LAW MAP:

Pathway plans & reviews

Key points

- A pathway plan is **a legally defined document which sets out a young person's needs, views, plans, goals and aspirations, and the different services, both universal and more targeted, that will be provided by local authorities and others to meet those needs and to support the young person to thrive.** It is **a 'living document' that is subject to ongoing reviews based on the young person's changing needs and circumstances**. A pathway plan sets out "the advice, assistance and support which the local authority intends to provide" to a young person and it **must comprehensively address any matters prescribed in regulations** (The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 for eligible children and The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 for relevant and former relevant children).
- A pathway plan **must be developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment and must be prepared for every eligible child**, including young people who become looked after under s.20 CA 1989 after their 17th birthday, every **relevant child** who does not already have one, and **then continued/maintained for every former relevant child**.
- **Young people's involvement is fundamentally important to effective pathway planning and reviews**. Local authorities must seek and have regard to young people's views and take all reasonable steps to enable them to attend and participate in any meetings which concern them.
- A pathway plan **must include information about how the responsible authority intends to meet the young person's needs, who will do what and when**.
- **Statutory professionals** like independent reviewing officers, social workers and personal advisers **play different and complementary roles** in the pathway planning, preparation, review and implementation process.
- **Independent advocates have a dual role to play** – (a) contributing to pathway plans and reviews and (b) holding local authorities to account for failure/s to follow the law and statutory guidance, always based on and in line with young people's wishes and instructions.
- Some young people require specialist support from advocates and solicitors to have a **care leaver's** ('former relevant child') **status recognised retrospectively**.
- Any unwelcome or otherwise problematic decision taken by a local authority in connection with a young person's pathway plan can be the subject of a representation, including complaint, under the Children Act 1989. **Where a complaint concerns a proposed change to a pathway plan, accommodation or another service, the decision may need to be deferred (frozen)**.
- Local authorities must arrange a pathway plan review at prescribed intervals and whenever a review is requested by a young person. **Reviews should always be brought forward where there is a known or assessed risk that a crisis may develop in a young person's life**.
- **The statutory responsibilities of local authorities** to prepare, review and implement pathway plans **apply irrespective of any other services being provided to young people because they are disabled, in custody or because they have an uncertain immigration status**. Planning and support need to be holistic and responsive to young people's individual needs and circumstances.

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Relevant scenarios:

Andrew, 18, has been in care since a care order was granted when he was 6 years-old. He is due to be released from prison in two weeks but there are no plans for what happens when he is out. Andrew is worried that he has no home to go to, no money and he doesn't know where his personal possessions are. Before being sentenced to custody, he was living in supported accommodation and had a key worker who was also his leaving care personal advisor. He had asked his key worker for help to enrol on a course at a local college but was told that all future advice and support would have to be provided by the probation service.

Sarah, 22, lives in a privately rented flat and has been told by her landlord that she needs to leave in 3 months. She tried to call her personal adviser (PA) for help; the PA emailed to say that Sarah is no longer entitled to any support. Sarah is in the second year of her degree and while she loves her course and the university environment, she is struggling financially and the housing situation is affecting her mental health, making it impossible to focus or rest.

Zahra, who turned 16 six months ago, has just been informed by her social worker that she would be moving from the children's home where she's been living for 2 years to supported accommodation. The social worker explained that this must happen as part of "preparation for transition to adulthood". When Zahra asked what would happen after that, she was told that it would depend on a number of things and would be discussed once she's turned 18.

Relevant legislation and government guidance:

Children Act 1989

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010

IRO Handbook (2010)

The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations
Volume 2: care planning, placement and case review (2021)

The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations
Volume 3: planning transition to adulthood for care leavers (2010)
(last updated February 2025)

Extending Personal Adviser support to all care leavers to age 25 (2018)

Local offer guidance (2018)
(last updated February 2025)

Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers (2018)

Key:

Primary legislation

Secondary legislation

Statutory guidance

Pathway plans and eligible children
(children who are aged 16/17 and are still looked after)

Paragraph 19B of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 places **a duty on local authorities to carry out an assessment of the needs of each eligible child to decide what advice, assistance and support it should provide - both now** (while the young person is still looked after) **and in the future** (after the local authority has ceased to look after them) - **and prepare a pathway plan**. This plan **must be kept under regular review** and reviews take place at the same time as the statutory 'care reviews'.

