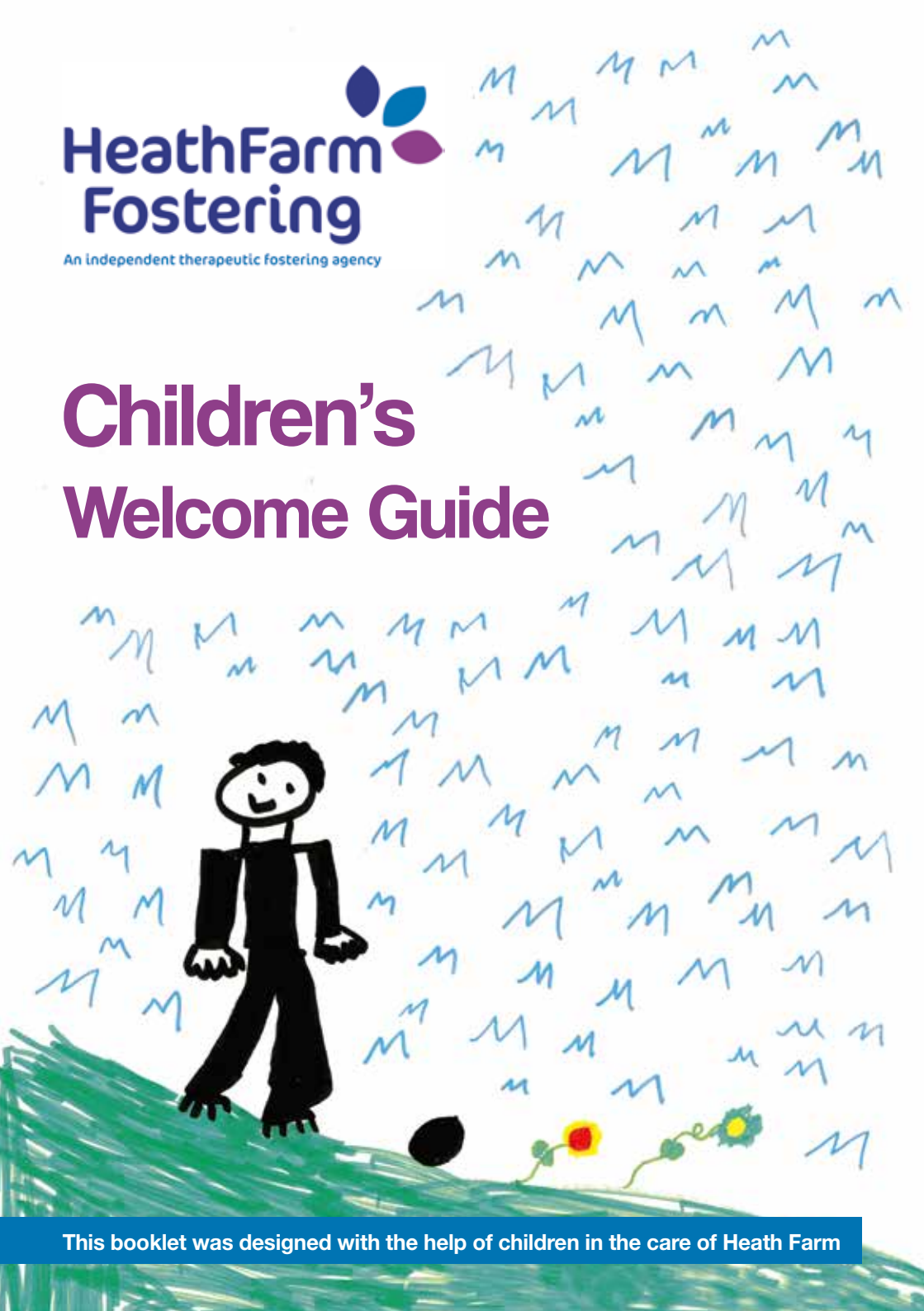


# Children's Welcome Guide





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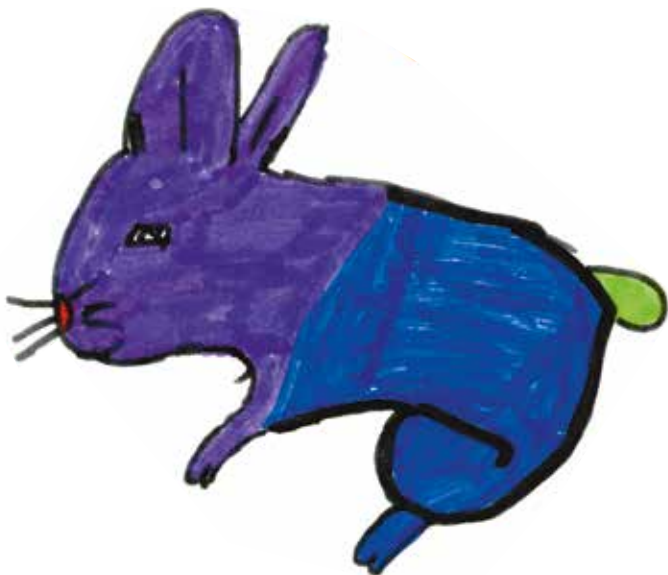
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# Welcome to your new foster family and Heath Farm

**We hope you are going to like living with your foster carers for a while and don't feel too scared or upset.**

You may be a little bit confused as to why you are staying with a foster carer and not your own family, but hopefully your social worker will have talked to you about this. If not, tell your foster carer and they will help you to understand.

This little book has lots of useful things in it and has been made especially for you.



# This book belongs to:

.....

**My new home address is:**

.....

.....

**My new home number is:**

.....

**My school is:**

.....

**My social worker's name is:**

.....

**My social worker's telephone number is:**

.....

**My foster carer is called:**

.....

**Any other important numbers:**

.....

.....

.....

# Who are Heath Farm and what do they do?

Heath Farm is a foster care organisation. It is here to help children and young adults live with a foster family. Heath Farm has foster carers

who are very experienced at looking after children and young people. Some children go to Heath Farm School and some will go to other schools.



## Your social worker

Your social worker is someone that has been specially trained to work with children and their families.

They will visit you regularly and keep in touch with your family and your foster carer. YOUR social worker is there to help YOU.

## Heath Farm social worker

A Heath Farm social worker is someone who looks after the foster carers and makes sure that they are looking after you and you are OK. They will talk to YOU and YOUR family.

## Information about me - my file

Heath Farm have to keep information about all the children who live with their foster carers to make sure you are looked after properly. If you ever want to see any of the information about you, ask your foster carer or their social worker.

