



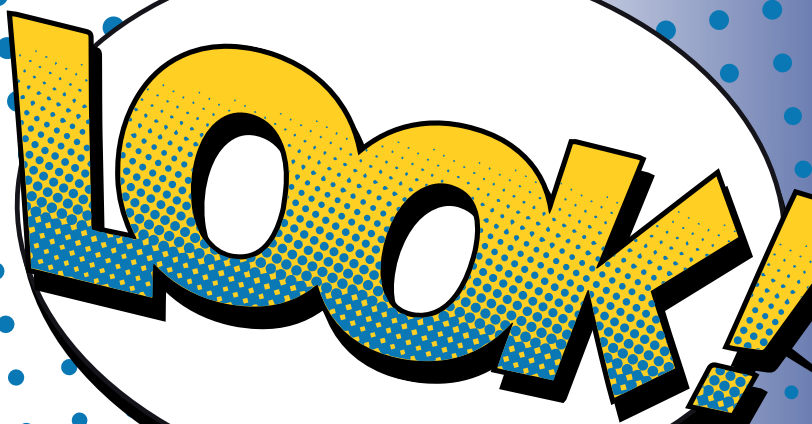
HeathFarm Fostering

An independent therapeutic fostering agency



YOUNG PERSON'S WELCOME GUIDE

What's in this guide?



LOOK!

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ciao



salut

Introduction

This guide has been written for you. Heath Farm is a foster care organisation. It is here to help children and young people live with a foster family. Heath Farm has foster carers who are very experienced at looking after children and young people. Some young people go to Heath Farm School and some will go to other schools.

Guten tag

Hola

Hello

Cześć

Bonjour

Sveiki

helo

hallo

Zdraveite

ahoj

It's all about me

Name:

.....

Address:

.....

Age/Birthday:

.....

My Family:

.....

My School:

.....

My Foster Carers:

.....

My Foster Carers Numbers:

.....

My Social Worker's Number:

.....

My Children's Rights Worker:

.....

Emergency Contact:

.....

.....

Your social worker

Your social worker is someone that has been specially trained to work with young people 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 and YOUR family.

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 social worker. If you have any problems you can ask to speak to them.



Information about me



Hi!



My file

Heath Farm have to keep information about all the young people who live with their foster carers to make sure you are looked after properly. If you ever want to see any of the information we hold 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.

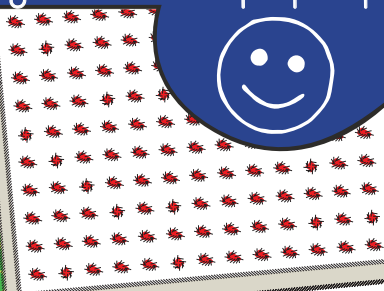
Being 'Looked After' by Social Services

You may hear people use the term 'looked after' when they are talking about you. All this means is that Social Services are looking after you whilst you are unable to live at home, and they are involved in the decisions about your future.

Whilst you are being 'looked after' by Social Services, your social worker will keep in contact by visiting and telephoning you regularly.



Heath Farm will make sure you're being looked after properly



Meetings & Reviews

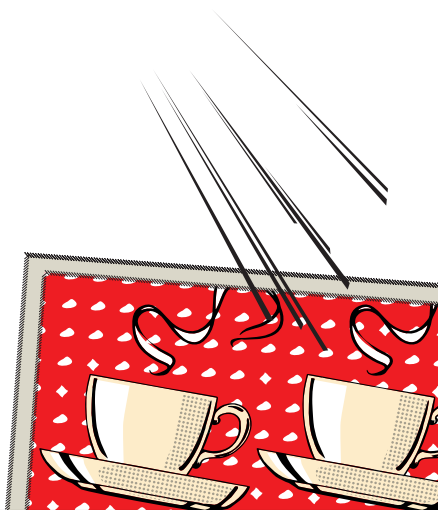
Throughout your stay with your foster carer, regular meetings and reviews are held by Social Services, (which they have to do by law). Your social worker will arrange these meetings about and for you.

It is always useful if you can attend these meetings although we know you may choose not to. Your parents, social worker, teacher and foster family will be some of the people who may be invited to attend - as well as anyone else you would like to invite. These meetings and reviews are to check that things are going okay and to plan for your future. You do not have to go to them if you don't want to - but it is important that the people who do go to these meetings understand and know what YOU want. Speak to your social worker about attending these meetings or having your views heard.