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 contain further, important legal duties.

In relation to every eligible child, local authorities must assess their needs for the purposes of preparing a pathway plan (reg.41). This assessment must be completed **no more than three months after the young person's 16th birthday or, if they become looked after after their 16th birthday, within three months of them becoming an eligible child** (having been a looked after child for 13+ weeks) (reg.42). As part of the assessment, local authorities must take account of a variety of considerations, including (reg.42(2)):

- needs related to physical, emotional and mental health and development;
- education, training or employment needs;
- needs resulting from the young person being an unaccompanied asylum seeking child or a victim of trafficking;
- actual and anticipated financial resources and the capacity to manage financial matters;
- accommodation needs;
- wishes and feelings of the young person;
- the views of relevant adults and professionals (e.g., IRO, personal adviser).

Reg.43 of The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 places a **duty on local authorities to prepare a pathway plan "as soon as possible after the assessment"** – this pathway plan **must include the young person's care plan and must address all the matters listed in Schedule 8**. Importantly, reg.43(2) states:

The pathway plan must, in relation to each of the matters referred to in paragraphs 2 to 10 of Schedule 8, set out—
(a) ***the manner in which the responsible authority propose to meet C's needs****, and*
(b) ***the date by which, and by whom, any action required to implement any aspect of the plan will be carried out****.*

Statutory guidance, Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations: Volume 2, states:

- ***The pathway plan then is much more than a statement of intent. It is a living document.*** *The assessment and pathway planning process for an eligible child* ***must involve a measured, evidence-based analysis of the young person's continuing need for care and accommodation and the support necessary****, so that s/he is properly prepared and ready for the time when s/he will no longer be looked after or supported in an independent or semi-independent setting, whichever is the sooner* (para 5.30).
- ***No young person should be made to feel that s/he should 'leave care' before s/he is ready. The role of the young person's IRO will be crucial in making sure that the pathway plan reflects the young person's views.*** *Before significant change can take place, such as moving from a regulated to an independent or semi-independent placement, or ceasing to be looked after,* ***the young person's statutory review meeting must evaluate the quality of his/her pathway plan*** (para 5.34).

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The IRO Handbook states that the IRO should be satisfied that the pathway plan has been informed by a good quality assessment (para 5.6), that it is aspirational, that it will assist the young person with the transition, and that it contains contingency plans in respect of health and education Para 5.8). If the IRO is not satisfied that the pathway plan will meet the child's identified needs, they should seek resolution of this informally or, where necessary, through the local dispute resolution process (para 5.8).

In situations where a child might cease to be looked after before they are 18, the IRO Handbook says:

- *It is likely that given their vulnerability most young people will benefit from the support that results from being looked after (including having a pathway plan that is kept up to date and reviewed by an IRO) until the age of 18. However,* ***where there is consideration that it might be in a young person's interests to no longer be looked after and become a 'relevant child' …, then this entirely separate issue must be considered by a properly constituted statutory review of the pathway plan chaired by the IRO. The proposed pathway plan for the young person concerned must be available for scrutiny at this review. The review should also stipulate how in future the pathway plan is to be reviewed and whether there would be any benefits in these meetings being chaired by an independent person****, with an established competence in the provision of leaving care, housing support and other services to care leavers (para 5.17)*
- *…* ***local authorities should consider the advantages of IROs continuing to maintain an overview of pathway plan reviews for relevant children****. The IRO could oversee this process though s/he may not always be the most appropriate person to chair the review of a relevant child. It will often be good practice for these young people to chair their own review though, at least initially, their former IRO may wish to support them to do this* (para 5.18).

Pathway plans and care leavers - needs assessment and preparation and maintenance of pathway plans
(relevant and former relevant children)

Local authorities are under a **duty** to:

- Carry out an **assessment of needs and prepare a pathway plan for every relevant child** who does not already have a pathway plan (s.23B(3) CA 1989 and regs.4-6 of The 2010 Care Leavers Regulations); and
- **Continue to keep the pathway plan under regular review for every former relevant child** (s.23C(3) CA 1989 and reg.7 of the 2010 Care Leavers Regulations).
- For care experienced **young people pursuing higher education** – the duty to carry out an assessment of the needs and prepare a pathway plan is expressed in section 23CA(3) CA 1989). If the young person's pathway plan sets out a programme of education or training which extends beyond their 21st birthday then their pathway plan must be **maintained and kept under review** accordingly.

