2 and Advanced Apprenticeships are available at Level 3 and 4; you can now also opt for Degree Apprenticeships which are at higher levels (5&6). Apprenticeships offer you the opportunity to earn while you learn. They involve both on and off-the-job training. As well as working for an employer, you'll spend some time at a college/ university or with a training provider. By doing an apprenticeship you will gain qualifications such as an NVQs/Degrees alongside Functional Skills. Apprenticeships are open to anyone who is over 16 and not in full time education. More information and apprenticeship opportunities can be found on https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

### **Ealing Apprenticeships**

Ealing Council's Apprenticeship programme provides an excellent opportunity for young people aged 16+ to develop skills, gain work experience and complete qualifications. The scheme is open to people who live or have studied in Ealing within the last three years and who meet the criteria for Ealinbg Council applicants. Vacancies are advertised in April and September each year. For more information: www.ealing.gov.uk/apprenticeships

### Volunteering

Volunteering is a great chance to do something worthwhile and gain transferable skills and real life work experience. If you are studying, in part time employment, or out of work, volunteering is an excellent way to gain valuable experiences that can help you to: build confidence, showcase your skills and abilities and enable you to demonstrate these to potential employers. Although you won't get paid, it can look good on your CV or job/college/university applications and can help you become more employable and you may be entitled to expenses. If you're keen on a particular area of work but can't find a job vacancy, volunteering for something similar might be a good next step. Contact your Personal Adviser if you want to find out more about vounteering.

### FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION:

The Virtual School team of qualified and specialist teachers based at Horizons will make sure you have an appropriate school/ education place and can offer additional 1:1 teaching and support; advocacy at school and support with your Personal Education Plan (PEP).

We also provide out of hours study support sessions at Horizons to help you catch up on school work and get ready for your exams.

We provide Post 16 information and advice sessions – about your studies in general and options for further or higher education or alternatives.

We will help you apply for the Governments 16-19 Bursary Fund if you are eligible.

If you want to go to University, we will help you choose the right course and university that matches your talents, interests and abilities. We will also assist you to apply for tuition fee and maintenance loans and bursaries directly from the university.

Ealing also offers the Education Grant – this is a discretionary grant of up to £3500 in Year 1 (on top of the Government's one-off £2000 HE Bursary) and up to £5500 per year in Years 2 and 3 (subject to requirements set out in the Ealing Education Contract).

The Ealing Education Grant covers your accommodation costs during the vacation periods. Most young people with the support of their Personal Adviser have a budget plan to ensure that by working and/or claiming grants /loans alongside the Ealing Education Grant they are able to cover their accommodation costs for the entire year.

To find out more about the support we can offer with your education, contact the Post 16 teacher at Horizons

to achieve your goals







We want to help you to stay as healthy as possible, physically and mentally, and will provide you with support to do so.

### EALING WILL OFFER YOU:

Help to register with a GP and to access any other specialist health services if needed e.g. substance abuse, counselling or sexual health services.

### WHO TO CONTACT:

- » Speak to your Personal Adviser or the LAC Health Nurse.
- » The LAC Nurse also holds monthly drop in sessions on the first Thursday of each month at Horizons from 1-6pm
- » You can also speak to the nurse if you have any worries about your physical or mental health and s/he can advise you of support options available.

If you have worries about your emotional health and well-being, input from the Leaving Care Clinical Psychologist may be useful.

» Contact your Personal Adviser

Support from a specialist Looked After Children and Care Leavers Health Team until aged 21 years

For young people aged 21-25 accessing leaving care support via the After Care service, there will be health clinics based at the Drop in sessions at Horizons.

» Contact your Personal Adviser



Provide you with a Health Summary via the LAC Health team at your final health assessment aged 17 giving you information about your medical history.

» Contact your Personal Adviser or the LAC nurse



### EALING WILL OFFER YOU:

Access to workshops at Horizons to help you manage emotions and learn relaxation techniques.

### WHO TO CONTACT:

» Contact Horizons for information about these sessions

Help so you know how to claim free prescriptions. We will also consider paying transports costs to attend health appointments.

» Contact your Personal Adviser or Duty at the After Care service

Give you information on healthy living and where you can get help with diet, smoking, exercise

In order to support you to maintain good all-round health the Ealing offer includes discounted gym membership and some of the structured after care sessions will have an activity focus.

We provide all Foster carers with a health and well-being handbook to equip them to support your health. » Contact your Personal Adviser, LAC nurse or Duty at the After Care service



If you are a young parent, we can offer you advice and support to develop your parenting skills.

Depending on your circumstances we may offer you parenting classes.

We can also signpost you to information about childcare and early years services.

» Contact your Personal Adviser or Social Worker.

» You can find out about universal childcare, early years and parenting support services at Ealing Family Information Service

- » T: 020 8825 5588
- » W: www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

Health referrals to adult mental health services and Occupational Health services will include the fact that the young person is a Care Leaver in order that there is an immediate understanding of possible emotional trauma and vulnerability.

» Speak to the LAC nurse or your Personal Adviser

# Healthy Relationships and Domestic Abuse

Young people have recommended we include information and support at the After Care drop in sessions on healthy relationships and domestic abuse.

### WHO TO CONTACT:

» Contact Horizons or your Personal Adviser





#### Mental Health:

Support if you transfer from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health Services at aged 18.

If you are a care leaver aged 16-25 and you are worried about your mental health, let us know and we will support you to access relevant services.

If you are an asylum seeker we will support you to get a health assessment and become fully immunised if you are not already. We will also help you access emotional support where you may need this from professionals who understand the challenges you may have faced in coming to the UK.

