



Children Act 1989

1989 CHAPTER 41

PART III

[^{F1}SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PROVIDED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND]

Advice and assistance for certain children [^{F1} and young persons]

Textual Amendments

F1 Words in heading before s. 24 inserted (1.10.2001) by 2000 c. 35, ss. 2(3); S.I. 2001/2191, art. 2; S.I. 2001/2878, art. 2

[^{F2}23A The responsible authority and relevant children.

- (1) The responsible local authority shall have the functions set out in section 23B in respect of a relevant child.
- (2) In subsection (1) “relevant child” means (subject to subsection (3)) a child who—
 - (a) is not being looked after [^{F3}by any local authority in England or by any local authority in Wales];
 - (b) was, before last ceasing to be looked after, an eligible child for the purposes of paragraph 19B of Schedule 2; and
 - (c) is aged sixteen or seventeen.
- (3) The [^{F4}Secretary of State] may prescribe—
 - (a) additional categories of relevant children; and
 - (b) categories of children who are not to be relevant children despite falling within subsection (2).
- (4) In subsection (1) the “responsible local authority” is the one which last looked after the child.

Changes to legislation: Children Act 1989, Cross Heading: Advice and assistance for certain children and young persons is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 19 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (5) If under subsection (3)(a) the [^{F5}Secretary of State] prescribes a category of relevant children which includes children who do not fall within subsection (2)(b) (for example, because they were being looked after by a local authority in Scotland), [^{F6}the [^{F5}Secretary of State]] may in the regulations also provide for which local authority is to be the responsible local authority for those children.]

Textual Amendments

- F2** Ss. 23A, 23B, 23C inserted (1.10.2001) by 2000 c. 35, s. 2(4); S.I. 2001/2191, art. 2; S.I. 2001/2878, art. 2
- F3** Words in s. 23A(2)(a) substituted (6.4.2016) by The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 2016/413), regs. 2(1), 74(a)
- F4** Words in s. 23A(3) substituted (6.4.2016) by The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 2016/413), regs. 2(1), 74(b)
- F5** Words in s. 23A(5) substituted (6.4.2016) by The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 2016/413), regs. 2(1), 74(c)
- F6** Words in s. 23A(5) substituted (13.11.2008) by Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (c. 23), ss. 39, 44, Sch. 3 para. 8(3)(b)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 23A(2) modified (W.) (1.10.2001) by S.I. 2001/2189, reg. 4(4)(5) (as amended (1.8.2002) by S.I. 2002/1855, reg. 2(b)(i))

[^{F7}23B Additional functions of the responsible authority in respect of relevant children.

- (1) It is the duty of each local authority to take reasonable steps to keep in touch with a relevant child for whom they are the responsible authority, whether he is within their area or not.
- (2) It is the duty of each local authority to appoint a personal adviser for each relevant child (if they have not already done so under paragraph 19C of Schedule 2).
- (3) It is the duty of each local authority, in relation to any relevant child who does not already have a pathway plan prepared for the purposes of paragraph 19B of Schedule 2—
 - (a) to carry out an assessment of his needs with a view to determining what advice, assistance and support it would be appropriate for them to provide him under this Part; and
 - (b) to prepare a pathway plan for him.

^{F8}(4)

^{F8}(5)

^{F8}(6)

^{F8}(7)

- (8) The responsible local authority shall safeguard and promote the child’s welfare and, unless they are satisfied that his welfare does not require it, support him by—
 - (a) maintaining him;
 - (b) providing him with or maintaining him in suitable accommodation; and
 - (c) providing support of such other descriptions as may be prescribed.

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- (9) Support under subsection (8) may be in cash.
- (10) The [^{F9} Secretary of State] may by regulations make provision about the meaning of “suitable accommodation ” and in particular about the suitability of landlords or other providers of accommodation.
- (11) If the local authority have lost touch with a relevant child, despite taking reasonable steps to keep in touch, they must without delay—
- (a) consider how to re-establish contact; and
 - (b) take reasonable steps to do so,
- and while the child is still a relevant child must continue to take such steps until they succeed.
- (12) Subsections (7) to (9) of section 17 apply in relation to support given under this section as they apply in relation to assistance given under that section.
- (13) Subsections (4) and (5) of section 22 apply in relation to any decision by a local authority for the purposes of this section as they apply in relation to the decisions referred to in that section.]