Your social worker will also have information about you, and you can ask them to see this as well. You are also allowed to write notes in your file if you want to – ask your social worker about this.



# My foster home

We hope you are going to enjoy living in your new foster home. Your foster carer may have children of their own, there may be other children being looked after or you may be the only child in the house.

While you are living at your foster carers' it is your home. We want you to be safe, happy and be able to try new things. Maybe there is something you have always wanted to do or have enjoyed before. Let your foster carer know.

If you have any problems or worries, remember you can always tell your foster carer or your social worker. Heath Farm also has a Children's Rights Worker who can come and see you if you want her to.

Sometimes you may go and stay with other carers within the Heath Farm for a few days. This is known as respite.

If you don't think you can talk to any of these people, there are other people you can talk to. Look at the pages 20 and 21.

## Pocket money

You will get pocket money every week. Ask your foster carer how much you will get and when.

You may choose to save some of your money each week for special occasions such as holidays.

You could save it at the post office or the bank. If you would like to open a bank account, you can talk to your foster carer or your social worker about this.

Your carers will also put some money aside for you every week, into a special account known as a 'savings account'.

**How much pocket money will I get?**

£ .....

**Which day will I get my pocket money?**

.....



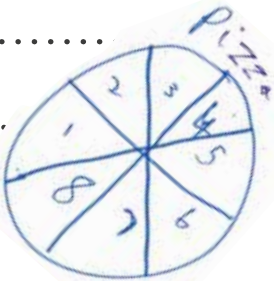
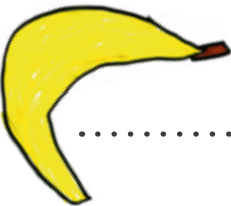


# Food

You can tell your foster carer what you would like to eat and your foster carer will talk to you about what foods are good for us to eat.