Contact with your family

In most cases, all young people will be encouraged and helped to see their families as often as possible, but sometimes there may be reasons why this is not possible and these reasons should be explained to you.

Discuss with your social worker about contact with your family and how you will see and talk to them.



Where you live

House Rules and Safer Caring

Heath Farm asks all its fostering families to have a Safer Caring Policy which may detail household rules. These rules are there for all members of the household and are designed to keep everybody safe. Your foster carer may talk this through with you.

Members of the household will knock before entering anyone's bedroom and we shouldn't touch each others things unless we have permission to do so.

We appreciate that having your own space is important but sometimes there may be occasions when your foster carer may need to enter your bedroom i.e. to check that your room is clean and tidy.

Bedrooms / Privacy

Everyone has a right to space and privacy and as such you will have your own bedroom whilst you are staying with your foster carers.

There may also be occasions when a foster carer may check your room because they are worried about your safety and welfare. You will always be told if this happens.



Using the Telephone/ Confidentiality

You should be able to use the telephone in private especially if you need to talk confidentially to your social worker or the Children's Rights Officer.

Clearly, using the telephone can be expensive so talk to your carer about when you can and cannot use the phone.

As long as it has been agreed by your social worker you should be able to phone and receive calls from your family.



Foster Carers

When things aren't going well

At Heath Farm we believe that everybody, whether you're a young person or an adult, needs boundaries and when we do something wrong we need to have this explained to us so we can learn to do the 'right' thing next time. The thing to remember is that whatever you've done nobody should ever smack, hit or hurt you.

Your foster carer **MUST NEVER:**

- Smack you or physically hurt you
- Stop you from seeing your parents because you've been naughty
- Lock you in a room
- Stop you from having food or drink
- Take all your pocket money, (but you may have to pay part of it if, for example, you're paying for something that you have broken)
- Humiliate you



Food

It is important that you like the food that's on offer to you so talk to your carers. They will make sure that they give you food that you like, but they will also need to give you a healthy balanced diet as well.

You should never be made to eat food you dislike, or are allergic to, and your religious dietary needs should always be respected.

It could be helpful to go shopping with your carers so you can look at the different foods you might not have tried before, as well as the food you like.

If you are having problems that prevent you from eating, or are worried about food in other ways, there is help on offer. Talk to someone you trust so that they can support you. **REMEMBER** that you can always speak to your social worker or carers.

Pocket Money

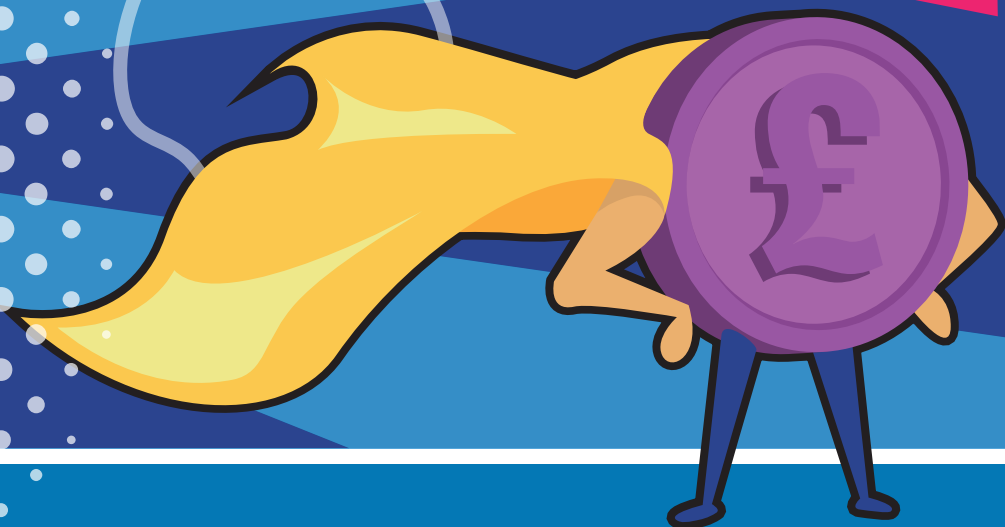
The amount of pocket money you receive from your foster carers usually depends on how old you are.

