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One Minute Guide: Leaving Care

Who are the Leaving Care Team?

The Leaving Care Team in Redbridge, currently based at the Station Road Centre, Barkingside, works with young people who were previously 'looked after' and have reached the age of 18. The Team are now part of a commissioned service that is run on behalf of LB Redbridge by Barnardos and it is expected that they will move to Barnardo's accommodation in the near future. The Team includes one Senior Personal Adviser (PA), three Personal Adviser (PA) posts and a Team Manager.

What is the role of the Team in relation to Corporate Parenting?

The aspiration for all our care leavers is that they have a fulfilling adult life and take part in education, training or work so they can look after themselves.

Like good parents, Redbridge has a responsibility to give advice, support and also provide financial assistance to young people who are leaving care. Please see planning transition to adulthood below.

Redbridge has signed up to the Department for Education (DfE) [Charter for Care Leavers](#).

What is the Statutory Guidance?

The Children's (Leaving Care Act 2000) introduced the Personal Adviser (PA) role to support care leavers. PAs develop Pathways Plans (which are started at 16 by the young person's social worker) with care leavers to meet their support needs and help them prepare for independent living.

In 2011, new guidance came into effect called Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers. This sets out how transition must be managed and what must be considered during this period for care leavers.

Unless a young person is in education they cannot not continue to receive support from the Leaving Care team after the age of 21, however if they remain in education or return to education they can receive a service until their 25th birthday.

Eligibility for the leaving care service depends on how long a young person has spent in care. Young people need to be in care for 14 weeks between 14 and 16 which includes a day after their 16th birthday. If a young person comes into care between their 16th and 18th

birthday they must be in care for 13 weeks during this period to qualify for leaving care services.

All care leavers receive a leaving care grant which varies from authority to authority. The government have a recommended minimum of £2000 which is the amount Redbridge provides.

How are cases managed?

There are currently 130 care leavers and transferring cases to the Leaving Care Team takes place in a similar way to other cases transferring between teams. All records are held on the Integrated Children's System (ICS) Protocol. The process is detailed on [TriX](#).

Redbridge use commissioned independent housing providers of semi-independent accommodation for care leavers which is provided through the Placements Service, within the Children Living Away from Home (CLAFH) Service. We do not use bed and breakfast, or other temporary accommodation for care leavers unless there is no alternative and only for as short a period as possible. Young people are supported to claim all relevant benefits including Housing Benefit.

There are weekly groups for education, supporting care leavers to obtain more basic skills in English and Maths and for other life skills like money management harm reduction from drugs and alcohol and sexual health.

How can I find out more?

The Leaving Care Team can be contacted on Redbridge 1, Inside Redbridge and via Protocol.