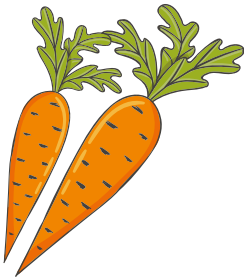
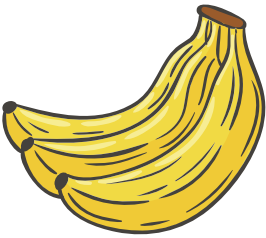
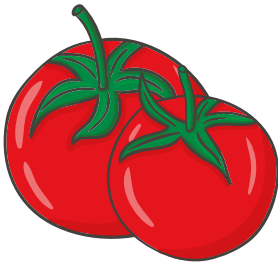
You will be able to go with your foster carer to do the shopping so that you can choose some of your favourite foods.

My favourite foods are:



How about some healthy food?  
Can you name these fruit and vegetables?

Answers at the back



Foods I don't like:

# My bedroom



You will be able to have your own bedroom, it's your bedroom and you can arrange your toys and other things just as you want to.

Your foster carer will always knock on your door before they come into your bedroom, unless they are worried that you may be doing something dangerous that might hurt you. If so they may come into your room to make sure that you are safe.

Some children like to have a light on whilst they go to sleep, let your foster carer know if you do.

**What time is my bedtime on a school night?**

.....

**What time is my bedtime on a non-school night?**

.....

# About me

## My family

There may be lots of different reasons why you are not living with your family at this time, but we know that they are still very important to you. Your social worker and foster carer will help you to understand why decisions are made and what happens now.

You may be missing your friends and family and wonder when you will be able to see them again. Talk to your social worker and your foster carer about this and if you can visit, telephone, email or write to friends and family.

## My religion

If you would like to go to a church, a mosque, a synagogue or any other place to practice your faith, your foster carer or social worker will help you.



## My religion is:

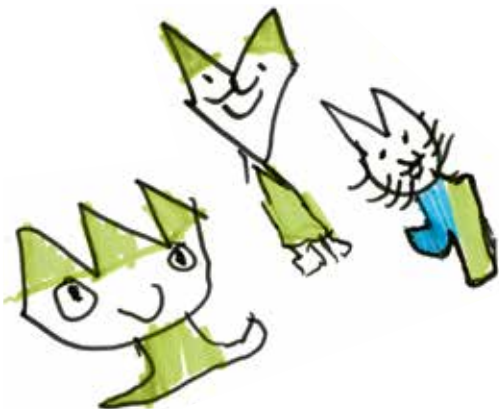
.....

## I would like to attend:

.....

## What time and on which days:

.....



## My social worker and meetings

There will be meetings with your social worker and sometimes members of your family. But most importantly, with YOU.

You can decide if you want to go to the meetings or not – just talk to your social worker or your foster carer about this.

You may decide instead to tell your foster carer what you want or what you are feeling and they can tell the meeting.

These meetings are to check that things are going well and that you are happy with your new foster family. They will also talk about other things like your school, your health and how well you are doing.

## My feelings

We want you to feel at home with your foster carer, be able to tell them if you are unhappy and if you are happy.

Whilst you are living with a foster carer you will have a Care Plan, which tells all the adults what they need to do to make sure you are looked after properly.

If you don't think you can tell your foster carer how you feel, talk to your social worker or you can call one of the numbers on page 20 and 21.



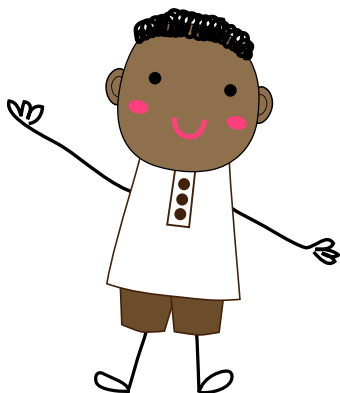
# Your rights

## You have the right to:

- Be listened to and asked what you think
- Follow your chosen culture & religion
- Have contact with your family and friends if it is safe for this to happen.
- Telephone your social worker if you need to
- Eat a special diet/foods if that is part of your culture/religion
- Have pocket money
- See your social worker if you need to - and in private
- See a dentist and doctor when you need to
- Go to school and have an education
- Have suitable clothing to wear
- Private time (privacy)
- Your own bedroom
- Complain

## Talking to me

You have the right to share your thoughts and feelings about decisions that are made about you. This means people will ask you for your views and listen to what you say. It doesn't mean you will always get what you want but you will be told the reasons why.



