



THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

March 2024

HAVE A CRACKING TIME FOLKS!

Hi everyone,

Firstly best wishes to everyone celebrating a number of different key events this month, from Ramadan to Easter, and Holi to Purim.

Now is a time to find out about different cultures and take part in activities where you can. See **page 11** for a terrific **FREE** Eid event.

We want to send good luck to our soon-to-be new Trust apprentices who have been interviewed this month, as well as to two new Civil Service interns starting in March (**see page 10 for details**).

Well done to those who came to 'Brunch with Businesses' we recently held - a big success.

As we are now into peak Springtime there are lots of opportunities for you to read about in this newsletter, along with helpful advice and guidance on a range of topics, including student finance (**pages 14 and 15**).

If you are in employment we have a new article about working and emotional wellbeing on **page 13**. We recommend you have a quick read.



This month we have a wide range of fantastic opportunities and offers that you can apply for, so make sure you read every page.

We love your good news

If you have anything you would like to be considered for next month's edition please email it to Juliette Walton.

Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

If you can't get hold of your PA, please call: **0121 464 1229**.

*****NEED HELP ? CALL OUR DUTY LINE ON 0121 464 1229*****

IN THE MARCH 2024 ISSUE OF THE TRUST TIMES:

- Unite Foundation and MyBnk - **page 2**
- Useful finance apps and websites - **page 3**
- Spotlight on the Prince's Trust - **page 4**
- Our office base for the 18+ service - **page 4**
- WEA Adult Learning Courses - **page 5**
- Give Kooth a try - **page 6**
- Back issues of the 18+ newsletter - **page 6**
- Rees Foundation April 2024 update - **page 6**
- Cash Transfer Scheme and Bus Pass offer - **page 7**
- Suicide prevention - **page 7**
- Advocacy Service - **page 8**
- Care Leavers' Forum - **page 8**
- Child Trust Funds - **page 9**
- Junior Individual Savings Accounts - **page 9**
- Sign up to our newsletter online - **page 9**
- Your Good News and Care Leaver prescriptions - **page 10**
- Rights and Participation updates - **page 11**
- The importance of work experience - **page 12**
- Therapeutic Emotional Support Service (TESS) - **page 13**
- Student Finance information adverts - **page 14-15**
- AA Driving Theory Test free offer - **page 16**
- Cleansing our database, Trust Website Care Leavers' opportunities, and Our Offer to You - **page 17**
- Do you want FREE BT Broadband? - **page 17**

Unite

Foundation

Education is for everyone.

The Unite Foundation supports estranged and care experienced students with rent-free accommodation for up to 3 years through a nationwide scholarship scheme.

Deadline to **apply**

If you know someone who is thinking of going to university this year, or has already started their degree but could benefit from the scholarship, applications are now open until **14 June 2024**.

How to **apply**

All of the information, including eligibility and how to apply, can be found by reading the Unite Foundation adverts on pages **14** and **15** of this newsletter, or scan the QR code below on your phone.

Any questions, drop us a line at **info@unitefoundation.org.uk**



@ f X d

@thisisusatuni
@thisisunitefdn

thisisusatuni.org

thisisusatuni.org/unite-foundation-scholarship



The **Money House** is an award-winning workshop that helps young people, 16-25, prepare for independent living and adult life through a three or five-day workshop in our flat-style space in Digbeth.

You get vouchers once you finish the course (£30 or £50), AND you can also apply to the **MyBnk** grant scheme for £100. Since December 2023 we've awarded almost £5,600!

We reimburse you for your travel each day, there's breakfast and hot lunch, Wi-Fi, free hygiene and period products, a mental health first-aider on site, chill out spaces, signposting board, gender-neutral toilets and a fully stocked kitchen!

It's much more than money management though – young people tell us that they like going to a new place, the routine is good for them, they never thought they'd like something like this, sometimes they make new friends, and they feel safe and respected. The money bit is often secondary to the overall experience for them!

Find out more and sign up

Speak to your PA, or contact us on **TMHMidlands@mybnk.org** or **07562 665234** and ask for **Danielle**.

USEFUL APPS AND WEBSITES

Here are three finance/money apps that you may find useful.



Emma

Emma

- Emma is a budgeting tool where you can see all your main financial accounts in one place. The aim is to help you track expenses, avoid overdrafts, cancel wasteful subscriptions and generally save money.