### WHO TO CONTACT:

- » Contact your GP and Personal Adviser
- » You can also contact Ealing IAPT Service directly www.ealingiapt.nhs.uk T: 020 3313 5660

#### Sexual Health

Sexual health is an important part of our overall health and wellbeing. We will offer you information and advice about sexual health services in Ealing or near to where you live. There are also a number of services specifically for young people and those with disabilities and additional needs. You can also speak directly to the LAC nurse.

### WHO TO CONTACT:

- » Contact your Personal Adviser, GP or the LAC nurse.
- » Information is also available on the internet: nwlondonsexualhealth.nhs.uk
- » Links to other useful organisations can be found in the 'Life is what you make it' pack.



### Substance Misuse Drugs/Alcohol

We will help you get information and access support services if you want information or are worried about your use of alcohol and/or drugs.

### WHO TO CONTACT:

» You can speak to your Personal Adviser or the LAC nurse.

You can also directly contact:

» The cgl EASY Project Young Person Service can support young people up to the age of 18 years.

Contact: 020 8567 4772 or Easy.Project@cgl.org.uk

» The cgl RISE project is for anyone 18 and over who lives in, or is registered with a GP in Ealing. Contact: 0800 195 8100

# Helping you participate in society

We want our care leavers to be active members of society, and to have all the chances in life that other young adults have. We can help you participate in society in the following ways:

### WHAT EALING WILL OFFER

- » Providing information on leisure activities groups and clubs you may wish to join including volunteering opportunities.
  CONTACT: Personal Adviser, Ealing Youth & Connexions Service
- Informing you about relevant awards, schemes and competitions you can enter, in line with your talents and interests.
   CONTACT: Personal Adviser; Post 16 teacher.
- » Encouraging and helping you to enrol on the Electoral Register, so you can vote in elections.

**CONTACT**: Personal Adviser

» Encourage you to participate in Ealing Care Leavers forums e.g. Horizons Shout Out Council; ME Mentoring Project; Corporate Parent Committee.

**CONTACT:** Personal Adviser or Horizons Centre

» Giving you advice and helping you to challenge any discrimination you face as a care leaver.

**CONTACT:** Personal Adviser

# Help with finances and managing your money



Knowing how to manage your money is an essential part of becoming independent.

We recognize how difficult this is and will help you learn how to do this. Your Personal Adviser, the Post 16 Teacher or the After Care Service at Horizons can help you to access all benefits, student loans and bursaries available to you. Ealing may also offer you additional financial support where needed as set out in the Care Leavers Finance Policy.

ealing.proceduresonline.com

### WHAT EALING WILL DO:

Support you to open a bank account and give you advice on savings



Your Personal Adviser

WHO TO CONTACT:

Provide you with advice on entitlements and help to claim welfare benefits



Your Personal Adviser or DWP advisor at Horizons Drop in Centre

Give you information on how to access your Junior ISA, if you have one (a fund of money set aside by the government and the council)



You can contact your IRO or Personal Advisor for information.

Help you obtain important identification documents, such as a passport and National Insurance number.

a passport and National Insurance number.

Support with getting your status in the UK and British

Citizenship/ naturalization where applicable



Your Social Worker or Personal Adviser

Provide a 'setting up home/leaving care grant' of £2,000 to help you buy essential things when moving into your own home



**Your Personal Adviser** 

Care leavers up to aged 21 living in and out of borough are exempt from paying council tax. You must claim all relevant benefits if you are entitled to them.

Care leavers between the ages of 21-25 years living in Ealing will be exempt from Council Tax from April 2019. All available benefit and Council Tax claims must be made.



Contact your Personal Adviser or the After Care service at Horizons.

Provide money management and pre-tenancy training courses at Horizons



Contact Horizons for dates.

Provide a discretionary Ealing Education Grant for those care leavers going to Higher Education, subject to application and requirements



Speak to your Personal Adviser or Post 16 Teacher

Consider requests for financial support to access training and work opportunities as detailed in the Care Leavers Finance Policy



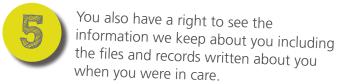
Contact your Personal Advisor who can make a request to the Care Leavers Funding Panel

# Supporting y relationships

We know that having a network of personal and professional support can really make a difference to how well our care leavers manage their journey to independence.

Some care leavers attending Horizons After Care 'drop in' sessions have told us how valuable informal contact with staff and other care leavers is to them, as well as the content of structured sessions. The support available from your Personal Advisor and the Leaving Care Service is aided by our partners in Health, Housing and other services. We also know that there may be other important people in your life and we are committed to helping you maintain these relationships.

- Help you to maintain or regain contact with people special to you or who cared for you in the past, such as family members or former carers.
  - » CONTACT: Your Personal Adviser
- Ealing's 'ME peer mentoring project' can link you up with a care leaver as a 'mentor' and also offers a range of opportunities to meet up with other care leavers
  - » CONTACT: Lead Mentor or Post 16 **Teacher at Horizons**
- Where relevant, continuing to support your contact with the 'Independent Visitor' you had while you were in care
  - » CONTACT: Your Personal Adviser
- Help you make sense of your time in care and support you to access your records if vou wish.
  - » CONTACT: Your Personal Adviser



- » CONTACT: In the first instance we recommend you talk this over with your Personal Adviser. Contact Ealing's Data Protection Team if you wish to make a **Subject Access Request.** dataprotection@ealing.gov.uk
- Give you information on sources of support regarding your identity; such as organisations offering advice and support around your religion, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality, disability or immigration status etc.
  - » CONTACT: Your Personal Adviser. See also 'Life is what you make it' pack for useful contacts
- **Healthy Relationships and Domestic Abuse** Young people have recommended we include information and support at the After Care drop in sessions on healthy relationships and domestic abuse.
  - » CONTACT: Contact Horizons for more details.