## If you have a complaint or need to talk to someone...

If you are not happy with the way you are being looked after, you must tell someone. You should tell us how you feel so we can try and sort it out.

If you do have a complaint, Heath Farm will take everything you have to say seriously.

The complaints system does work and we have changed the way we do things by listening to children and young people, taking on board suggestions for improvement.

You can also tell your foster carer, social worker, teacher, or your parents if you have any problems.

# Independent Reviewing Officers

Independent Reviewing Officers (usually shortened to ‘IROs’) are people working with children in care as well as their social workers. Each child in care should have an IRO. It is the IRO’s job to check that the local authority is doing what it should be doing for children while they are in care. The IRO is in charge of your review and checks that all the adults are doing what is in your Care Plan, and that your wishes and feelings are being listened to.

You will see your IRO at your reviews at least twice a year, or if you want to speak to your Independent Reviewing Officer. Ask your social worker how you can contact them.

**My Children’s Rights Worker’s name is:**

.....

.....

**Their contact number is:**

.....

.....

## Children’s Rights Worker (CRW)

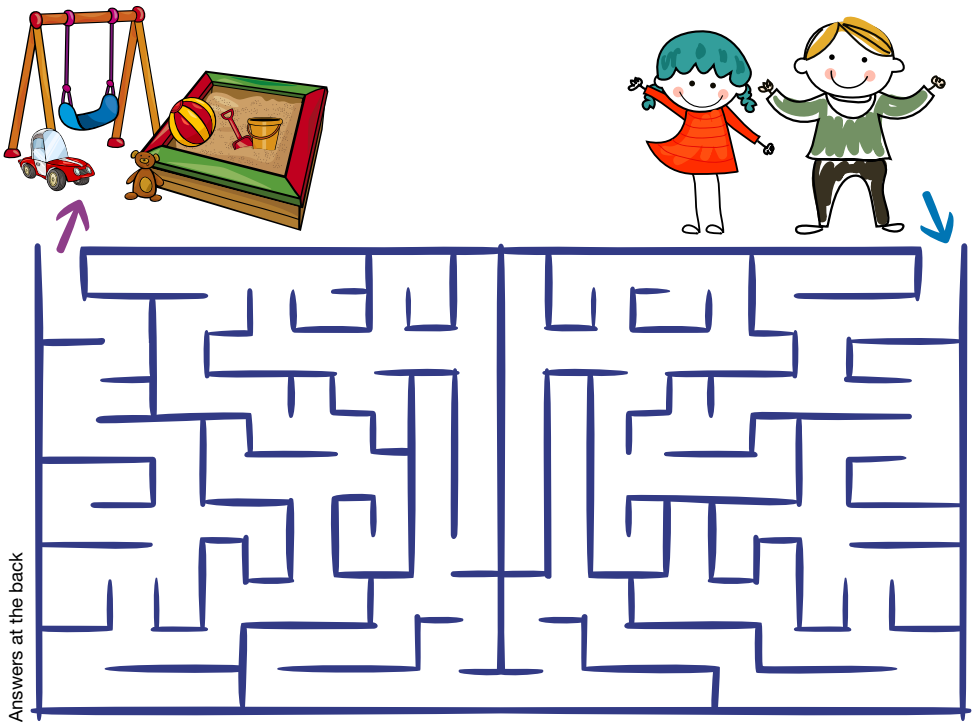
The Children’s Rights Worker can help with your problems, show you how to sort out any complaints and explain your rights.

# Spot 10 Differences

Answers at the back



# School & friends



## My school

It may be that you go to your usual school or you may have a new school closer to your new house. Your social worker and foster carer will talk to you about this.

## Activities

Are there any clubs or activities you would like to go to?  
Your foster carer can help you with this.

.....

.....

.....

# My school

While you are at your foster carers we hope you will make friends that you may want to invite to play or to tea. Talk to your foster carers about your friends coming to visit.