<https://emma-app.com>



Snoop

- As well as being a great all-round budgeting app, every day, Snoop will generate personal money-saving tips, such as vouchers for retailers you commonly spend with. The app also closely monitors your spending on bills, alerting you to any alternatives that can save you money

<https://snoop.app>



Wally

- Wally is a great student budgeting app that allows you to connect your different accounts in one place to manage your finances.

You can easily track your spending budgets as well as any upcoming bills for FREE!

They have an interesting feature called the Wally GPT, which is an AI-powered tool that can assist you with planning and setting goals and learning more about finances and investing.

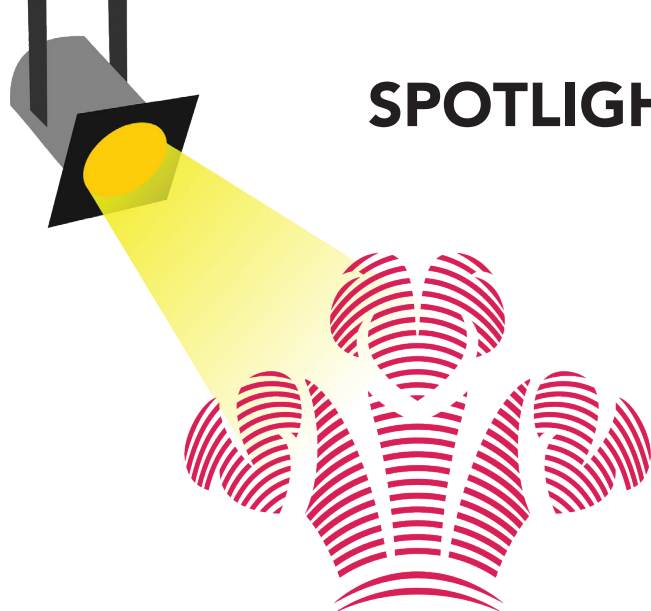
Learning about this can help you manage your money better in the long run, so this is a feature that you shouldn't miss out on.

The app also has access to over 15,000 banks in 70 countries meaning you can track and manage your finances with ease.

<https://www.wally.me>



SPOTLIGHT ON THE PRINCE'S TRUST



Prince's Trust

Every young person should have the chance to succeed. The Prince's Trust knows how hard it can be to get started in life.

Whatever challenges you're facing, if you're aged 16 to 30, The Prince's Trust – soon to become The King's Trust – is here for you.

You've got what it takes to gain the confidence and skills to get a job. But sometimes it takes that first step, and we're here to help.

Find out more on their website today!

<https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/>

OUR OFFICE BASE FOR THE 18+ DUTY SERVICE

Below is some important information for young people about access to our 18+ duty service for care-experienced young people. We are here to help, either by phone or in person.

To contact the 18+ duty service, please continue to call our duty line, 0121 464 1229. There is always a Personal Adviser and 18+ Manager available to give advice or help.

Our office base

We are open:

- Monday – Thursday 8.45 to 5.15
- Friday – 8.45 to 4.15

You can call in at our new office, **One Avenue Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 4DU** between these hours.

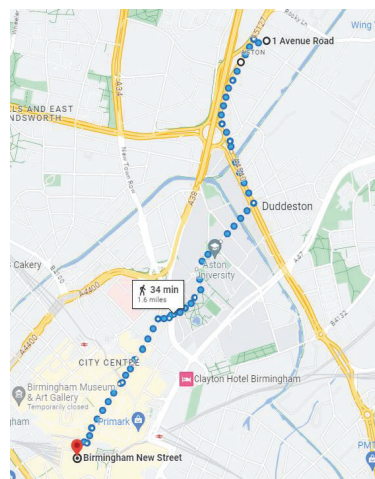
Ask the friendly reception staff as you go in, to let the 18+ duty team know you would like to see a Personal Adviser. Reception will call us and a team member will come to reception to see you. We have access to a quiet space where you can speak in confidence.

Buses to use: The main bus route is the Number 65 and 67, both go from the city centre. These buses will drop you right outside One Avenue Road, and the Number 8 route crosses nearby. The 65 and 67 buses go from outside the large B&M store in the city centre.



