

Looked After Children



Home Access is the government programme that will help to ensure that more children in state-maintained education in England have access to technology at home to support learning.

During the planning for national rollout of the programme it was recognised that Looked After Children represented some of the most vulnerable children in our society and Becta committed to running a parallel scheme focusing particularly on Looked After Children provision.

Pilot activities

Alongside the Home Access pilot all local authorities were invited in October 2008 to submit expressions of interest to run Home Access activities targeting groups for which they have special responsibility. More than 100 local authorities applied and received £18million of funding to provide computers and internet connectivity to learners in a number of targeted groups, including Looked After Children.

National rollout of the programme

As children within other previously targeted groups are now supported by the main Home Access programme a revised process has been developed by Becta, the Department for Children, Schools and

Families (DCSF) and several Looked After Children Education Services (LACES) teams across the country.

For national rollout of the Home Access programme a Looked After Child's designated care worker will be able to fill out an application form on the learner's behalf. All children and young people in foster care and in full-time education in England (Key Stages 1-5/years 1 to 13 inclusive) will qualify, unless they have already been provided with a similar service or already have appropriate provision. Looked After Children living in local authority maintained accommodation are ineligible for the programme as facilities should already be in place for this group.

The application process

The application form for Looked After Children needs to be completed by the designated care worker and countersigned by the foster carer or the learner themselves if they are over 16 and deemed responsible. It should then be submitted for processing.

If the learner is eligible and under 16, a Home Access Grant will be issued to the foster carer, who can then buy a computer and internet package from an approved

supplier as per the main model. If the young person in care is over 16 and is deemed responsible by their designated care worker, grants can be provided to them directly.

Further information

Detailed guidance about Looked After Children within the Home Access programme has been sent to all local authorities. In order to learn whether a Looked After Child can benefit from the Home Access programme contact should be made in the first instance with the learner's designated care worker or LACES representative within the local authority to assess the learner's appropriateness for inclusion in the programme.

Detailed guidance and the Looked After Children application form are only available for local authorities from a secure area at www.homeaccess.org.uk



"I didn't have a computer before because I couldn't afford one, now I use mine every day."

Kit

-  Home Access Grant helpline
Call: 0333 200 1004*
-  Minicom: 0121 748 1471
-  Support the programme
www.homeaccess.org.uk
-  Realise the benefits
www.becta.org.uk/homeaccess

*Calls may be monitored or recorded to maintain high levels of security and quality of service. Calls to this number cost no more than a call to a 01 or 02 number and count towards inclusive minutes in the same way as 01 and 02 calls. These rules apply to calls from any type of line including mobile, BT, other fixed line or payphone.