



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

For virtual school heads and other local authority teams who are supporting care leavers aged 16-25.

2025

SPECTRA⁺



Department
for Education



WHAT IS THE CARE LEAVER COVENANT?

The Care Leaver Covenant was launched in 2018. This Government-funded scheme involves private, public and voluntary sector organisations signing the Covenant, backed by a practical offer of support for care leavers that fits the organisation's capacity and social value/community minded ethos. Over 600 organisations have signed the Covenant, offering jobs, free and discounted services, and help setting up home.

▶ Check out the [Care Leaver Covenant website](#).

WHO RUNS THE COVENANT AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

Spectra has delivered the Care Leaver Covenant on behalf of the Department for Education since 2018. They were reappointed as the Covenant delivery partner following a procurement exercise in 2022/3.

Spectra's main role is to:

- Negotiate to get organisations to sign the Covenant with a pledge of practical support to care leavers. The practical offers of support are published on the Care Leaver Covenant website.
- Promote the Covenant to care leavers so they can sign up to the Connects platform. By signing up to Connects, young people get automatic alerts about the offers of support available from Covenant offers.
- Work with local authorities – especially getting buy-in from senior leaders and politicians in local government – to help Spectra raise the profile of the Covenant across the entire authority and to make sure everyone, especially young people, know about it and how they can benefit.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORT THROUGH CARE LEAVER COVENANT OPPORTUNITIES?

Opportunities are focused on care leavers aged 16 to 25 but if a signatory wants to support care leavers beyond age 25, they are able to do so.

WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING AS A VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD TO PROMOTE THE COVENANT TO MY LOCAL AUTHORITY'S CARE LEAVERS?

You can do the following things to promote what's on offer via the Covenant:

- i. Make sure you know your way around the Care Leaver Covenant website. Visit it at least once a week in case there are opportunities, that you can flag as appropriate, for looked-after children who are about to leave care.
- ii. Talk to your care leaving team to make sure they know what a great resource the Covenant is.
- iii. If there are organisations already supporting care leavers, or looking to do so, that your local authority works with, please ask them to get in touch with Spectra.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

Across 600 + organisations there are thousands of opportunities. Some are national offers and others are regional.

► Check out the offers from Amazon, Pure Gym, Automobile Association and many more [here](#).

ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES IN EACH REGION?

Yes. You can search opportunities by region.

OUR LOCAL AUTHORITY IS IN TOUCH WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT SUPPORT CARE LEAVERS. CAN LOCAL BUSINESSES SIGN THE COVENANT?

If your local authority has links with businesses that already support care leavers in your area, those businesses are eligible to become Covenant signatories.



IS MY LOCAL AUTHORITY INVOLVED IN THE COVENANT AND, IF NOT, SHOULD IT BE?

If it isn't already, it should be. At the heart of the Care Leaver Covenant is a close collaboration with local authorities who are statutorily responsible for the wellbeing of care leavers. Over 90 local authorities are already working in partnership with the Care Leaver Covenant. Many are embracing the Care Leaver Covenant philosophy of adopting a Whole Council Approach.

► Read about this [here](#) and get in touch with the Covenant by emailing bethany@spectraconnect.co.uk.

HOW CAN MY CARE LEAVERS FIND OUT ABOUT CARE LEAVER COVENANT OPPORTUNITIES?

Ensure that every single one of the care leavers in your local authority is signed up to the [Connects](#) platform, to receive regular alerts about the opportunities, jobs and discounts that they can unlock through the Covenant.

HOW CAN THE CARE LEAVER COVENANT HELP MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR ME?

Making use of all the opportunities the Care Leaver Covenant can unlock helps everyone by being another source of help for care leavers. If they get the support they need via a Covenant opportunity, it could mean less strain on the local authority and other systems. So, it's in everyone's interest to engage with the Covenant, especially care leavers.

CAN I SIGN UP TO GET ALERTS ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES?

Yes. Anyone who is a care leaver support worker can sign up to the [Connects](#) platform.