Walking here

From Birmingham New Street Station
There are a number of pedestrian routes you can take from New Street Station to get to One Avenue Road. This is the most direct route that follows a designated pedestrian path from the station, all the way through to the office and is well lit.





**Adult Learning
Within Reach**

WEA Adult Learning Courses

The WEA will be holding initial assessment and enrolment sessions at the Dolphin Women's Centre (Ward End Park, Washwood Heath Road, Birmingham B8 2HB) for courses starting in April:

Pre-entry ESOL

- If you are new to learning English this course will get you started and offer opportunities to progress to higher level ESOL courses in the future.

Days: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (times will vary, you must attend all three sessions each week).

Driving Theory

- Learn the language and skills you need to pass the UK driving theory test.

Days: Thursdays 12:45-2:45pm

Book an appointment with the Dolphin Centre 0121 326 8343.

More information

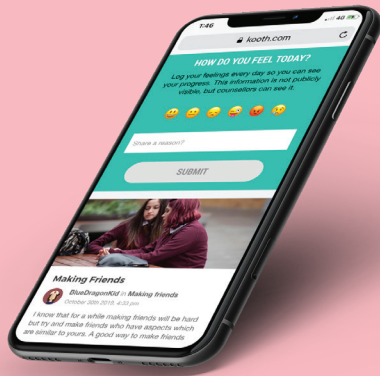
If you would like more information, please contact Lisa Havard on 07500 099600 or email lhavard@wea.ac.uk.

You can also visit the WEA website at www.wea.org.uk

WEA courses are for learners aged 19+, and are free if you are in receipt of a work-related benefit or if you work and earn less than £30,000.



Give Kooth a try



Kooth offers free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support, with many different features and sections to offer you support such as:

- **Magazine** - helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team.
- **Discussion Boards** - start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community. Lots of topics to choose from!
- **Chat with the team** - chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.
- **Daily Journal** - write in your own daily journal to track your feelings or emotions and reflect on how you're doing.

Visit the **Kooth** website to see the features listed above and much more!

www.kooth.com

THE TRUST TIMES

Back issues of the 18+ newsletter

You can find the last two years worth of 18+ newsletters on the Birmingham Children's Trust website. Many of the feature articles, including those providing information and guidance are still valid.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/3yliug3>

REES FOUNDATION April 2024 UPDATE

Rees Foundation run a number of groups called '**Let's Connect**', which allow you to connect with other members of the care experienced community. Rees find that these networks can lead to lifelong and empowering friendships.

Website: **www.reesfoundation.org**

The groups are facilitated using a team whose members may be care experienced or individuals who are experienced by profession, with the ultimate aim of creating a safe place where care experienced people like you can meet to discuss matters of personal interest.

Courses in April 2024

Careers Drop-In with Lucy

Date: 24 April 2024

Time: 2.00pm - 3.00pm

Book a 15 minute slot with Lucy, our Careers Mentor, who will be on hand to offer help and advice to care experienced people looking for a new job, training or to get into higher education!



Please note, booking slots will be provided on a first come, first serve basis.

Circle of Support

Date: 10 April 2024

Time: 7.00pm - 8.00pm

Group for care experienced people of all ages to discuss a range of topics. Each online session focusses on something different.



To sign up to any of the groups, please complete the form in the link below:
<https://form.jotform.com/203141499622353>

Cash transfer scheme

Kings College London are doing a research project which involves making cash transfers to care experienced young people.

The purpose of the research is to see if the cash (which doesn't have to be declared to DWP because it is a 'gift') makes a positive difference to wellbeing.

To be part of the research you will need to complete an online survey.

Scan the QR code below to go to the survey:



SCAN ME



Transport for
West Midlands

The Trust has signed us up to a scheme with TFWM (Travel For West Midlands). The scheme is aiming to get more people using the buses by offering **free bus travel** to different groups of people. Care experienced young people fit into the 'excluded access' group and are eligible for this scheme.

Important – please read:

- There will be a question asking if you have a Swift Card – say **No**.
- There will be a question asking how often you use the bus – **say once or twice a month, less than once a month, or never**.

(This scheme is to get more people to get on the buses – so if you say you already have a Swift card and you use the bus every day, you won't be chosen.)

Once you are on the scheme you will get a monthly code to renew your bus pass – as long as you have used it in that month.