Textual Amendments

- F7** Ss. 23A, 23B, 23C inserted (1.10.2001) by 2000 c. 35, s. 2(4); S.I. 2001/2191, art. 2; S.I. 2001/2878, art. 2
- F8** S. 23B(4)-(7) repealed (1.4.2011 for E., 19.6.2012 for W.) by Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (c. 23), ss. 22(1), 44, Sch. 4; S.I. 2010/2981, art. 4(g)(l); S.I. 2012/1553, art. 2(a)(e)
- F9** Words in s. 23B(10) substituted (6.4.2016) by The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 2016/413), regs. 2(1), 75

[^{F10} 23C Continuing functions in respect of former relevant children.

- (1) Each local authority shall have the duties provided for in this section towards—
- (a) a person who has been a relevant child for the purposes of section 23A (and would be one if he were under eighteen), and in relation to whom they were the last responsible authority; and
 - (b) a person who was being looked after by them when he attained the age of eighteen, and immediately before ceasing to be looked after was an eligible child,
- and in this section such a person is referred to as a “ former relevant child ”.
- (2) It is the duty of the local authority to take reasonable steps—
- (a) to keep in touch with a former relevant child whether he is within their area or not; and
 - (b) if they lose touch with him, to re-establish contact.
- (3) It is the duty of the local authority—
- (a) to continue the appointment of a personal adviser for a former relevant child; and
 - (b) to continue to keep his pathway plan under regular review.
- (4) It is the duty of the local authority to give a former relevant child—

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- (a) assistance of the kind referred to in section 24B(1), to the extent that his welfare requires it;
 - (b) assistance of the kind referred to in section 24B(2), to the extent that his welfare and his educational or training needs require it;
 - (c) other assistance, to the extent that his welfare requires it.
- (5) The assistance given under subsection (4)(c) may be in kind or, in exceptional circumstances, in cash.
- [It is the duty of the local authority to pay the relevant amount to a former relevant
- ^{F11}(5A) child who pursues higher education in accordance with a pathway plan prepared for that person.
- (5B) The [^{F12}Secretary of State] may by regulations—
- (a) prescribe the relevant amount for the purposes of subsection (5A);
 - (b) prescribe the meaning of “higher education” for those purposes;
 - (c) make provision as to the payment of the relevant amount;
 - (d) make provision as to the circumstances in which the relevant amount (or any part of it) may be recovered by the local authority from a former relevant child to whom a payment has been made.
- (5C) The duty set out in subsection (5A) is without prejudice to that set out in subsection (4)(b).]
- (6) Subject to subsection (7), the duties set out in subsections (2), (3) and (4) subsist until the former relevant child reaches the age of twenty-one.
- (7) If the former relevant child’s pathway plan sets out a programme of education or training which extends beyond his twenty-first birthday—
- (a) the duty set out in subsection (4)(b) continues to subsist for so long as the former relevant child continues to pursue that programme; and
 - (b) the duties set out in subsections (2) and (3) continue to subsist concurrently with that duty.
- (8) For the purposes of subsection (7)(a) there shall be disregarded any interruption in a former relevant child’s pursuance of a programme of education or training if the local authority are satisfied that he will resume it as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- (9) Section 24B(5) applies in relation to a person being given assistance under subsection (4)(b) [^{F13}or who is in receipt of a payment under subsection (5A)] as it applies in relation to a person to whom section 24B(3) applies.
- (10) Subsections (7) to (9) of section 17 apply in relation to assistance given under this section as they apply in relation to assistance given under that section.]