It's up to you how you want to spend or save your pocket money. If you want to save your pocket money, speak to your carers about opening your own bank or savings account.

How much pocket money will I receive each week

£ _____

Your carers will also put some money aside for you, into a savings account every week. They will look after this until you are an adult.



Hygiene & Beauty

Your carer will provide you with any items that you need to keep yourself clean. If you require other essential items, discuss this with your carer and they should purchase them for you. Make-up can be purchased with your pocket money. You may require specific products for hair and skin care and your carer will be responsible for purchasing these items for you.

Your cultural background and religion may influence what you do with your hair, e.g. your religion may require you leave your hair uncut. This will always be respected. You may need to make your carer aware of these things so they can support you.

Medical Card

Your medical card is an important document with your full name, date of birth, NHS number and your doctor's details on it. You need it to get medical and dental treatment on the NHS.

Your carer will look after it for you until you are 16, or longer if you want them to.



Running Away

There may be times when you feel like running away because of something that is happening, or because you feel unhappy. It's important you talk to someone you trust about your feelings.

If you do run away, lots of people will be worried about you and your safety.

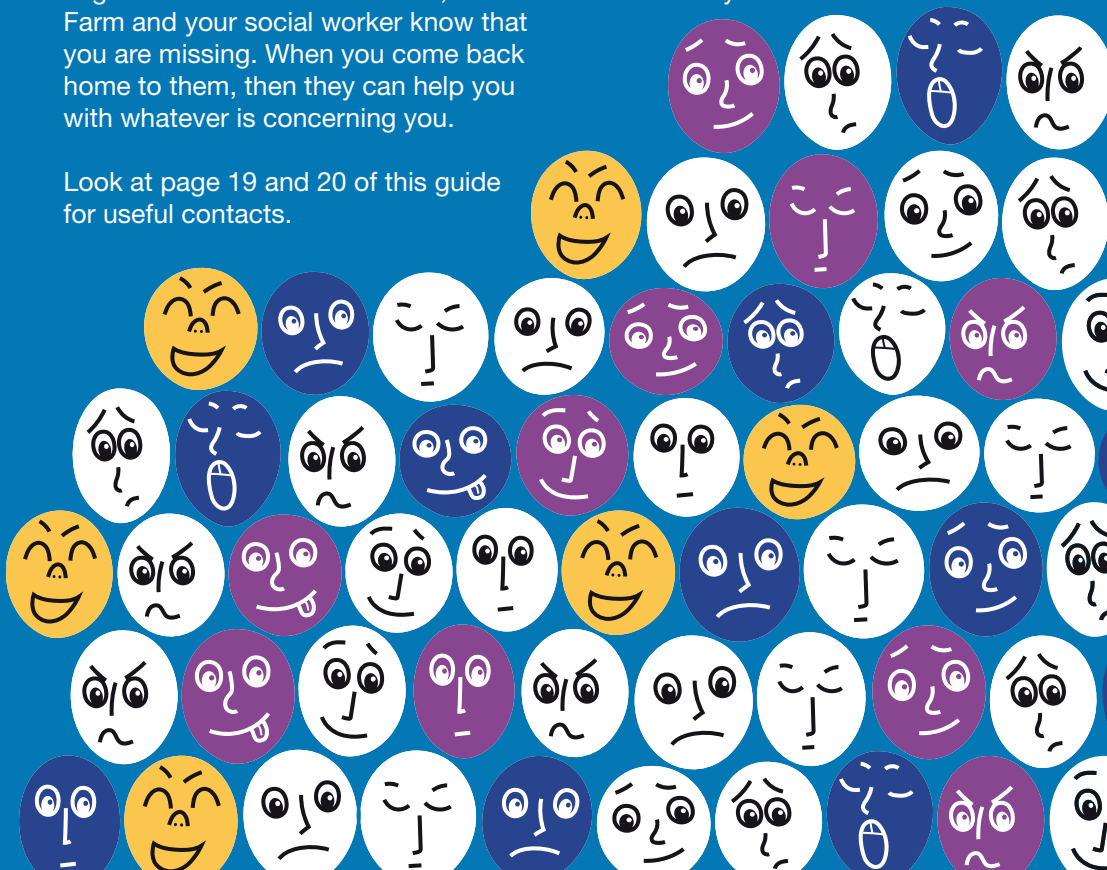
Please telephone or text someone you trust to let them know that you are safe. Your foster carers would be really happy to know that you are safe and will always welcome you back. They might have had to let the Police, Heath Farm and your social worker know that you are missing. When you come back home to them, then they can help you with whatever is concerning you.