Suicide and self-harm prevention

If you, or anyone you know, is feeling suicidal, or wanting to harm themselves, there is always help available.

However bad you are feeling right now, there is help that you can get.

Lots of people have felt like this and - with help – managed to get through it.

Here are some numbers and links to supportive professionals and organisations who offer help to those feeling suicidal.

These links will be included in all future newsletters so they will always be here for you to access



PAPYRUS
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE

- Papyrus has a lot of useful advice and also a suicide prevention helpline.

<https://papyrus-uk.org/>

- Samaritans helpline **116 123**
- SANE helpline **0300 304 7000**
- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) (for men) **0800 58 58 58**
- Help Guide suicide prevention

www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.html

Also please see the **TESS offer** on **page 13**.

Scan this
QR Code
to apply:



ADVOCACY SERVICE

The aim of **Rights and Participation (RAP) Advocacy** service is to ensure that Birmingham children in care, care leavers and children on child protection plans (wherever they may live), are provided an advocacy service. You are entitled to have the support of an advocate and access to children's rights.

RAP Advocacy is the representation of your wishes and feelings, your views, and your voice, to professionals and services. This could be at meetings, through the complaints process, or wherever you wish us to do so.

RAP Advocacy is **ALWAYS** led by you the young person - our **BOSS**. Your advocate will work on your instructions alone.

RAP Advocacy is issue based, so it is provided for a particular purpose, and is there until there is an outcome for the complaint, or concern.

Advocacy referrals are normally allocated to an advocate within three working days of receipt. The advocate will then contact you and support you with your issue/s.

You can make a referral for yourself or anyone else can make a referral on your behalf.

To make a referral or if you have any questions about RAP Advocacy service please email advocacy@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Testimonials about the RAP Advocacy service

"Thanks so much my advocate - everything went the way I wanted."

"Thank you for helping me learn and grow as a young mum you stood up for me and believed in me. It's all paid off, you're truly amazing and I hope we can always stay in contact."

"My advocate helped me to have housing officials listen to my housing needs. Without her they would not have listened to me and fobbed me off."

Care Leavers' Forum

We are a group of care leavers who work together to use our experiences to make things better for other children in care and care leavers.

We feel that the group:

- Stops us feeling alone and isolated
- Makes us feel like we are making a difference
- Builds up our confidence
- Builds up skills, such as speaking in front of other people

What we do:

- Interview new Trust staff
- Use our experience in producing and delivering training
- Discuss issues – what works and what needs to change, and make changes happen

We tell people what we need and get people to work in a different way. We don't share anything that is painful or private and have lots of support for you. Some of this work is paid (in vouchers). We also organise days out – like a trip to Drayton Manor.

How we do this:

- We meet every month, sometimes face-to-face and sometimes online
- When we meet face to face we have food together
- We get help with transport to the meetings if we need it

Over the next few months we are particularly going to look at **HOUSING** (including the state of housing, repairs and semi-supported) and **HEALTH** (including mental health, in-patients, autism and neurodiversity). We have work to do for the city council and NHS on these topics, so if you have experience please get in touch.

Contact us today

Try **Julia Balston**, Children's Rights Officer
Julia.balston@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
or **Emily Blythe** by text or call **07704 539 011**
Emily.Blythe@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Emily is our Transformation & Improvement Apprentice!

Child Trust Funds



If you were born in the UK and turned 18 after 1 September 2020 and don't have details of your Child Trust Fund (CTF), please use the online form below to find your details and take control of your CTF (usually worth £250 or more): <https://findctf.sharefound.org>

Junior Individual Savings Accounts

If you turned 18 before 1 September 2020 (born since 3rd January 1994) you may have a Junior Individual Savings Account (JISA) set up with £200. To be eligible you must have been in care in the UK, continuously for 12 months or more, since 2 January 2012. Please use the online form below to find your details so you can take control of your JISA:

<https://myjisa.sharefound.org>

If you need to contact the Share Foundation regarding the online forms please email:

info@sharefound.org

Or call

01296 310400

For further enquiries please contact:
Tracey.Britton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

SIGN UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE

We are looking to provide future newsletters in a different way for care-experienced young people like yourselves.

The plan is to move to using an emailer platform called Mailjet to send you updates direct to your inbox.