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 contain further, important legal duties.

Local authorities **must keep a written record** of the persons whose views have been sought as part of the assessment, the information obtained in the course of the assessment, the discussions and meetings held in connection with any aspect of the assessment, and the results of the assessment (reg.5(3)).

The assessment must be completed within prescribed timescales (see reg.5(2)) and, as part of the needs assessment, local authorities must **take into account all dimensions of young people's lives**, including (reg.5(4)):

- health and development;
- education, training or employment;
- the young person's support networks, including their family;
- financial needs;
- practical and independent living; and
- care, support and accommodation needs;
- needs connection to the young person being an unaccompanied child or a victim of human trafficking;
- the views of people connected to the young person (unless this would not be reasonably practicable or appropriate), including the young person's parents/carers, education and health professionals, the young person's advocate, their personal adviser and any other person whose views the responsible authority, or the young person, consider may be relevant.

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Wishes and feelings, and care leavers' participation in the development and review of pathway plans

When:
- carrying out an assessment for the purpose of preparing a pathway plan,
- preparing a pathway plan, and
- reviewing a pathway plan,

local authorities **must** (unless not reasonably practicable):
(a) **seek and have regard to the views of the young person**, and
(b) **take all reasonable steps to enable them to attend and participate in any meetings at which their circumstances are to be considered** – reg.4(1) of The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010.

Additionally, the 2010 Care Leavers Regulations recognise the important role played by advocates – reg.7(4) requires local authorities to seek and take account of the views of the young person's advocates (to the extent it considers it appropriate to do so) when reviewing pathway plans.

The local authority **must ensure that a written record is kept** of the young person's views obtained in connection with pathway plan preparation or review – reg.4(3) of the 2010 Regulations.

Statutory guidance, Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations: Volume 3, underscores and elaborates on the importance of young people actively participating and feeling in control of their pathway plans and reviews:

Para 3.2. ***The participation of care leavers is fundamental to effective pathway planning. Young people should be central to discussions and plans for their futures and it will be exceptional for decisions about their futures to be made without their full participation. They must be active participants in building their future, based on their hopes and aspirations.***

Para 3.14. *The views of the young person* ***must be recorded and incorporated into the pathway plan****. …. Disagreements between the young person and professionals should be noted carefully.*

Para 4.9. *As they mature and develop, support for former relevant young people should* ***enable and empower them to take increasing control over the pathway planning process****. Empowering young people may require a [personal adviser] to allow care leavers the* ***opportunity to take risks and learn and grow****, even if this means that they may not initially be successful in what they set out to achieve…*

Para 4.19. *The young person must be* ***engaged in making the arrangements*** *about how their pathway plan is to be reviewed. Young people may suggest that some key professionals are not invited to their review meeting, and, if so, these* ***wishes should generally be respected****…*

Para 4.20. *Young people might be encouraged to take increasing responsibility for the review of their personal pathway plan and it will be good practice, if the young person wishes, to support them so that they chair their own pathway plan reviews with support from the chairperson, if appropriate.*

In fulfilling all of their functions relating to pathway plan development and reviews, local authorities **must have regard to the need to encourage looked after and care experienced young people to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account** (s.1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

All care experienced young people are entitled to make **representations, including complaints**, about the discharge of local authority functions towards them under Part III of the Children Act 1989 - s.24D CA1989. Local authorities must make arrangements for the provision of advocacy to those who make or intend to make representations under section 24D - s.26A CA 1989.
Where a complaint concerns a proposed change to a pathway plan, young person's accommodation or a service, the decision may need to be deferred (frozen) until the complaint has been considered – para 9.2 in statutory guidance: Volume 3.

