

One Minute Guide

Child in Care



What is a Child in Care?

A child in care is a child or young person up to their 18th birthday who is either accommodated by, or in the care of the local authority. There are many reasons why a child comes into care including: the death of parents; the child has experienced or is at risk of significant harm; or the child is or was experiencing neglect.

Children and young people in care may live with foster carers (including in [connected others](#) arrangements with family and friends), in children's homes, in secure accommodation or with prospective adopters.

Some children may be live with parents under a [Supervision Order](#). However, children and young people living in private fostering (guide) arrangements are not in the care of the authority.

What does 'in care' and 'accommodated' mean?

A child is described as being in care when a legal order is made (such as an Interim or Full Care Order; or Emergency Protection Order) and the parents or those with [parental responsibility \(PR\)](#) may or may not have provided consent. Accommodated means that the local authority has provided accommodation usually with the parents' consent (under section 20 Children Act 1989). Also, a child or young person is accommodated if they are remanded to youth detention accommodation in which case, they automatically become a child in care.

In addition a child comes into the care of the authority when placed for adoption (but not following adoption) or when the local authority is authorised to place a child for adoption, either when parents or those with PR have given consent or through the making of a Placement Order.

How do we support children and young people in care?

We have a child in care service specifically to meet the needs of children and young people in care whether they live in Warwickshire or elsewhere in the country. Every child in care has an allocated social worker. They assess the child's needs and work with them and with other practitioners to develop a care plan. The plan is reviewed at a All About Me Review. Each child also has an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) whose role is to quality assure the care planning process for each child and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration.

As well as the people who care for and support children in care where they live, other support comes from [Independent Visitors](#), designated teachers in schools and designated nurses for children in care.

The [Children in Care Support Service \(CICSS\)](#) will also provide a range of direct work and interventions to children/young people in care and also their families, including support to foster carers to maintain secure foster placements.

What do we want for our children and young people in care?

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) want their children and young people to reach their full potential, they are ambitious for them and want them to feel loved, cared for and safe.

Anyone working with or representing the interests of children and young people in care, is a corporate parent - they are ambitious for them working to ensure they fulfil their potential. They look out for the child or young person, provide security and protect them from harm, doing all that is reasonably possible to ensure the council is the best parent it can be. To support this, the Corporate Parenting Panel made up of elected members, council officers and partners, scrutinise the services provided and offer support and challenge

[WCC Corporate Parenting Policy](#) sets out WCC's commitment to ensure that all children and young people who are in care live in an environment that can meet their needs for as long as required, maximising every opportunity for long term care arrangements; to improve their educational attainment and health levels so that the gap is narrowed between them and their peers, and for them to be well prepared and supported for living independently as and when it is the right time for them.

[The Warwickshire Pledge](#) was developed with young people, and is a set of promises made by WCC to children and young people in care and care leavers.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we want children in care to have a voice and influence over both their individual circumstances by supporting them to participate in planning and for their reviews and collectively through [WCC Children in Care Council](#). The CICC is a strong and established committee which ensures that children and young people in care can contribute to the development of services and practice that relates directly to them across agencies. By meeting with members of the senior leadership team for Children and Families Services and elected members from the Corporate Parenting Panel, it provides opportunities to listen to what children and young people have to say and gives a voice and weight to their views and experiences and ensures that these are used to improve services.

Key contacts and more information

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You can find out more information from [Adoption Central England](#) or [Warwickshire Fostering](#)