Look at page 19 and 20 of this guide for useful contacts.

Feelings

It's important that you are able to share what makes you happy, or sad, and any worries that you may have. Your foster carers, social workers and legal guardians all want to help and protect you. If there's anything e.g. bullying or being hurt by someone, or maybe you need help with homework, do talk to someone. If you don't find it easy to talk, you could write it down and pass it on to someone you trust.

If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, tell someone you trust.



Your education

All children and young people are legally required to attend school every day.

Whilst living with your foster carers, you will be involved in making plans to ensure that you receive an education. This will help to give you better opportunities so you can have a good job in the future.

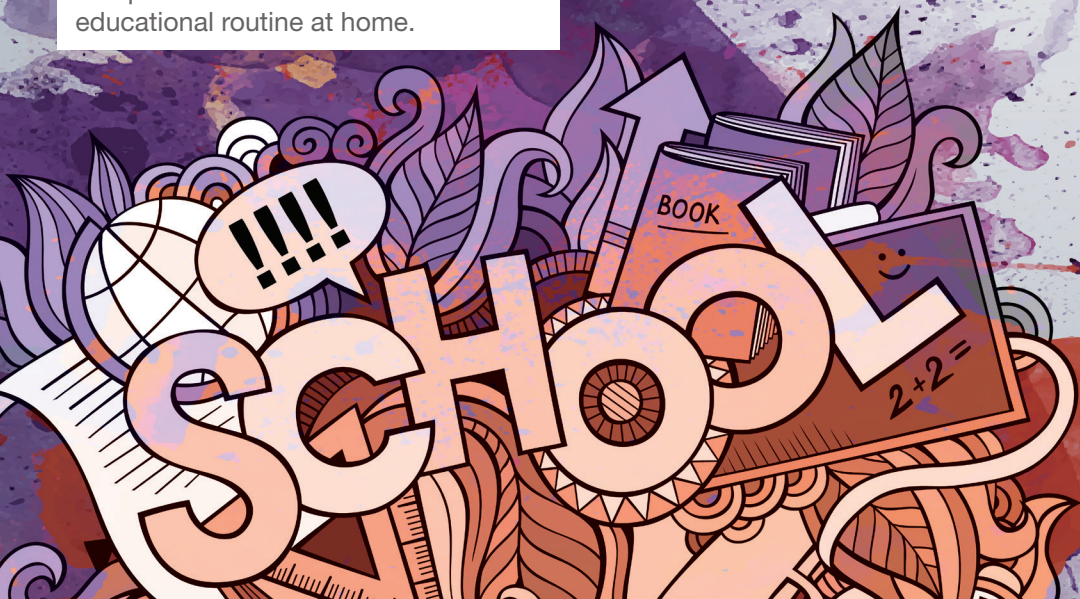
If you are living near to your home, you may be able to carry on going to your current school, but if you have to move further away, your foster carers and social worker will try to organise a new school as quickly as possible.

If there is any delay in a school being found or if you are excluded from school, you will be expected to complete school work and follow an educational routine at home.

If you are out of school for a long period of time, an Education Welfare Officer may work with you to help you get back into education.

Your foster carers will encourage you to do homework and offer any help you might need. They will also attend consultation evenings in school and keep in regular contact with your school.

If you are of school leaving age, speak to your foster carer and social worker about support with further education or job opportunities.



Your rights and who you can talk to

EVERYONE HAS RIGHTS.
WHILST YOU ARE LIVING
WITH YOUR FOSTER FAMILY.
IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU
TO KNOW THAT THERE ARE
CERTAIN THINGS THAT YOUR
FOSTER FAMILY SHOULD
SUPPORT YOU WITH.

