

# APPLICANT'S GUIDE

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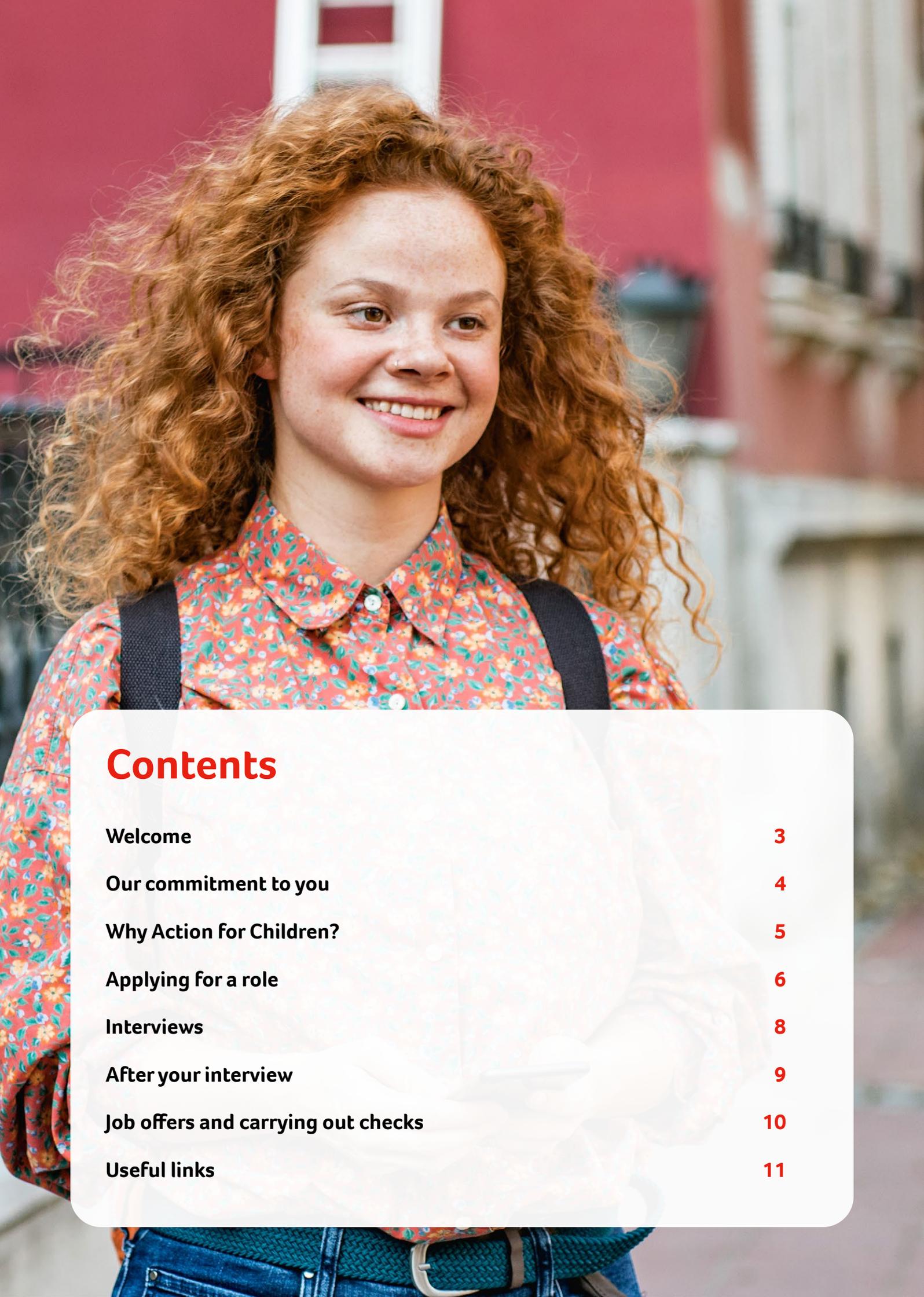


Action for  
Children

# By your side

Applying for a role at Action  
for Children with care  
experience – your guide





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# Welcome

**Growing up in care gives you a unique understanding of the care system. We value that experience, as it can help us better support all children, including those in care.**

At Action for Children, we believe that every child should have a safe and happy childhood, and the foundations they need to thrive. We make sure their voices are heard, and campaign to bring lasting change to their lives.

Last year, we helped more than 670,000 children, young people and their families across the UK.

We're dedicated to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. We actively encourage applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and disabled candidates as they are under-represented within Action for Children. We want to take meaningful action to ensure equal opportunity to all groups in society and for Action for Children.

