

This is the Southend Children's Partnership
Pledge
to
Looked after Children

This version of the Pledge is for children
age 11+

This document is
published by Southend-on-Sea Borough
Council.

A summary of this leaflet can be translated
into alternative languages and can be
provided in other formats. Please phone
Specialist Services on 01702 215007

www.southend.gov.uk

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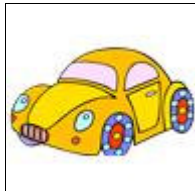
Southend Children's Partnership

Our promise to you

We will spend time with you and listen to you.

We will visit you at least every six weeks or as agreed in your review. We will come to see you where you are living, and we will ask you how you prefer us to keep in touch with you.



 We will give you prior notice before visiting you, unless there is a good reason why we can't, and we will explain this to you. If we have to cancel a visit we will get a message to you to tell you and try to make a new appointment with you in the next 2 days.

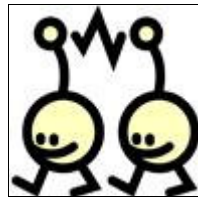
If you phone when we are out we will make sure our office staff take your name and phone number and leave a message for us so we can call you back. If we can't phone you back that day we will ask someone else to call you for us and explain why we can't.



We will involve you in decisions about your life

We will ask you what you think before making decisions about you. If we cannot do what you would like we will explain why not to you.

We will always try and keep brothers and sisters together when possible. If we think this is not a good idea we will explain this to you.



We know it is important to you to see your families and friends while you are in care. If a Court decides on contact arrangements for you we will do our best to arrange these for you. We will also listen to what you ask for and do our best to arrange it. If we cannot, for example if a Court decides it is not in your best interest we will explain this to you.



When you leave care

When you are older we want you to be the best you can be. We want you to continue your education and find a job you enjoy. If you need to go to college and get qualifications to do this we will help you.

We will make sure you have a bank account. We will encourage you to be sensible with your money and continue to save for the future.



We will make sure you have a passport. If this is not possible we will explain the reasons why.

We will talk to you about what you would like for your future, and plan the support you will need in your pathway plan when you are leaving care, whether you are going to university, into training or into work.



We want you to be involved and make your voice heard

We will make sure you know your rights and what you are entitled to. If you do not feel your views are being heard we will tell you how you can ask for an advocate and also how you can make a complaint if you need to.



National Youth Advocacy Service

If you would like someone independent from us to visit you, listen to you, support you and give advice if needed we will arrange this for you.

Your care plan will be reviewed properly and the meetings will be led by an Independent Reviewing Officer who will make sure things are being done as set out in your care plan and in your best interests.

We would like you to be involved in our group for children who are looked after, called Voice for All. This is the way you can tell us how we are doing and where we need to do better.

We want you to be fit and healthy

We will make sure doctors, dentists and health professionals understand your needs and listen to your problems. When you move placements we will make sure your doctor and dentist know. If you need counselling we will do our best to get this for you as quickly as possible.

We will make sure that foster carers have important information about your health, e.g. about any allergies and medicines you need.

As you grow older we have a duty to take your views into account and listen to you, especially when it comes to whether we share what you tell us with other people.

We will make sure you have the right information on health, for example when you are older, on sexual health and making the right choices about contraception.

We will make sure you have the right vaccinations as you grow up and we will encourage you to have your yearly health assessments and dental checks. You can talk to your school nurse if you would like confidential advice on your health or we have our own nurses for looked after children who you can speak to. One of our nurses runs a confidential weekly health drop in at the Leaving Care team and also has a health drop-in at Voice4all.



We want you to feel safe

We know that everyone has different backgrounds and different needs, especially in terms of race, culture, religion and sexuality. We will ask you about these and do our best to meet your needs, including making sure you feel happy and supported where you are living and at school.



We will make sure your foster carers have the right skills and knowledge to keep you happy and healthy.

We will reduce the number of social workers you have. We won't move you from placements where you feel happy and settled, unless there is a very good reason, which we will explain to you.

Unless you are moved in an emergency, we will give you information about new placements and make sure you are introduced to your new carers.



We want you to get the most out of life

Before you are old enough to go to school we will make sure you can go to nursery so you can enjoy playing with other children.

We will support you to do well at school and make sure you have extra help if you need it. We will do all we can to make sure you have access to a computer when you need it.



We will make sure the school works with us to write your personal education plan, and do all we can to make the plan run smoothly

We will encourage you to enjoy your spare time in a healthy way. Your social worker will ask you what activities you enjoy and if possible we will work out a way of you to continue doing it while you are looked after. We can arrange free use of the facilities at some of the leisure centres in Southend, which includes swimming. We will do all that we can to help you stay in touch with your friends.