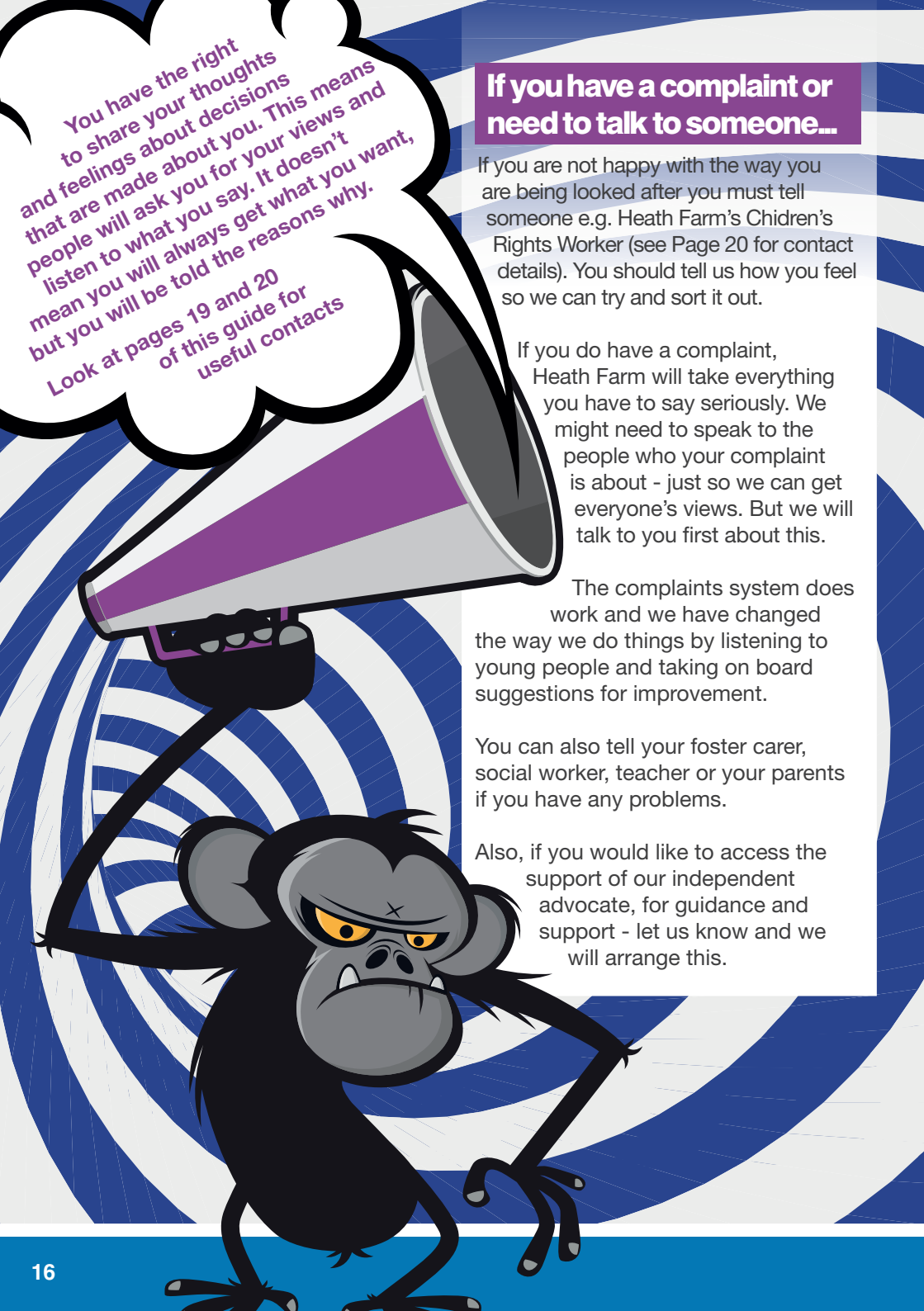
WE HAVE GIVEN SOME
EXAMPLES ALONGSIDE
TO HELP YOU
UNDERSTAND
YOUR RIGHTS.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Be listened to and consulted
- Follow your chosen culture and religion
- Have contact with your family and friends*
- Telephone your social worker if you need to
- Eat a special diet/foods that are part of your culture/religion
- See your social worker if you need to - and in private
- Have pocket money
- See a dentist and doctor when you need to
- Go to school and have a state education
- Have suitable clothing to wear
- Private time (privacy)
- Your own bedroom
- Complain/Children's Rights Officer
- Share your views

*If safe to do so - talk to your Social Worker about this.