To do this we will need your permission to send direct emails from this platform, so we kindly need you to complete a short online form on our website. **Scan the QR code below** to go to the form. There are just eight quick questions.



Once you click 'Sign up' at the bottom of the form you will be sent an email to verify that you wish to sign up to future newsletters. Please make sure you accept this invite, and your name and email will then be added to our database.

You can of course opt out of receiving these newsletters at any time, using the 'unsubscribe' link, but we hope you will stay with us for future newsletters and bulletins.



Sign up for our care-experienced news and information

Please add your details below.

First name

Last name

Email address

YOUR GOOD NEWS IN MARCH '24

We are continuing to celebrate your good news in this newsletter.

Congratulations to every one of you on your achievements in March 2024.



- **Jon** and **Kash** have just started working at job centres in Birmingham.

They are in front-line roles, with the assisted service team – helping people who have additional needs to set up their Universal Credit accounts.

These are full time jobs with good pay and they will be working towards qualifications at work. So well done **Jon** and **Kash** – we are really proud of you!

These jobs were ringfenced for different groups of people - through a scheme run by the **Civil Service** called **Going Forward into Employment**.

- **PL** passed her driving theory test this month and is all set to start getting driving lessons!

If you'd like to know more, get in touch – with Juliette Walton on **07825 117 381** or juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

- **Zobia** has consented for this photo to be used in the newsletter, Zobia and her degree course colleagues were selling items they had made to raise money for their final exhibition in London. Zobia is in the last year of her degree in activism and photography.



NHS
Birmingham and Solihull

Care Leavers Prescription Form



NHS Birmingham and Solihull have published a form for you to apply for free prescriptions.

Simply scan the QR code below, complete the form, save it and send it to:

nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net



You can get a copy of this form from your Personal Adviser or by sending an email to:

nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net



Next Steps – Mentoring and Befriending

For young people aged 16-25 years



This is our brand new Mentoring and Befriending Service that also allows you to develop new skills.

There are some great freebies too like FREE Gym Membership, FREE Broadband, FREE counselling and a 24/7 helpline, Housing and Financial Advice, a MAX discount card and more!

We also make sure you have food and vouchers for any of the activity sessions you attend.

Scan the QR code below to be taken to an application form:



There are tailored programmes too that include:

- Making the Change – podcast and music production/performance
- ROCUP – fitness, personal training and positive mindset
- Wellbeing sessions with Journal to Dream

Eid
Celebration

11th April 2024 1-4pm

★ This event is open to all Children In Care and Care Leavers aged 16-25.

★ If you have a Young Person who would like to attend please click on the link below:
<https://forms.office.com/e/udAGaXsrTr>

3 course menu, Live DJ, Chai Station
Raffle prizes, Chocolate fountain

Tipu Sultan 43 Alcester Rd,
Birmingham B13 8AA

Our Trust Rights and Participation and Corporate Parenting teams will be holding their much anticipated annual **Eid event** at **Tipu Sultan** on **11 April 2024, 1.00pm - 4.00pm.**

This is open to all children in care and care leavers aged 16-25. Spaces are limited so please ensure you book by **5 April 2024.**

Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate travel on this occasion.

On the day we have a three-course menu upstairs in the private dining area, live DJ, chocolate fountain and a chai station, as well as many raffle prizes to give away. We look forward to welcoming you.

If you have a young person who would like to attend, please scan this QR code and register.



The importance of work experience



Work experience is the best way to try out different types of work, so if you get the opportunity to do some – take it.

It won't affect benefits, and we can help with travel costs and work clothes.

Work experience will increase your confidence and will give you something to put on your CV plus you can use employers as a reference.

Sarah and Krystyna (pictured above) both recently completed work experience at John Lewis. They have spent the majority of their time helping with a merchandise move, they spent time with different members of staff and really got on well with everyone.

Sara Breen from John Lewis said: "It's been a pleasure to have worked with both Sarah and Krystyna."

On the right is a short interview with Krystyna, hosted by Juliette Walton.

We are working with lots of employers who would like to offer work experience – so if you'd like to get involved, just get in touch: 07825 117 381

juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Interview with Krystyna

Juliette: Where have you been doing work experience this week?

Krystyna: John Lewis in Solihull.

