



Nottingham City Local Offer for Care Leavers 2018/2019



Safer, cleaner, ambitious
Nottingham
A city we're all proud of



Nottingham
City Council

Foreword

Cllr David Mellen, Portfolio Holder for Early intervention and Early Years at Nottingham City Council:

This leaflet tells you about the support that we will provide in Nottingham for you as a care leaver. Just because you are leaving care, or have already left care, we haven't stopped caring about you. We want to make sure that you feel supported and know where and who to go to for advice and help when you need it.



Local care leavers have helped make this leaflet. We held six focus groups involving different organisations and current care leavers. We will continue to listen to your views to make sure the services we offer are what you need.

Participation

Your right to be heard and taken seriously

You have a right to be involved in all decisions about your plans for leaving care. Throughout your time in care you had a right to support from an independent advocate and this is the same even now you are a Care Leaver. Independent advocates can inform you about your rights and help you to be heard in meetings. They are separate from Children's Services. If you already had an independent advocate and would want to continue with this support or would like to get in touch with one please speak to your Personal Advisor and they will assist you with this.

You have a right to see the information we keep about you, including the files and records written about you when you were in care. We will advise you about how to get these records if you want to do this.

Celebrating Achievements

We hold regular events to celebrate the achievements of children in care and care leavers, including the annual Care Leavers Achievement Awards, where you will receive recognition for your achievements across 6 categories; Education, Employment, Apprenticeships, Employability, Contribution to Service Improvement and Outstanding Achievement. In addition to receiving

awards for your hard work, you and your guest can enjoy celebrating your success with a three-course meal and live entertainment by local artists.

Support that we offer

Where you live

- Staying with your former foster carer after you turn 18. If this is what you and your foster carer(s) want, we will support you to remain with your foster carers under what is called a 'Staying Put' arrangement. This can last until you are age 21.
- We have many different ways for you to get suitable housing, including supported accommodation if you are not ready for your own tenancy. If you are ready for your own flat, we will work with Nottingham City Homes to ensure that you are a priority when you are bidding for properties up to the age of 25 years. If you require supported accommodation, we will support you to do this by referring to the Housing Gateway and supporting you through the assessment process, including coming to appointments with you.
- We will help you to set up home and provide you with financial support to buy the items you need when moving into your new home and in choosing these items.
- We have an agreement with Nottingham City Homes that all care leavers in a Nottingham

City Homes tenancy will have 2 carpets provided (for 2 rooms of your choice) and decorating vouchers for their properties where needed.

- We will give you practical help moving in and looking after your home, including advice about decorating, minor repairs and cleaning. We will give advice about paying rent and bills regularly.
- We will give advice about your tenancy (the official agreement or contract between you and your landlord that lets you live in a property as long as you pay rent and follow the rules). If you are in a Nottingham City Homes property, the Housing Patch Manager will also support you with this.
- If you have a Nottingham City Homes tenancy with a garden, all grass and hedges will be trimmed for you when you move in. You will get an hours support from the NCH caretaking team if you need it and the free hire of garden tools. You will also be able to go on a Tenant Academy course to learn more about gardening and organisations which support tenants with growing projects.

Your Money

We have an agreement between Nottingham City Council and the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) to make sure that we do our very best to work together to support you. This includes:

- Being able to claim for benefits before you are 18 so that you are not waiting for them when you become 18.
- The DWP understanding that sometimes things might go wrong so they will always contact your Personal Advisor and Job Centre Leader before thinking about imposing any sanctions.

The Leaving Care Service will also ensure that:

- All Personal Advisors are trained on Universal Credit and able to give you the support you need to get your benefits.
- If you are claiming Universal Credit you will have access to online facilities at our Leaving Care Centre at Isabella Street.
- We will make sure that your rent is paid directly to your landlord where possible.
- We support you with setting up a bank account and accessing your savings.
- We help you to get identification documents, (important pieces of paper about you) to help you open up a bank account and other important things you need to do.

Nottingham City Council will also exempt you from paying Council Tax up to the age of 20 years.

Education, training and employment

We want to support you with whatever you decide you want to do when you are 18 so we will make sure that you are getting the right advice and guidance about what you want to do next and have options available to you to pursue education, training or employment. We have a dedicated employment advisor in our Leaving Care Team who can help you with those decisions, but you can also talk to your Personal Advisor.

Employment

If you want to get a job we will support you by:

Making sure you have access to the Leaving Care Service employability programme to make positive steps towards training and employment. The programme is recognised by the Department of Works and Pensions as a genuine job seeking provision for care leavers. The programme provides opportunities that aim to build your confidence so that you feel able to move onto training or employment. You will be involved in all aspects of planning your programme which could involve a mentor.

Offering delivery of ASDAN courses where you will have the opportunity to achieve employability qualifications (from entry level to level 2).

Sometimes if you are not quite sure what you want to do work experience can help you make a decision. Our care leavers thought this would be a

good idea so we have worked with education providers in the city to help give you a range of work experience opportunities. For example, the Work Inspiration scheme at Nottingham Trent University runs throughout the year and provides opportunities across a wide range of work experiences. In addition, Nottingham College will, where possible, seek work placement or experience opportunities for care leavers not enrolled at the college. The DWP will also offer work experience if you are getting benefits and health organisations can offer work experience to care leavers who wish to pursue a career in health. Nottingham City Council will also offer work experience and taster opportunities within the Council. Please talk to your Personal Advisor if you want to find out more about work experience.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a really good way of getting into work. In Nottingham there are lots of opportunities for apprenticeships with Nottingham City Council, Nottingham City Homes as well as other businesses.