**Remember:** If you are going to play with a friend it is important that an adult knows where you are at all times or else we will all be worried about you.

My friends are called:

If your foster carers do not know where you are they may have to tell the police, your social worker and maybe your family.



.....

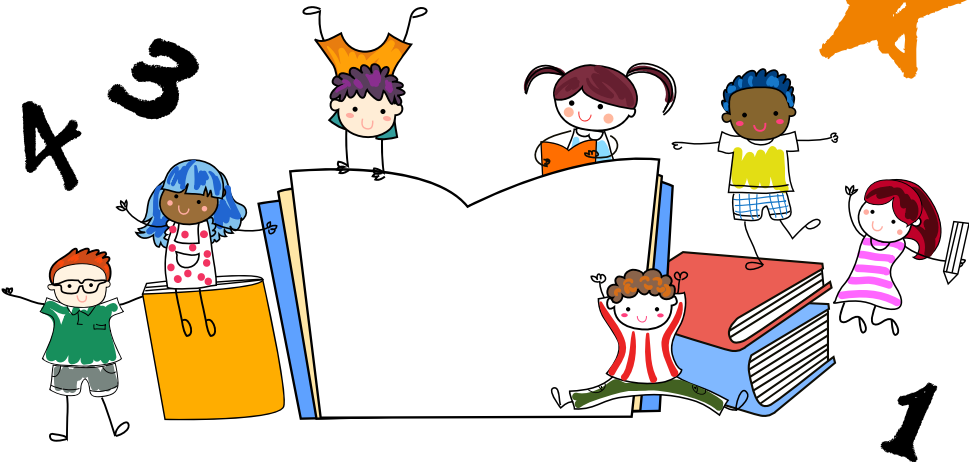
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## Bullying

We want you to live together happily and safely in your new home.

If someone is making you feel sad or unhappy, we want you to tell someone. You can tell your social worker, a teacher, your foster carer, the CRW or the Heath Farm social worker. They will talk to you about this and try to sort the problem out.

It is important that you are able to share what is making you sad and what is making you happy.

You may choose to tell someone by drawing a picture, writing it down or talking to them.

If you feel that you are still unhappy and not being listened to, you could ring one of the numbers on page 20 and 21.



## Keeping safe

### When you are playing outside

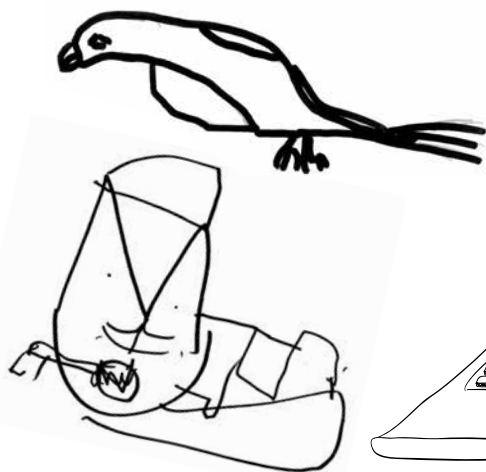
When you are outdoors playing with friends or with an adult you **must NOT** talk to strangers or wander off without permission.

### When you are near animals

**You must** not approach or stroke an animal that you do not know.

### When you are on the computer

If you are on the computer, make sure you do not give anyone your address or phone number. **ALWAYS** let your foster carer know if anyone has asked you for your address or phone number. **NEVER** arrange to meet anyone you contact through the internet.



# Race, equality & diversity



## What's it all about?

Race Equality means that all people; white, black, red and yellow, have the right to be treated fairly and that everyone should have the same chance. **EQUAL RIGHTS NO MATTER WHAT!**

There are many different religions celebrated in Britain. For example, Hindu, Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, Jehovah's Witness, Judaism and Buddhism.

When children come to Britain from other countries they sometimes feel frightened, uncomfortable, sad and lonely. Everything is new to them. You could make them feel better by welcoming them and making them feel happy to be here. You could play

**If you would like to find out more about race, equality and diversity, you could:**

- Ask your teacher
- Look up books on race and diversity in the library
- Look at the contact list on the next pages

# If you are unhappy

If you are unable to talk to anybody at Heath Farm about something which is worrying you, you can call any of the organisations listed

below. The people who work for these organisations are people who care about children and want to help them.

