

Fact Sheet - Who's Who

Social Worker

What they do: Every child in care will have a Social Worker. They make decisions about the child's care and manage their 'care plan'. They should be in regular contact with the child and visit at least every 6 weeks.

How they help: They must listen to the child and include their wishes and feelings in their care plan. They should explain decisions and ensure they know how to get their voice heard. The child should always have their social worker's contact details!

Personal Advisor

What they do: All care leavers over 16 will have a PA. They'll take over the child's care planning and complete their 'pathway plan' reviews until they are 21 (or older if you're in education or training).

How they help: They should stay in regular contact, helping the young person get into education, training and employment. They also advise on things like housing, money, health and wellbeing to ensure they're ready to live independently.

Team Manager

What they do: They decide who the child's social worker or PA is and make sure they're doing a good job, while providing advice and approving decisions.

How they help: They can attend meetings where important things are discussed. Ensuring the young person tells them their views can help make sure things get done!

Independent Reviewing Officer

What they do: Any child or young person in care should have an IRO. They'll chair care planning meetings and ensure the decisions made are acted on. Siblings in care should have the same IRO.

How they help: They'll make sure decisions are made in the young person's best interests, listen to them and ensure their views are heard. They'll guide the young person on how to make a complaint and will try to resolve any grievances they have about the services they receive. They'll stand up for the child's rights!

Who's Who Continued

Director of Children's Services (DCS)

What they do: They're in charge of Children's Services. The DCS must make sure that the service does the best it can, to keep all children safe. They also make sure schools are of a high standard.

How they help: The child or young person might never see the DCS but it's their job to check that the council gives all children the best possible service.

Advocates / Children's Rights Officers

What's the difference? All children in care are legally entitled to an advocate. Advocates usually work for independent organisations, whereas Children's Rights Officers work for the council. Their roles are the same though.

How they help: They should make sure the child's voice is heard, listen to them, help them to make a complaint when needed, check they're getting what they're entitled to and that they understand their rights, and support them in important meetings.

Participation Officer

What they do: They work closely with Children in Care Councils to make sure young people's views on services are heard.

How can they help? They often organise fun activities and offer opportunities to meet other young people in care and receive training. If a young person in care has a problem, they can help the young person find the right person to talk to.

Independent Visitor

What they do: IVs are volunteers who aren't connected to the council, who befriend and support children in care (like a mentor). The law says that all children in care must be offered the chance to have an IV.

How they help: They'll be someone that a young person in care can talk to for advice, support, and to be a friend!

Who's Who Continued

Virtual School Head Teacher & Designated Teacher

What they do: They'll check the child's school/college understands the issues that might affect their education and keep track of how the child, and all children in care, are doing. They'll also be responsible for the young person's Personal Education Plan (PEP), which should help them to fulfil their potential.

How they help: They'll help the school/college support the child and meet their needs, checking that the child is involved in setting learning goals and that there's a smooth transition if they change courses.

Designated Nurse

What they do: Children in care should have a health assessment every year (twice a year for under 5's) overseen by the Designated Nurse. They'll work with the child's social worker to ensure their health needs are met.

How they help: They understand issues facing children in care and give advice and support with this in mind.