## Last year, we helped

671,275



## children, young people and their families across the UK.

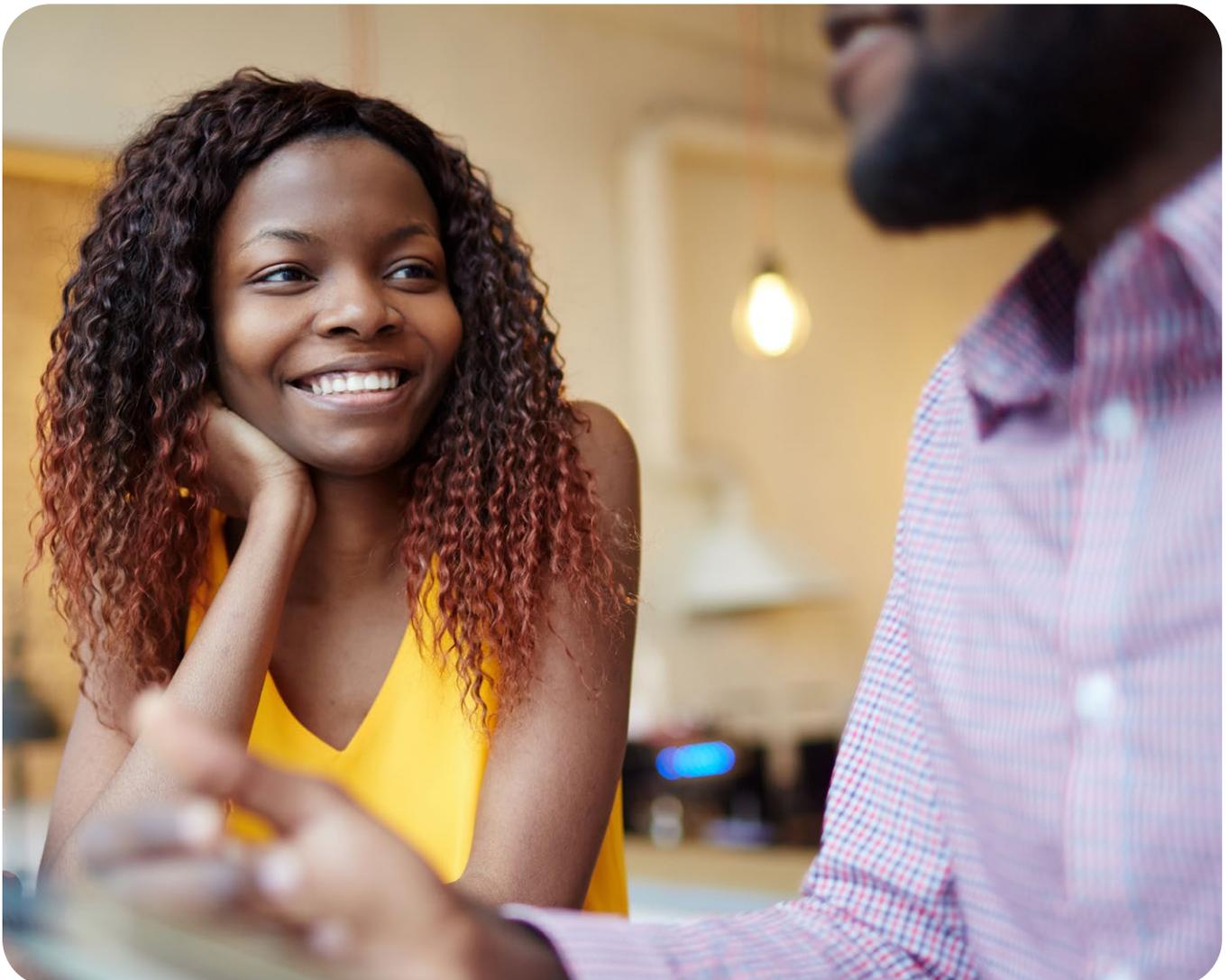
# Our commitment to you



If you have care experience, we provide extra support from when you apply for the job, and during your time working with us.

## As part of this commitment, we:

- Work with the **Care Leaver Covenant team** to promote opportunities to the care leaver community through targeted means.
- Have advocates in the **Recruitment and Children's Services Teams** who can support and guide care experienced people before, during and after the recruitment process.
- Offer a **guaranteed interview** and constructive feedback to applicants who identify as care experienced and who meet minimum criteria for the role.
- Assign a **workplace buddy** for our care experienced employees. A workplace buddy will be there for informal support, guidance and to help you settle in.
- Create and communicate **clear boundaries** and expectations for our care experienced employees. This will make sure your time with us is a growing and fulfilling one.
- Approach our care experienced employees' professional challenges with **compassion and empathy**, recognising that there may be, or have been, a high level of disruption in their personal life.



