

# WELCOME

Your Guide to  
Claiming Asylum  
as a Separated  
Child in the UK  
(A CHILD = <18 YEARS)



# Seeking asylum

To be granted asylum and be recognised as a refugee you must show you have: *“a well founded fear of persecution in your country due to one or more of these reasons: your religion, ethnicity, nationality, social group or your political opinion, and why you would be persecuted if you were returned there”*. You will have to explain what has, will, or could happen to you if you were returned to your country, and why, and try to provide evidence of this.



## Separated child

To be under 18 years of age and be alone without parents, older family members or a guardian who could look after you and meet your essential needs. A separated child is placed in the care of Social Services in the UK, supported as a 'Looked after Child' and provided with a social worker.

## Social worker

Must work in the 'best interest' of every separated child, ensure the child's individual needs are met, their voices are heard through an interpreter and the child is not discriminated against, for example, due to their nationality, gender, religion, ethnicity, disability or immigration status.



## Interpreter

A person who will translate for you in your language and tell others what you say in English. Interpreters must only translate your words or the words of others and **MUST NOT** make any personal comments on what you say. They **MUST** keep all information that they interpret for you confidential.

# The first people you will meet



## Home Office (UK Government)



### WELFARE INTERVIEW



## Police

The Police are here to protect you and to make sure people follow the rules.



## Social worker

To assess your immediate needs.



## ALERT!

- Check your name, nationality and age are correct on your papers.
- Keep all papers safe as they are important.
- If you give someone here your passport / identity document then you must be given a copy.
- You must tell someone immediately if you do not understand the interpreter.

# Your social worker

## Your social worker's job



School



Clothes



Doctor



Law



Church



Mosque



Money



Housing

**Social worker's job:**  
to meet you every 4/ 6  
weeks; listen to you; and  
make sure you are safe  
and have a care plan.



When you are a care  
leaver at 16 you may  
be given a Personal  
Adviser (PA) to  
support you.

## ALERT!

- You must be given your social worker's name and phone number and emergency social services phone number.
- You can ask your social worker to contact the Refugee Council Children's Advice Project for you on 0207 346 1134 or another charity for independent advice.

## Your responsibilities



Mobile



Help



Listen



Tell them your feelings

**Your job:** give your new mobile number, ask for help if you don't understand; listen carefully and tell people how you feel.

## Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)



Monitors you and your social worker after 4 weeks, 3 months and 6 months.

## Refugee Council Children's Adviser



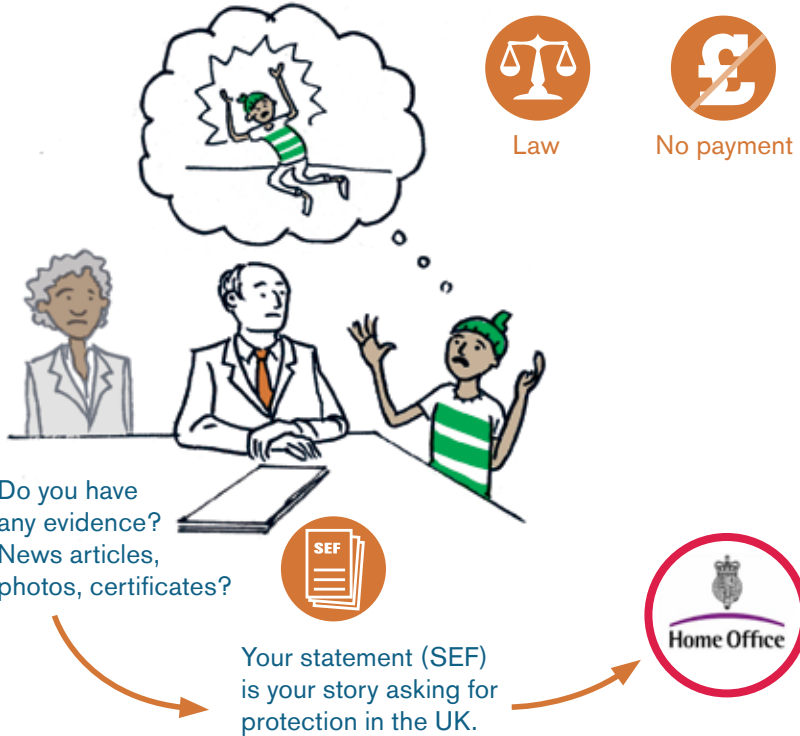
You can ask your social worker or IRO to speak to a Children's Adviser at the Refugee Council.

## ALERT!

- Your IRO checks your Care Plan is suitable and that you are happy with it.
- Your IRO should give you their name and phone number.
- You should tell your IRO if you are unhappy about anything or have a complaint.

# Your immigration solicitor

Solicitor/lawyer = a legal specialist



## ALERT!

- Your solicitor works for you – give them as much information as you can.
- Your solicitor must give you their name and phone number.
- ONLY sign papers which have been read to you through an interpreter and that you understand.
- A solicitor is independent from the Home Office and Social Services.

# Your health

**NHS**



**Your GP**



Physical  
health



Emotional  
health



Height



Hearing



Teeth

**Your dentist**



Eyes

**Your optician**

## ALERT!

- You should have an initial health assessment within 20 days of being supported by social services.
- Your social worker should book an interpreter for health appointments.
- Your social worker should tell you why health appointments have been booked for you.
- In a health emergency, call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

# Your charity support services

## Advocate



Your advocate can help your voice to be heard

- Help to resolve your problems.
- Keep what you tell them private unless you or others are unsafe.



## Mentor/ Independent Visitor



An Independent Visitor or Mentor can meet you and offer friendship, support or advice and help with your appointments.

## Age Assessment

Age?

Two social workers assess your age over several meetings. You must have an 'appropriate adult' and an interpreter with you. Social workers must explain their reasons for the age they assess you and give you all their reasons in writing.

## ALERT!

- Charities are independent so do not work for social services or the Home Office.
- All separated children and care leavers have a right to independent advice and advocacy.
- Charities do not share your information without your consent.
- You may have the right to appeal a decision about your age. You must appeal within 3 months. Seek advice.