Textual Amendments

F10 Ss. 23A, 23B, 23C inserted (1.10.2001) by 2000 c. 35, s. 2(4); S.I. 2001/2191, art. 2; S.I. 2001/2878, art. 2

F11 S. 23C(5A)-(5C) inserted (12.2.2009 for certain purposes for E., 22.8.2009 otherwise for E., 26.4.2010 for certain purposes for W., 18.3.2011 otherwise for W.) by Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (c. 23), ss. 21(2), 44; S.I. 2009/268, art. 3(1)(d); S.I. 2009/2273, art. 2(1); S.I. 2010/1329, art. 2(g); S.I. 2011/824, art. 2(b)

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F12 Words in s. 23C(5B) substituted (6.4.2016) by [The Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 \(Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/413\)](#), regs. 2(1), **76**

F13 Words in s. 23C(9) inserted (22.8.2009 for E., 18.3.2011 for W.) by [Children and Young Persons Act 2008 \(c. 23\)](#), ss. **21(3)**, 44; S.I. 2009/2273, art. **2(1)**; S.I. 2011/824, art. **2(a)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C2 S. 23C restricted (8.1.2003) by [2002 c. 41](#), s. 54, [Sch. 3](#) (with s. 159); S.I. 2002/2811, art. 2, [Sch.](#)

[^{F14}**23CZA** **Arrangements for certain former relevant children to continue to live with former foster parents**

- (1) Each local authority ^{F15} ... have the duties provided for in subsection (3) in relation to a staying put arrangement.
- (2) A “staying put arrangement” is an arrangement under which—
 - (a) a person who is a former relevant child by virtue of section 23C(1)(b), and
 - (b) a person (a “former foster parent”) who was the former relevant child's local authority foster parent immediately before the former relevant child ceased to be looked after by the local authority,
 continue to live together after the former relevant child has ceased to be looked after.
- (3) It is the duty of the local authority (in discharging the duties in section 23C(3) and by other means)—
 - (a) to monitor the staying put arrangement, and
 - (b) to provide advice, assistance and support to the former relevant child and the former foster parent with a view to maintaining the staying put arrangement.
- (4) Support provided to the former foster parent under subsection (3)(b) must include financial support.
- (5) Subsection (3)(b) does not apply if the local authority consider that the staying put arrangement is not consistent with the welfare of the former relevant child.
- (6) The duties set out in subsection (3) subsist until the former relevant child reaches the age of 21.]

Textual Amendments

F14 S. 23CZA inserted (13.5.2014) by [Children and Families Act 2014 \(c. 6\)](#), ss. **98(2)**, 139(6); S.I. 2014/889, art. 5(e)

F15 Words in s. 23CZA(1) omitted (6.4.2016) by virtue of [The Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 \(Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/413\)](#), regs. 2(1), **77**

[^{F16}**23CZB** **England: further advice and support**

- (1) This section applies to a former relevant child if—
 - (a) he or she has reached the age of 21 but not the age of 25, and
 - (b) a local authority in England had duties towards him or her under section 23C (whether or not some of those duties continue to subsist by virtue of subsection (7) of that section).

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- (2) If the former relevant child informs the local authority that he or she wishes to receive advice and support under this section, the local authority has the duties provided for in subsections (3) to (6).
- (3) The local authority must provide the former relevant child with a personal adviser until the former relevant child—
 - (a) reaches the age of 25, or
 - (b) if earlier, informs the local authority that he or she no longer wants a personal adviser.
- (4) The local authority must—
 - (a) carry out an assessment in relation to the former relevant child under subsection (5), and
 - (b) prepare a pathway plan for the former relevant child.
- (5) An assessment under this subsection is an assessment of the needs of the former relevant child with a view to determining—
 - (a) whether any services offered by the local authority (under this Act or otherwise) may assist in meeting his or her needs, and
 - (b) if so, what advice and support it would be appropriate for the local authority to provide for the purpose of helping the former relevant child to obtain those services.
- (6) The local authority must provide the former relevant child with advice and support that it would be appropriate to provide as mentioned in subsection (5)(b).
- (7) Where a former relevant child to whom this section applies is not receiving advice and support under this section, the local authority must offer such advice and support—
 - (a) as soon as possible after he or she reaches the age of 21, and
 - (b) at least once in every 12 months.
- (8) In this section “former relevant child” has the meaning given by section 23C(1).]