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Content and format of pathway plans
(relevant and former relevant children)

Reg.6 of The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 states that a pathway plan, which must be recorded in writing, must include:

- **All matters listed in Schedule 1** (see box below) for each relevant and former relevant child (for those care leavers aged 21+ who are undertaking further education or training – the pathway plan must includer the matters listed in paragraphs 1-4 of Schedule 1);
- Information about **how, by whom and by when action will be taken** to address and implement the matters covered in the pathway plan:

Reg.6(3) The pathway plan must, in relation to each of the matters included in it …, set out—
*(a) **the manner in which the responsible authority proposes to meet the needs** of the relevant or former relevant child, and*
*(b) **the date by which, and by whom, any action required to implement any aspect of the pathway plan will be carried out**.*

SCHEDULE 1: Matters to be dealt with in the pathway plan and review
*1. The nature and **level of contact and personal support** to be provided, and by whom, to the child or young person.*
*2. A detailed plan for the **education or training** of the child or young person.*
*3. How the responsible authority will assist the child or young person in relation to **employment** or other purposeful activity or occupation.*
*4. **Contingency plans** for action to be taken by the responsible authority should the pathway plan for any reason cease to be effective.*
*5. Details of the **accommodation** the child or young person is to occupy (including an assessment of its suitability in the light of the child's or young person's needs, and details of the considerations taken into account in assessing that suitability).*
*6. The support to be provided to enable the child or young person to develop and sustain appropriate **family and social relationship**s.*
*7. A programme to develop the **practical and other skills** necessary for the child or young person to live independently.*
*8. The **financial support** to be provided to the child or young person, in particular where it is to be provided to meet accommodation and maintenance needs.*
*9. The **health needs**, including any mental health needs, of the child or young person, and how they are to be met.*
*10. Details of the arrangements made by the authority to meet the child's **needs in relation to identity with particular regard to their religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background**.*
11. Where the child [is an **unaccompanied asylum seeking child or a victim of trafficking**], whether the child's **needs as a result of that status** are being met*
**[NB. para 11 was added to Schedule 1 in 2014 and can viewed here].*

The format of pathway plans will be different in different local authorities as there is no single, prescribed model of what a pathway plan should look like. It's crucial for advocates to check whether individual local authority approaches follow the law and statutory guidance and that young people's wishes, feelings and preferences are central to pathway plans.

Statutory expectations in terms of local authorities' approaches to pathway plans are elaborated in Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations which states that pathway plans should:

- **Be clear** about what services, including accommodation, will be provided to young people (para 4.8) and **set out both general** entitlements **and more targeted, specific entitlements** (para 8.25);
- **Reflect high aspirations** for young people **and adopt a supportive, not punitive, attitude** towards situations where things don't go to plan or where young people make mistakes (para 4.8);
- Ensure that **all dimensions of young people's lives** are recognised and addressed (para 4.13);
- Provide a **full, accurate and meaningful (narrative style) record of young people's needs** – this must include "**explicit information about their wishes and feelings for their future**" (para 4.29);
- Include **strategies for early intervention and contingency plans** for when things might go wrong, including, crucially, with respect to where young people live (para 7.76);

Whenever advocating with and on behalf of a care experienced young person, advocates should, with the young person's permission and instruction (unless non-instructed advocacy is being provided) request a copy of the pathway plan and any associated review notes to check their content and compliance with legislation and statutory guidance.

Access to pathway plans and connected records

Under reg.4(2) of the 2010 Care Leavers (England) Regulations, local authorities must, as soon as practicable, **provide young people with copies of**:
(a) the pathway plan **needs assessment**;
(b) the **pathway plan**; and
(c) each **pathway plan review**.

They must also ensure, unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so, that the contents of each document are explained to the young person in a way that is adapted to their level of understanding (reg.4(2)).

The documents listed in reg.4(2) form part of what The 2010 Care Leavers (England) Regulations refer to as 'case record' – reg.10. Each care experienced young person's 'case record' must be prepared in writing and maintained by the responsible local authority and must be retained until the young person's 75th birthday (there are different statutory timescales if the young person dies before their 18th birthday). The 'case record' must be kept securely and may not be disclosed to any person except for when disclosure is authorised by law or a court.

Statutory guidance, Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations: Volume 3, explicitly recognises **care experienced young people's fundamental right to access information that affects their lives** and requires records to be legible and coherent (page 39). Para 4.30 states:

Each young person must have a copy of their pathway plan and understand which professionals have access to it and the arrangements made by the local authority for secure filing and storage. Similarly, where other agencies have a copy of their contribution to the plan, then the responsible authority must assure itself that the agency understands their responsibility to maintain confidentiality and make arrangements for secure storage of documents containing personal information about care leavers …

Pathway plan reviews
(relevant and former relevant children)

Reg.7(2) of The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 places **a duty on local authorities to arrange a review of a young person's pathway plan**:
(a) if this is requested by the young person;
(b) if it is considered necessary by the local authority or the personal adviser; and
(c) in any event, at intervals of not more than six months.

