

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Leaving Care Worker		
Directorate	Childrens and Families		
Reporting to	Team Leader Leaving Care		
Grade	12		
Evaluation ref:	AG0995	Job Family ref:	C&F12
Role purpose			
To work directly with young people from 16 up, who are in care or have been in care, supporting them to make the successful move into adult life.			
Responsibilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a Leaving Care Worker, you will support young people aged 16–25 who are or have been in the care of Somerset Council. These young people may face complex challenges as they transition to independent living, and your role will be to guide and empower them to overcome these barriers and achieve their goals. From ages 16 to 17, you will work alongside social workers to help young people plan for adulthood. This includes exploring post-18 options, developing essential life skills, and engaging with their support networks. At 18, you will assume the role of Personal Adviser, continuing to support young people in setting and achieving personal goals. Liaise with the young person, their family, carers, social worker and other relevant multi-agency professionals in co-developing and reviewing Pathway Plans with and for young people. These plans should contain aspirational short, medium, and long-term goals, identify outcomes sought and outline a creative and effective intervention plan detailing the specialist support services which will be provided. You will identify how Somerset Council, as their corporate parent, will support them. You will build strong relationships with partner services—such as housing, education, health, and social care—to reduce barriers and will advocate on behalf of young people when needed. Your work will be trauma-informed, relationship-based, and focused on building trust, resilience, and independence. You will also encourage young people to have a voice in shaping services at local, regional, and national levels. Where appropriate, you will engage with family members and significant others to help build a lasting support network. You will also support young people in integrating into their communities and making positive use of their leisure time. You will ensure they understand and can access the care leaver offer and contribute to their life story by maintaining clear, timely, and reflective records of your work. 			

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Impact

This role involves helping young people aged 16 and over—both those still in care and those who have left care—prepare for living independently. You'll work closely with each young person and other professionals to understand what kind of support they need, looking at all areas of their life.

You'll support a group of care leavers, offering them personal support and acting as their Personal Adviser once they turn 18. This includes working with social workers and other agencies to create and review Pathway Plans. These plans should set clear, realistic goals that are specific, measurable, agreed upon, and time-based.

You'll use different tools to assess each young person's needs and deliver support that helps them make positive changes in their emotions, attitudes, and behaviours. This includes helping them stay safe and healthy—physically, emotionally, and mentally.

Part of your job is to support young people in finding suitable housing, whether they're leaving their foster home, moving out of supported accommodation, or facing homelessness. You'll also help them manage their money, including any allowances they receive, and offer guidance on budgeting and dealing with debt if needed.

Education, training, and employment are key areas of focus. You'll encourage and support young people to reach their goals, whether that's staying in college, starting a job, or getting work experience. If they're not currently in education or work, you'll help them make a plan to get back on track.

You'll also help them build and maintain healthy relationships with family and friends, and connect them with community activities and support networks. For young people who are pregnant or already parents—especially where there are child protection concerns—you'll work as part of a team to help them become confident and capable parents.

You'll be part of a wider team that shares responsibility for supporting care leavers, and you'll regularly take part in reflective supervision to review your practice, share learning, and ensure the best outcomes for young people. Managing risk and safeguarding is a key part of the role, and you'll be expected to identify concerns early, take appropriate action, and work closely with other professionals to keep young people safe.

Much of the work takes place where care leavers live, which means you'll often be visiting them in their homes or supported accommodation. This can involve extensive travel across Somerset and sometimes beyond, so flexibility and a willingness to travel are essential parts of the role.

	Essential	Desirable	
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Knowledge			
<p>Child and Adolescent Development</p> <p>Understanding of physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development stages.</p> <p>Awareness of how development may be impacted by trauma, neglect, or disrupted attachment.</p>	X		
<p>Trauma-Informed Practice</p> <p>Knowledge of the effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).</p> <p>Ability to apply trauma-sensitive approaches in daily interactions and planning.</p>	X		
<p>Attachment Theory</p> <p>Understanding of secure and insecure attachment styles.</p> <p>Awareness of how attachment disruptions affect behaviour and relationships.</p>	X		
<p>Needs of Care-Experienced Young People</p> <p>Insight into the challenges faced by care leavers.</p> <p>Awareness of identity, belonging, and the impact of frequent moves.</p>	X		
<p>Safeguarding and Child Protection</p> <p>Up-to-date knowledge and understanding of safeguarding legislation, policies, and procedures as they relate to both children and adults.</p> <p>Ability to identify and respond appropriately to signs of abuse or neglect.</p>	X		
<p>Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing</p> <p>Understanding of common mental health issues in care experienced young people.</p> <p>Familiarity with support strategies and referral pathways.</p>	X		
<p>Education and Learning Needs</p>	X		

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Awareness of barriers to education for care-experienced young people.			
Knowledge of strategies to support engagement and achievement.			
Legislation and Policy			
Familiarity with relevant legislation (e.g., Children Act 1989, Children and Families Act 2014, Leaving Care Act).	X		
Understanding of the rights of care leavers.			
Communication and Relationship Building			
Skills in building trust and rapport with young people.	X		
Ability to communicate effectively with young people, families, and professionals.			
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion			
Commitment to anti-discriminatory practice.	X		
Understanding of how cultural, racial, and identity factors affect care experiences.			
Experience			
Direct experience working with young people aged 16–25.	X		
Proven ability to engage and build trusting relationships with young people who may present with complex needs, including emotional, behavioural, mental health, or substance misuse challenges.	X		
Experience in managing and de-escalating challenging behaviours using trauma-informed and person-centred approaches.		X	
Demonstrated understanding of the barriers faced by care-experienced young people, including transitions to independence, housing instability, and access to education, employment, and health services.		X	
Experience in and an understanding of the collaborative nature of multi-agency working.	X		
Experience of working both independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team, showing initiative, accountability, and collaboration.	X		

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Strong organisational and time management skills, with the ability to prioritise tasks, manage caseloads, and meet deadlines in a dynamic environment.	X		
Experience in coordinating support plans, contributing to team meetings, and maintaining accurate records and reports.		X	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
A good all round standard of education is required to A level or at least 5 GCSEs at Grade C/Level 4 and above or equivalent.	X		
A vocational qualification or an ability to demonstrate competence against occupational standards equivalent to Level 3 Qualification Credit Framework Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce.		X	
A commitment to continuous professional development.	X		
Skills			
Skills in engaging and influencing challenging young people often in distressing circumstances, to improve behaviours or practices which negatively impact on outcomes for them.	X		
An ability to undertake assessments, devise and implement plans and deliver specific interventions to young people.	X		
Excellent recording skills and an ability to write good quality, concise assessments and plans that include analysis, and are SMART (specific / stretching, measurable / meaningful / motivational, agreed on / achievable, realistic / relevant and time based)	X		
Working Conditions			
Able to travel countywide, and sometimes further, to areas that are not currently serviced by public transport.			
Working Arrangements			
Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.			
Corporate Responsibilities			
Understand, uphold and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.			



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Date: April 2025