Textual Amendments

F16 S. 23CZB inserted (1.4.2018) by [Children and Social Work Act 2017 \(c. 16\), ss. 3\(2\), 70\(2\)](#); S.I. 2018/346, reg. 4(c)

[^{F17} **Further assistance to pursue education or training**

23CA

- (1) This section applies to a person if—
 - (a) he is under the age of twenty-five or of such lesser age as may be prescribed by the [^{F18}Secretary of State];
 - (b) he is a former relevant child (within the meaning of section 23C) towards whom the duties imposed by subsections (2), (3) and (4) of that section no longer subsist; and
 - (c) he has informed the responsible local authority that he is pursuing, or wishes to pursue, a programme of education or training.
- [^{F19}(2) It is the duty of the responsible local authority to provide a personal adviser for a person to whom this section applies.]

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- (3) It is the duty of the responsible local authority—
- (a) to carry out an assessment of the needs of a person to whom this section applies with a view to determining what assistance (if any) it would be appropriate for them to provide to him under this section; and
 - (b) to prepare a pathway plan for him.
- (4) It is the duty of the responsible local authority to give assistance of a kind referred to subsection (5) to a person to whom this section applies to the extent that his educational or training needs require it.
- (5) The kinds of assistance are—
- (a) contributing to expenses incurred by him in living near the place where he is, or will be, receiving education or training; or
 - (b) making a grant to enable him to meet expenses connected with his education and training.
- (6) If a person to whom this section applies pursues a programme of education or training in accordance with the pathway plan prepared for him, the duties of the local authority under this section (and under any provision applicable to the pathway plan prepared under this section for that person) subsist for as long as he continues to pursue that programme.
- (7) For the purposes of subsection (6), the local authority may disregard any interruption in the person's pursuance of a programme of education or training if they are satisfied that he will resume it as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- (8) Subsections (7) to (9) of section 17 apply to assistance given to a person under this section as they apply to assistance given to or in respect of a child under that section, but with the omission in subsection (8) of the words “and of each of his parents”.
- (9) Subsection (5) of section 24B applies to a person to whom this section applies as it applies to a person to whom subsection (3) of that section applies.
- (10) Nothing in this section affects the duty imposed by subsection (5A) of section 23C to the extent that it subsists in relation to a person to whom this section applies; but the duty to make a payment under that subsection may be taken into account in the assessment of the person's needs under subsection (3)(a).
- (11) In this section “ the responsible local authority ” means, in relation to a person to whom this section applies, the local authority which had the duties provided for in section 23C towards him.]

Textual Amendments

- F17** S. 23CA inserted (1.4.2011 for E., 19.6.2012 for W.) by [Children and Young Persons Act 2008 \(c. 23\)](#), [ss. 22\(2\)](#), 44; [S.I. 2010/2981](#), [art. 4\(g\)](#) (with [art. 6](#)); [S.I. 2012/1553](#), [art. 2\(a\)](#) (with [art. 3](#))
- F18** Words in s. 23CA(1)(a) substituted (6.4.2016) by [The Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 \(Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/413\)](#), [regs. 2\(1\)](#), [78](#)
- F19** S. 23CA(2) substituted (1.4.2018) by [Children and Social Work Act 2017 \(c. 16\)](#), [ss. 3\(3\)](#), 70(2); [S.I. 2018/346](#), [reg. 4\(c\)](#)

Changes to legislation:

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 4(1A)(aa) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 21(3)
- s. 4(1C) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 21(4)
- s. 4ZA(2)(aa) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 22(3)
- s. 4ZA(3A) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 22(4)
- s. 8(4)(k) inserted by 2021 c. 17 s. 52(1)
- s. 31A(4A) inserted by 2014 c. 6 s. 15(2)(b)