In circumstances where the local authority provides accommodation for the young person, it **must arrange a review** 28 days after the young person moved in, or as soon as is practicable (reg.7(3)). During the first review, the frequency of subsequent reviews should be agreed but they must happen at least every three months.

Additionally, statutory guidance, Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations: Volume 3, stresses the **importance of being responsive to young people's changing needs and circumstances, including any risk of or emerging crisis**:

Para 4.16. *The [statutory] requirements for review describe the maximum permitted intervals between reviews.* ***Reviews should always be brought forward where there is an assessed risk that a crisis may develop in a young person's life****. The purpose of these meetings will be to allow all the agencies supporting the young person to meet with them and to agree strategies so that any potential crises can be averted.*

Para 4.17 of Volume 3 identifies examples of the kinds of **circumstances when a pathway plan review should take place outside of/in additional to planned reviews**, **due to the serious implications of certain events.** These include, for instance, a young person being threatened with homelessness, being charged with an offence, or facing difficulties as a young parent (including where there are any concerns about their capacity to care for their child). This list is not exhaustive and decisions about additional/urgent pathway plan reviews should be made based on each individual young person's unique circumstances and needs.

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 require that during each pathway plan review, the local authority **must:**
1.**Consider the matters listed in Schedule 1**;
2.Seek and take account of **the views of specific individuals**, to the extent the local authority considers it appropriate to do so (reg.7(4)(a)) – these individuals, listed in reg. 5(4)(b) and 5(5)(b), include the young person's parents/carers, health and education professionals, the young person's **advocate and personal adviser**, and any other person whose views the local authority or the young person consider relevant;
3.**Consider if**, in relation to each of the matters set out in the pathway plan, **any change is necessary** – reg.7(4)(b);

The results of each review and any agreed change to the pathway plan must be recorded in writing – reg.7(5) of the 2010 Care Leavers Regulations.

Personal advisers (PA) play a key role in the context of pathway plan reviews (and, more broadly, pathway plan implementation). Reg.8 of the 2010 Care Leavers Regulations defines the statutory **functions of PAs** – these include participating in the assessment and preparation of the pathway plan, participating in pathway plan reviews, and liaising with the responsible authority in the implementation of the pathway plan.

For detailed information about the statutory role and functions of personal advisers, please refer to:
Law map: personal advisers

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Pathway plans and care experienced young people who require additional, specialist support

There are groups of care experienced young people for whom pathway plans and reviews must take into account and address need arising from additional vulnerabilities. Statutory guidance, Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations: Volume 3, explicitly recognises three such groups (see chapter 6): disabled young people moving/"transitioning" from children's to adult services; young people who arrived in the UK as unaccompanied asylum seeking children; young people in contact with the criminal justice system.

Disabled young people (chapter 6(a), p.46):

- ***Local authority responsibilities towards disabled care leavers are the same as for all other care leavers.*** *Because of their additional needs, some young people may draw on a number of services, receive support from several professionals and have multiple plans. The local authority must ensure that these processes are streamlined as much as possible and roles and responsibilities discussed with the young person and their carer(s)* (para 6.3).
- *Each disabled young person will have their* ***own individual aspirations, hopes, needs and wants.*** *Whilst* ***different services*** *will have their own eligibility and access criteria, they* ***must work together to adopt a holistic approach based on assessment of individual needs informed by each young person's wishes and feelings*** (para 6.4).

Young people who arrived in the UK as unaccompanied asylum seeking children (chapter 6(b), p.50):

- *Planning transition to adulthood for [this group] is a* ***particularly complex process that needs to address the young people's care needs in the context of wider asylum and immigration legislation and how these needs change over time*** *(para 6.20) … should cover all areas that would be addressed within* ***all young people's plans as well as any additional needs arising from their specific immigration issues****…* (para 6.21).
- *Pathway planning for [those young people] who do not have permanent immigration status should initially take* ***a dual or triple planning perspective****, which, over time should be refined as the young person's immigration status is resolved …* (para 6.20).
- *Pathway plans should always consider the implications for the young person if their application to extend their leave to remain, or their appeal against refusal of that application, is dismissed…* (para 6.27).