# Why Action for Children?

**Working here is more than a job. Everyone in the Action for Children family is passionate about protecting and supporting children.**

It's the sense of purpose that drives us every single day. Because we know that, when we work together, we can make a huge difference to bring lasting improvements to vulnerable children's lives.

We offer rewarding social care roles working with children, young people and families. As well as roles in other professional areas within our central support teams including:

- Fundraising.
- Media.
- Human Resources.
- IT.
- Marketing.
- Finance.

You don't necessarily need qualifications or previous experience to work in some of our social care roles. We understand that people with care experience will bring other life experiences and skills to the role. We'll provide lots of on-the-job training and 1-2-1 support. We can even help you gain formal qualifications while you're working with us.

## Fantastic Benefits

A career in Action for Children offers lots of benefits, opportunities for progression, and a career where what you do makes a huge difference to the children and young people we serve. Take a look at our [benefits video](#) to find out more about what we offer.



# Applying for a role



Search our [careers site](#) or the [Spring careers site](#) to find a role that looks right for you.

When you find the job you'd like to apply for, click the '**Apply Now**' button. You'll be asked to log in to your account or create one if you haven't already. All you need is a valid email address.



Then fill out the online application form for that vacancy. You can save your application and return to it later if you need to. Make sure to tell us on the application in the personal details that you have care experience so we can proactively support your needs.

## Example application questions:

### Question:

*Action for Children welcomes applicants from all backgrounds, including people who have personal experience of the Care system. Have you had previous personal experience of the Care system for example have you been a child who is looked after, had a social worker, lived with foster carers, in a children's home or with extended family members rather than your birth parents?*

**In answering these questions, please make sure to tell us that you have care experience so that we can proactively support you.**

### Question:

*We understand that life experience can be as important as qualifications or work experience in making someone suitable for a particular job role. Please tell us how you think your life experiences could help you in this job role.*



If you need any support to apply for a role or have a query about any of our live vacancies, contact the Recruitment Team. Our Recruitment Partners are ready to answer any query you might have: [recruitment@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@actionforchildren.org.uk)

To make sure your query is prioritised, we recommend you put "**Care Experienced Query**" in the subject box of the email. We aim to get back to you within 24 hours.

We want people with care experience to work with us. We want our recruitment process to be accessible and have worked hard to remove as many barriers as possible. If you feel there are other barriers we need to address, please tell us using the email address above.



# Demonstrating your skills in your application

The application process will include submitting a CV. Click [here](#) to see a guide to help you write one if you don't already have one.



## How your hobbies can support an application

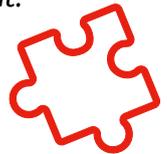
You will be asked to demonstrate how your skills match the criteria needed for the role (this is included on the job description and person specification). You should do this within your CV, and also in the supporting statement section of the application process.

Hobbies and extracurricular activities are a great way to showcase these skills and experiences you have. Here are some examples of the skills different hobbies can demonstrate:

- **Art/Photography** - Creativity, eye for detail, passion, patience, idea development.
- **Comedy** - Initiative, resilience, creativity, idea development, humour, confidence.
- **Cooking** - Creativity, attention to detail, patience, self expression, multitasking, fast paced decision making.
- **Dance** - Creativity, dedication, perseverance, motivation, resilience, discipline, confidence, self-belief.
- **Drama** - Confidence, self-awareness, presentation skills, dedication, resilience, teamwork, communication skills, creativity.
- **Gaming** - Communication, analytical skills, resourcefulness, adaptability, technical skills, problem solving.
- **Make-up, beauty, fashion** - Creativity, following trends, research, techniques, interpersonal skills, confidence, attention to detail.
- **Music** - Dedication, creativity, teamwork, perseverance, memory, listening, collaboration, confidence.



- **Pet ownership** - Dedication, responsibility, care, patience, time management.
- **Puzzles** - Strategy, logic, determination, analytical skills, problem solving, perseverance.
- **Reading** - Imagination, empathy, creativity, attentiveness.
- **Scouts/Guides** - Initiative, teambuilding, confidence, leadership, communication, problem solving.
- **Social media** - Presentation skills, audience awareness, self awareness, interpersonal skills.
- **Socialising** - Communication, interpersonal skills, planning, rapport building.
- **Sports/fitness** - Motivation, communication, passion, dedication, teamwork, leadership, time management, competitiveness.
- **Volunteering** - Motivation, passion, dedication, communication, interpersonal skills, networking, sense of community, empathy.