- Nottingham City Council know that these are hard to get so will make sure that you and your Personal Advisors are told about any apprenticeship opportunities within the City Council at the same time as going to recruitment partners. You will also be offered wrap around support. This would include regular review meetings with apprentice managers and PA's; and where needed,

access to the additional support e.g. Maths / English support, resilience coaching and mentoring sessions.

- Apprenticeships are very popular and securing an interview can be difficult enough. With this in mind we will guarantee you an interview should meet the minimum criteria of the role.

We will also provide additional support by:

- Making sure that any apprenticeship assessments or interviews are at a place that is right for you.
- Helping with transport costs to attend interviews for training, school/college, apprenticeships or job interviews.
- Preparation for interviews and where appropriate financial support to purchase suitable interview clothing.

If you want to go to college:

We understand that sometimes it is hard to go on your own to enrol at college so Nottingham College is offering you the chance to enrol at a different time if you want to. Nottingham College will also provide you with the following:

- Access to an Achievement Coach, wellbeing support and health advice.
- Support through the college and your personal advisor to support your attendance.
- A named person to support in you to get an appropriate work placement or work experience.

- Support to visit the colleges if you just want to find out more.

If you want to go to university:

We will encourage you to go to university and help you choose which one and where.

We will provide you with a Higher Education (HE) bursary of £2,000 if you go to University and we will help you to consider how this is best spent.

We will also provide somewhere for you to stay during University holidays (or funding for this if you would prefer to make your own arrangements) if you are in full time HE and your term time accommodation is not available. This is for 21 weeks of non-term time rent.

We will provide a living allowance equivalent to benefit rate.

We will help you with an application to Student Finance England for tuition fees and student loans; and we give you travelling costs to get to and from University at the start and end of term.

Locally, Nottingham University and Nottingham Trent University will give you lots of information about how they can help you before you apply to them.

Nottingham Trent University and Nottingham University may offer the following through their Growing Lives Programme:

- Campus visits for you before you arrive and/or additional welcome activities if you want to go to them.
- A bursary for financial support of £500.
- A dedicated support officer to help you while you are at University.
- Money advisers to help you apply for all you are entitled to and work out a budget to suit your needs and interests. Nottingham University offer this before you get to university.
- A guaranteed offer of University-allocated accommodation if you have accepted a place at Nottingham Trent University as your first choice - accommodation in halls is available throughout the summer vacation too.
- Nottingham University give you accommodation throughout the year and will help you move in if you are travelling on your own.
- A personal health and wellbeing welcome pack.
- Help accessing all support services.

Nottingham Trent University are also offering opportunities to find out more about the UK higher education system and accessing finance, tours and academic taster sessions, as well as English-language support at evening classes and an annual summer school.

Relationships, Health and wellbeing

We care about your health and we want you to feel supported to be as physically and emotionally healthy as possible. Everyone is unique and we all cope with challenges in different ways, therefore it is important that you have a choice in what type of help you receive around your health and that it suits your needs. To do this we will:

- Give free leisure passes to all 8 city leisure centres for all of our Care Leavers between the ages of 18-21 (4 years)
- Give you a reduced rate of £20 per month for your leisure pass when you reach 22 as hopefully by then you will be settled into a job
- Work really closely with companies in Nottingham to offer some free tickets to sporting events. These will be offered on our website so you will need to keep a close eye on what we are offering!
- We will support you to access the information available about your health and health history
- We will support you, prior to you leaving care, in accessing local and national services so that by the time you have your final health assessment you are confident in having the adequate information needed
- With your consent, support you with accessing a local GP and who will ensure you are offered the necessary services around your health

- Make sure you have a place at Isabella Street where you can go to relax, use the computers and find out more about things that you need and the support that we will offer.
- Advise you about contact with people special to you or who cared for you in the past like former foster carers
- Help you to form and keep healthy, safe relationships with family and friends
- Help you access support if you have a child such as parenting groups, access to the Family Nurse Partnership and early years support.
- Make sure that no care leaver is on their own on Christmas Day and will hold an annual Christmas dinner



And finally...

We will help you to share your views and be involved in improving the way we support you, by

listening to your views in meetings and by surveys. Or you could be part of the Your Voice Group, the Care Leavers consultation group, which takes place quarterly. The group is closely linked to the Children in Care Council, with care leavers regularly feeding back on the work undertaken by the group, to other young people who are approaching leaving care. The Your Voice group has participated in meetings with Councillors regarding access to housing and supported accommodation; education, employment and training and the 'Have Your Say' survey findings.

For any additional information, or to talk through the contents of this leaflet, please contact your Personal Advisor who will be happy to help you.

The support we must give you by law

Advice and Support from a Personal Advisor

Following changes introduced through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, you will be able to ask for support from a Personal Advisor up to the age of 25, whether you are in education or training or not.

Your Personal Advisor is there to help you to prepare to live independently and to offer advice and support after you leave care. Personal Advisers should talk to you about what support you need and record this information in your pathway plan.