Young people in contact with the criminal justice system (chapter 6(c), p.52):

- *Whilst* ***local authorities have primary responsibility for care leavers [in contact with the criminal justice system]****, they are entitled to expect the support of partner agencies, including youth offending teams (YOTs) for care leavers under the age of 18 and probation services for those over 18 (para 6.31).*
- *Where a relevant or former relevant child enters custody, pathway planning must continue. The young person must be visited on a regular basis … The role must not be fulfilled by a YOT worker. The establishment should facilitate the visits, and* ***PAs should be afforded the same status as legal visitors. The responsible authority must liaise with criminal justice services to support the young person emotionally, practically and financially whilst in custody*** *… It will be good practice wherever possible to carry out a review of the pathway plan at least a month before release in order to give sufficient time for pre-release planning. For a relevant child, it should be exceptional for a review not to take place. (para 6.41).*

For groups of care experienced young people who face additional challenges and vulnerabilities but whose circumstances are not explicitly addressed in statutory guidance – for example, care experienced young parents – it's vital to advocate with and for them from the standpoint of their individual circumstances, wishes and needs, while focusing on their rights and entitlements, as set out in primary and secondary legislation.

Pathway plans and reviews - local authorities as 'corporate parents'

Section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires local authorities to have regard to the need to follow the corporate parenting principles when carrying out their functions towards 'eligible children', 'relevant children' and 'former relevant children'.

These principles are:

(a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;

(b) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;

(c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;

(d) to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;

(e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;

(f) for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;

(g) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The requirement to have regard to the need to follow the corporate parenting principles applies to needs assessments underpinning pathway plans, pathway plan development and pathway plan reviews (see statutory guidance, 'Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers', e.g., paras 1.4, 1.12, 4.9).

The same guidance reminds all local authorities that the critical question they should be continuously asking themselves when acting in their capacity as corporate parents is -

"Would this be good enough for my child?" (para 1.1).

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ANNEX 1: Who needs a pathway plan and which professionals are involved?

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">ELIGIBLE CHILD → aged 16 and 17
Currently looked after AND has been looked after for a cumulative period of at least 13 weeks which began after their 14th birthday.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pathway plan is developed in preparation for when the young person is no longer looked after; Care plan is maintained until the young person leaves care; Pathway and care plan co-exist, and both are reviewed regularly.</td><td>Responsible statutory professionals:
• Social worker
• IRO
• PA
+ ADVOCATE</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">RELEVANT CHILD → aged 16 and 17
No longer looked after AND was looked after for a cumulative period of 13+ weeks since age 14 which ended after their 16th birthday (i.e., was an eligible child before ceasing to be looked after).
OR, no longer looked after AND after their 16th birthday was in hospital, a young offender institution or a secure children's home AND was (before leaving care) looked after for a cumulative period of 13+ weeks since age 14 which ended after their 16th birthday.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pathway plan identifies the young person's needs, views, plans, goals and aspirations, and what support is be provided to the young person as a care leaver, by whom and when.</td><td>Responsible statutory professionals:
• PA (and the leaving care service)
+ ADVOCATE</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">FORMER RELEVANT CHILD → aged 18-25
Was a relevant child in the past OR immediately before ceasing to be looked after at 18 was an eligible child.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pathway plan identifies the young person's needs, views, plans, goals and aspirations, and what support is be provided to the young person as a care leaver, by whom and when.</td><td>Responsible statutory professionals:
• PA (and the leaving care service)
+ ADVOCATE</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">QUALIFYING YOUNG PERSON → aged
Is the subject of a special guardianship order (or was when they reached 18) AND was looked after immediately before the making of that order OR, at any time between the ages of 16 and 18, was looked after (for less than 13 weeks) but is no longer looked after.</td></tr>
<tr><td>No duty to prepare a pathway plan BUT duties in law exist towards this group of care leavers and local authorities have the power to give assistance which matches that provided to former relevant children - see s.24-24B Children Act 1989 and statutory guidance Volume 3 (paras 2.6-2.11, 8.43-8.51)</td><td>Responsible statutory professionals:
• Leaving care service
+ ADVOCATE</td></tr>
</table>

For detailed definitions of the different categories of care leavers, including all legal references, please refer to Annex 1, page 6, of our LAW MAP: personal advisers.