

Our pledge

Our pledge makes 5 promises to children and young people in the care of Thurrock Council. These cover:

- health
- education
- reaching your potential
- positive relationships
- Leaving care.

The pledge was written by young people and has been adopted throughout the council.

It applies to all children and young people, from birth to 18 years of age that are in our care. Some also applies to those leaving care from the age of 18 up to 21 years, or 25 years in some cases.

The pledge applies regardless of sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, ability or background. It applies wherever you are placed, whether this is inside or outside Thurrock.

Our 5 promises

We promise to work to help you to develop healthily by:

- helping you to keep fit and healthy and giving you the resources and information on how best to equip yourself to continue to develop
- ensuring that you are given support to have regular health and dental checks
- having social workers support you in all aspects of your development and giving you every opportunity to flourish

We promise to do everything we can to keep you safe and feel important to us while in care by:

- making staff available to speak to you when you need to contact them to discuss your problems, anxieties and achievements
- **social workers will visit at least 12 times a year and give you the opportunity to meet with them independently during this visit. (Amendment 1)**
- involving you in decisions and plans that are made that will affect your current and future life
- **giving you access to life story work in conjunction with Thurrock`s life story policy including a book / memory box containing important information about your childhood. This information will include: where you were born, the area you grew up in, schools you attended, photos, family tree, calendar of events and other memories you may wish to add. (Amendment 2)**
- not changing your social worker unless absolutely necessary
- giving you advice and support to stay safe both within your home and community
- **social workers should give young people their contact details such as email, mobile number and/or office number (Amendment 3)**
- calling you back within 24 hours

We promise to help you reach your dreams while in care by:

- celebrating your achievements and recognising your goals and helping to push you further while in care
- supporting you to attend and achieve in education
- providing you with good educational opportunities that best meet your abilities
- providing you with a translating dictionary in your language when you first come into care if your first language is not English
- giving you the same opportunities available to young people who are not looked after
- **Respect your privacy when possible (Amendment 4)**

We promise to support your positive relationships and social activities by:

- giving priority when you ask to stay with friends and relatives away from your normal placement
- **We will seek your views about contact arrangements and support you in attending family contacts. (Amendment 5)**
- aiding you in having easy access to libraries, youth clubs and positive activities
- giving you access to an independent visitor/ mentors
- supporting you in being heard throughout the local authority across all departments

We promise to prepare you for adult life and leaving care by:

- **supporting you in opening a bank account / savings account (Amendment 6)**
- **Providing you with identification such as passport, birth certificate or alternative identification available to you. (Amendment 7)**
- **supporting you to have access to your files (Amendment 8)**
- supporting you financially up until the time you start work or are entitled to claim benefits
- providing you with a grant to help you settle into your own accommodation when you leave care
- supporting you in higher education at university
- helping you with support to seek employment and training
- helping you with transport for attending education and looked after children appointments
- supporting you to apply for all documentation and providing you with necessary information on your rights