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. Look at pages 19 and 20 of this guide for useful contacts

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 e.g. Heath Farm's Children's Rights Worker (see Page 20 for contact details). 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. We might need to speak to the people who your complaint is about - just so we can get everyone's views. But we will talk to you first about this.

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

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

Also, if you would like to access the support of our independent advocate, for guidance and support - let us know and we will arrange this.

The thing to remember most of all is
- You have a right to complain, a right to voice your opinions and views, and you will not get into trouble for telling the truth.

For other people you can complain to besides us, e.g. Ofsted, have a look at the useful contacts on page 19 and 20 in this guide.

Children's Rights Officer - Local Authority

The Children's Rights Officer can help with your problems, show you how to sort out any complaints and explain your rights. Your social worker will give you information about how to contact the Children's Rights Officer (because they also work with the local authority) from the area that you used to live in. Their advice is completely independent. The Officer won't talk to anyone else about the things you tell them (unless you ask them to, or unless you or someone else would be in danger if they said nothing). Remember: You have the right to access a Children's Rights Officer.

Children's Rights Worker (CRW) - Heath Farm

Heath Farm also has a CRW who can come and visit you if you would like them to.

Look at page 20 of this guide for their contact details.

Independent Reviewing Officers

Independent reviewing officers (usually shortened to IROs) are professionals working with young people in care, in addition to their social workers. Each young person in care should have an IRO. The IRO's job is to check that the local authority/council is doing what it should be doing for you while you are in care, to go to all your reviews and to make sure they are done properly, to check on your care plan, and to make sure the local authority/council takes proper notice of the your wishes and feelings.

If you want to speak to your Independent Reviewing Officer ask your social worker how you can contact them.

Independent Advocate - SeAp Advocacy

SeAp Advocacy provide Independent Advocacy for young people looked after by Heath Farm.

What is an Independent Advocate?

An Advocate is somebody that you can trust to speak on your behalf. Independent, means they don't work directly for Heath Farm.

What does an Advocate do?

- They can listen to you
- They can advise you of your rights
- They can provide you with information so you can look at your options
- They can speak on your behalf, if you wish

See page 20 for contact details.

Race, equality & diversity

Equality means that all people, no matter what they believe, look like or are able to do, have the right to be treated fairly and have the same opportunities.



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 young people and want to help them.

Coram Voice

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

Tel: 0808 800 5792

www.coramvoice.org.uk

Email: help@coramvoice.org.uk

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Who Cares? Trust

The Who Cares? Trust gives young people information about care.

Tel: 0207 251 3117

www.rhrn.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

NYAS - National Youth Advocacy Service

Provides advocates for young people in care or leaving care

Tel: 0800 616101 (0800 - 2000 Mon-Fri, 1000 - 1600 Sat)

www.nyas.net

Children's Legal Centre

Advice & information about issues that affect young people.

Tel: 08088 020 008

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

ChildLine

The Line is ChildLine's special telephone helpline & website for young people living away from home.

Tel: 0800 11 11

www.childline.org.uk

Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

Tel: 0800 528 0731

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Or email the Advice Team on:

advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

SeAp Advocacy

Provides advocates for young people Looked After by Heath Farm

Tel: 0300 343 5714

Heath Farm - Children's Rights Worker

Provides support for young people Looked After by Heath Farm

Tel: 01233 712030

Email: childrensrightsworker@heathfarm.org

Heath Farm charter of children's and young person's rights'

Heath Farm believes that every child and young person has the right to:

- Receive **affection, love** and **understanding**
 - Be encouraged to **develop a sense of personal responsibility**
 - 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**

Jargon buster

What some words mean



LAC

This stands for 'Looked After Child'.
It means any young person 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 young people 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 young people 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.

Inclusion Manager

This is somebody in school who makes sure any young people 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 young person will be supported in school. Your wishes and feelings are always included. Not all young people need an EHC Plan.

P.A.

As you approach 18, you will no longer have a social worker. You will have a 'Personal Advisor' instead who will support you with things you need to know about living independently as an adult.

Pathway Plan

Around your 16th birthday, your Care Plan will change and be called a 'Pathway Plan'. Your wishes and dreams for the future, in terms of where you want to live and whether you want to continue in education or go to work, should be at the heart of your pathway plan.

I AM!