## Keeping in touch

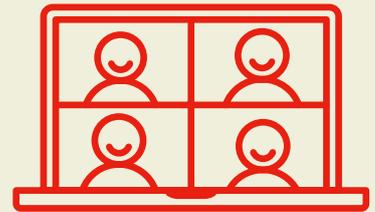
We'll stay in touch with you mainly by **email** during the recruitment process. Please check your email regularly (including your junk folder!) so you don't miss an important message from us.

We aim to contact all applicants within one week of the vacancy closing date. You can find this date on the job advert.



## Interviews

**If your application is successful at the shortlisting stage, we'll send you an email to invite you to attend a panel interview.**



This could be face-to-face or an online interview. You will be asked to select an interview slot via the online application system.

The email will also tell you everything you need to know about the interview, who will be conducting it and what paperwork you need to bring with you on the day. Please read all the information carefully and follow the instructions.



### Our Interview Guarantee Scheme

We'll offer an interview to all care experienced applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role. The minimum criteria is in the Job Description for the role. If you want to benefit from this scheme, please tell us in the appropriate part of the online application that you have care experience.

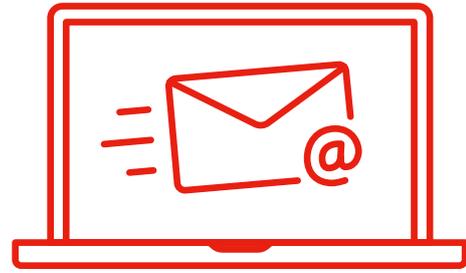


## *After your interview*

**We aim to let you know the outcome of your interview as quickly as possible.**

This could be to advise you about other stages of the selection process, or to tell you the outcome of the interview.

If you are successful, we will phone you and send you a letter with a conditional offer of employment.



If you are not successful, we will let you know by email. If you'd like feedback, ask the **Recruitment Partner**.



# Job offers and carrying out checks



## If we offer you a job, we will check or ask you for:

- **Proof of right to work in the UK.** This is a legal requirement under the current immigration rules.
- **Your bank account details** so we can pay your salary into it.
- **Your next of kin details** which we keep on our system in case of a personal emergency situation.
- **DBS/Access NI/Disclosure Scotland check (a criminal records check).** We need proof of your address history to complete this. We can support you, if needed, with this.
- **An overseas police check** – if you have lived outside the UK as an adult (i.e. from age 18) for a continuous period of more than six months in the last five years.
- We will check any **registration with relevant professional bodies** where this is required for the role.
- **References** – we will ask for the names of two companies/organisations or people you would like us to contact to provide a reference for you. We have several options about who this could be. If you've never had to provide a referee before, don't worry. We will support you to think who would be best to ask.

*Although we carry out criminal records checks on all staff, having a criminal record does not automatically bar you from working for us. Any information provided on disclosure checks will be considered individually by the recruiting manager who may contact you to discuss the information.*

Please note that carrying out these checks may take us a few weeks. Once they are complete, we'll offer you a date to start work, and your line manager will provide all the information you need for your first day.

Once you start working with us, we want to make sure you have all the support you need to flourish. Your line manager and local colleagues will help you. We can also provide a **workplace buddy** – someone to talk to, who can provide friendly help, guidance and help you to settle in during your first few months. **Our Care Experienced Staff Network** will be a great source of support for you as well.



## Useful links:



### Care Leaver Covenant

The **Care Leaver Covenant** is a national inclusion programme that supports care leaver aged 16-25 to live independently. They create meaningful opportunities for care leavers in five key areas and support leavers to access those opportunities.

### Metro Bank

**Metro Bank's** Care Leaver Offer is accessible in all 77 stores, helping thousands of young people access banking services.

Metro recognises that care leavers often struggle to produce some of the standard identity and verification documents that banks require when opening an account. This includes a physical form of ID and a verification of this identity e.g. proof of address.

Metro have developed a pragmatic, care leaver friendly account opening process. Instead of photo ID Metro branches will accept a letter from a Local Authority confirming the care leaver's identity and for verification the branch staff will make a call to the Local Authority to confirm that that care leaver is who the letter says they are.

### Driving Forward Foundation

This organisation supports care-experienced young people aged 16-26 in London to transition from care into a career. They have lots of information about applying for jobs that is applicable across the UK on their website.



## Action for Children

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[actionforchildren.org.uk](https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)

 /actionforchildren

 @actnforchildren

 @actionforchildrenuk

## Safe and happy childhood



Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.