## **Voice for the Child in Care**

VCC works to empower children and young people in care and campaigns for improvements to their lives.

Telephone: 0808 800 5792

Email: [info@vcc-uk.org](mailto:info@vcc-uk.org)

Website: [www.voiceyp.org](http://www.voiceyp.org)

## **Coram Voice**

We offer help (called advocacy) to children who are living in care.

Telephone: 0808 800 5792

Website: [www.coramvoice.org.uk](http://www.coramvoice.org.uk)

Email: [help@coramvoice.org.uk](mailto:help@coramvoice.org.uk)

## **Ofsted**

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street

Manchester M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **The Who Cares? Trust**

The Who Cares? Trust gives children and adults information about care.

Telephone: 0207 251 3117

Website: [www.rhrn.thewhocarestrust.org.uk](http://www.rhrn.thewhocarestrust.org.uk)

## **NYAS—National Youth Advocacy Service**

Provides advocates for children and young people in care or leaving care

Telephone: 0800 616101 (08:00-20:00 Mon-Fri, 10:00-16:00 Sat)

Website: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)

## **Children's Legal Centre**

Advice & information about issues that affect young people.

Telephone: 08088 020 008

Website: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

## **ChildLine**

The Line is a special telephone helpline & website for children living away from home.

Telephone: 0800 1111

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## **Children's Commissioner**

Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0800 528 0731

Or email the Advice Team on:

[advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)



# Heath Farm charter of children's rights

**Heath Farm believes that every child has the right to:**

- Receive affection, love and understanding
- Have adequate nutrition and medical care
- Have opportunities for play and recreation
- Be educated
- Have their individual abilities developed
- Have protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- Privacy and freedom of expression
- Complain if they feel they are being unfairly treated
- Expect stability, security and continuity of relationships
- Be heard and listened to
- Be encouraged to develop a sense of personal responsibility



# Jargon buster

## (What some words mean)

### **LAC**

This stands for 'Looked After Child' and it means any child that is in care.

### **LAC Review**

This is a big meeting where your IRO makes sure all the adults are looking after you properly. Your wishes and feelings are always included.

### **IRO**

This stands for 'Independent Reviewing Officer'.

Your IRO will chair your LAC Review and is in charge of making sure all the adults are looking after you properly.

### **LASW**

This stands for 'Local Authority Social Worker'.

This person is YOUR Social Worker.

### **SSW**

This stands for 'Supervising Social Worker'.

This person is your foster carer's social worker.

### **PEP**

This stands for 'Personal Education Plan'. All children in care must have a PEP.

This makes sure your school is doing everything it can to support and teach you properly. Your wishes and feelings are always included.

### **LAC Medical**

All children in care must have a medical once a year. This is done by a special nurse and can happen at a doctor's surgery or in the home.

### **SENCO/Inclusion Manager**

This is somebody in school who makes sure any children who need extra support in school get the help they need.

### **EHC Plan**

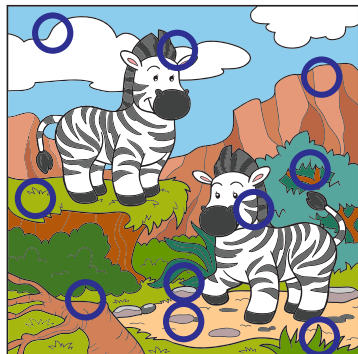
This stands for Education, Health and Care Plan. This is a plan that sets out exactly how a child will be supported in school. Your wishes and feelings are always included. Not all children need an EHC Plan.

# Answers:

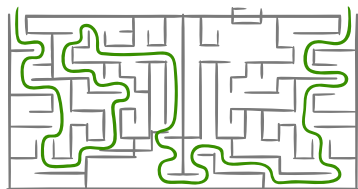
## p9 Name the fruit

tomatoes, bananas, carrots

## p14 Spot 10 Differences



## p15 School & Friends



## p19 Safari Crossword

1. Snake
2. Elephant
3. Giraffe
4. Zebra
5. Rhinoceros
6. Lion

ANSWER: SAFARI