Juliette: Which department were you working in ?

Krystyna: I did a bit of everything – Jewellery, then I went down to the Travel department and worked on enquiries. An old lady came in – she was 91 – and she needed proof of purchase, but in paper form. Then I was in Haberdashery – which is curtains, wool and fabric.

Juliette: Which was your favourite department ?

Krystyna: I didn't have a favourite department, but I had a favourite activity – which was putting prices on books and magazines.

Juliette: Would you recommend work experience with John Lewis ?

Krystyna: Yes - they're very inclusive and very encouraging

Juliette: You've done work experience with JQ BID in the Jewellery Quarter and JLP Solihull – based on those two, would you recommend doing work experience ?

Krystyna: Yes – it's good to be interested in what you're doing, but keep an open mind, learn new skills – you don't know what you'll like until you've tried it.

Therapeutic Emotional Support Service (TESS)

Come along and join the Trust's monthly TESS afternoon drop-in sessions for Birmingham's 18+ care-experienced young people, aimed at enhancing your emotional wellbeing.

Where will sessions take place:

TESS, 67 Bournbrook Road, Selly Oak
B29 7BX

Phone to book: 0121 675 1781

Dates: These will take place on the first
Wednesday of every month.

The next session will be on

3 April 2024.

Time: 12.00pm – 4.00pm.

What can I expect:

- A relaxing and welcoming environment with an outside garden and indoor area.
- Connection with the TESS 18+ team, which will give you the opportunity to talk and engage in activities and learn coping skills and strategies, that will help you to improve your emotional wellbeing.

Staff available on the day:

- Davinia Burrell • Paul Campbell
- Vibha Jivan • Sally Burgess
- Emily Kigonya • Rachel Quinn

Employment and Emotional Wellbeing

Continuing to work can be challenging when we feel anxious or low in mood and it is natural for us to want to avoid places or situations where we feel stressed. Whilst we might feel better for a while, the longer we avoid places where we feel anxious the more difficult it becomes to manage our feelings. This can become a vicious cycle. This also leads to feeling more isolated, stressed, low in mood and self-confidence. If we stay off work due to experiencing anxiety or low mood these difficulties can feel worse. The longer we avoid work places because of the way we feel, the more challenging it can become to commit to work life.

It feels daunting to go into employment because of the new responsibilities that this involves and the impact this might have on our entitlement to benefits. One way of helping us prepare for this is to consider working part-time to begin with. Another option is to explore volunteering opportunities to help build our self-confidence. There are lots of opportunities to volunteer with local charities for example food banks or charity shops. Please click on this link for the Birmingham Voluntary Service Council for more information:
<https://www.bvsc.org/>

Returning to work provides you with a routine, gives you a sense of identity and purpose, opportunities to form friendships, better financial security and the feeling that you are playing an active part in society. Please note the following links for tips on maintaining good mental health:

10 ways to maintain your positive mental health on Spunout - <https://bit.ly/495lqRK>

Top tips for care experienced young people - IMO - <https://bit.ly/4ar0BCw>

If you are signed off sick it is important to look after your mental health. Please click on this link for some advice and tips:

Recovering whilst signed off work for mental health - <https://bit.ly/3x7xw0x>

The NHS has some advice for returning to work after a period of sickness:
Returning to work after mental health issues - NHS - <https://bit.ly/3PyCSs7>

MIND have some tips for looking after yourself within the workplace - <https://bit.ly/4ardFI2>

You decide to go to uni or college.

YOUR STUDENT FINANCE JOURNEY

BEFORE UNIVERSITY

You find out what student finance is available from Student Finance England. Visit our student finance zone at www.thestudentroom.co.uk/studentfinance or find us at www.ucas.com/sfe

Apply for student finance online at www.gov.uk/student-finance. Make sure you have your passport, bank details and National Insurance number to hand.

Your parent or partner provides their income details. It's really important that they send us these as soon as possible so you get as much money as you're entitled to.

Provide evidence. Make sure you provide us with any evidence we ask for as quickly as possible to avoid delays in processing your application.

We assess your application. We'll send you a letter confirming how much you'll get.



Start university.

You need to register at uni before we can make your first payment.

Interest is applied from the day we make your first payment.

Reapply for student finance each year.

You graduate.

You start repaying the April after you finish or leave your course, but only when you're earning over £25 000 per year. When you start repaying, you make repayments to Student Loans Company. Find out more at <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/02/16/get-the-facts-on-student-loans/>

How much interest you're charged will be based on the Retail Prices Index. The actual rate applied will be adjusted each year.

If your income drops below the repayment threshold of £25 000 your repayments will stop.

Your loan will be cancelled 40 years after you're due to start repaying.

YOUR STUDENT FINANCE JOURNEY

BEFORE UNIVERSITY



You decide to go to uni or college.



You find out what student finance is available from Student Finance England.
Visit our student finance zone at www.thestudentroom.co.uk/studentfinance or find us at www.ucas.com/sfe



Apply for student finance online at www.gov.uk/student-finance
Make sure you have your passport, bank details and National Insurance number to hand.

Send evidence.

Make sure you send us any evidence we ask for as quickly as possible to avoid delays in processing your application.



Your parent or partner provides their income details.
It's really important that they send us these as soon as possible so you get as much money as you're entitled to.



We assess your application.

We'll send you a letter confirming how much you'll get.



Start university.

You need to register at uni before we can make your first payment.

%

Interest is applied from the day we make your first payment.

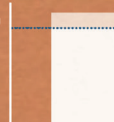
Reapply for student finance each year.



You graduate.



You start repaying the April after you finish or leave your course, but only when you're earning over a certain amount (£25 000 per year). When you start repaying, you make repayments to Student Loans Company. Find out more at <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/02/16/get-the-facts-on-student-loans/>



If your income drops below the repayment threshold your repayments will stop.



Interest rates can vary.

How much interest you're charged will be based on the Retail Prices Index. The actual rate applied will be adjusted each year.

%

Your loan will be cancelled 40 years after you're due to start repaying.



AT UNIVERSITY

AFTER UNIVERSITY

GET ACCESS TO THE AA DRIVING THEORY TEST APP FOR FREE



We've got exciting news. The AA has just joined on board with the Care Leavers' Covenant. They've committed to supporting care leavers to become safe and competent drivers on the roads.

Their full offer can be found here:

<https://mycovenant.org.uk/opportunities/aa-charitable-trust-theory-test-app/>

Found in the app store, the AA's Driving Theory Test App, originally priced at £4.99, is now available exclusively for care leavers to download and access for FREE.

A great discount initiative to encourage young people to take the first steps to obtaining their driver's licence.

Providing a super user-friendly interface, easy to navigate and a database of information covering essential topics to guide them successfully through the DVLA Theory Test.

Information on how to access this offer can be found below:

You will need to confirm that you are a care leaver by signing up to Connects and selecting 'I'm interested in FREE access to the AA Driving Theory Test app.'

Connects Sign-up – Care Leaver Covenant (mycovenant.org.uk)

Once verification is completed, an individual access code will be issued.

Care Leavers will need access to a smartphone or device, either on iOS or Google.



CLEANSING OUR DATABASE

We are cleansing the newsletter mail-out group. Young people who are 26 or older will be taken off the group unless you tell us you want to stay on it. If you are aged 26 or older and would like to stay on the email group, please let us know by emailing:

garry.james@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



OUR OFFER TO YOU

This is our support offer to you, so you know what to expect as you leave our care and beyond. Our website contains information you need about our support offer to you. Scan the QR code below to go to the offer page.



Care Leavers' opportunities

The Trust care leavers' opportunities page contains opportunities for you to get your hands on!

It is regularly updated, so be sure to favourite the page to keep an eye out for updated opportunities.

<https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/opportunitiesCL>

DO YOU WANT FREE BT BROADBAND?



We want to give you an update on the BT care leavers' broadband project where you can apply for a 24 month broadband contract with BT. Birmingham Children's Trust will pay for using funding from an HSF grant.

We have the finance to pay for 1,000 young people to have broadband fitted by August 2026.

Since August 2023 we have had 66 young people referred to BT for a broadband connection, and 40 now have an internet connection.

The average wait from sending BT the order to the order being completed was four weeks plus when we started the project in August 2023. For the majority of young people, the wait is now just 2-4 weeks

How do I find out more?

To find out more about this terrific offer, please contact your PA (personal advisor), and ask them to support you in applying for A BT Broadband line where you live.

