

Can I refuse help from children's social care?

Children's social care can help you with different issues including housing, but it is ok to not want to get help from us.

You are also welcome to get independent advice.

We'd encourage you to not refuse help until you explore all your options, as you might not get any more help if you turn it down.

Useful contacts

Useful contacts not already mentioned in this leaflet:

- Slough Children First Emergency Duty Service, 01344 351999 (5pm to 9am weekdays, 24hrs on weekends and bank holidays)

- Shelter
0808 800 4444
www.england.shelter.org.uk

- National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS)
www.nhas.org.uk

- Childline
0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk



Contact us

You can contact our MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Team on:

-  01753 875 362
-  Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk
-  The MASH Team, Slough Children First Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2EL

Translations and other formats

If you'd like this document translated or in another format, please let us know by emailing us at emailus@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

Complaints

If you would like to make a complaint, you can contact our Complaints Manager on [01753 875825](tel:01753875825) or at complaints@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

16-17 and homeless or been told to leave home?

Know your rights!



Am I homeless?

You don't have to be sleeping on the streets to be homeless.

If you are staying somewhere you have no legal right to stay, like sofa surfing at a friend's house or somewhere that is not safe for you, then you are homeless.



Who can help in Slough?

Slough Children First (SCF) and Slough Borough Council (SBC) must help 16 and 17 year olds who are homeless.

The council where you usually live is the one that has a duty to help you. In an emergency you can go to any council.

If you are 18+ please contact them as soon as you can to see what help they can provide. If you are a care experienced young person under the age of 25, please contact your Personal Advisor or Slough Children First's Care Leavers Team on 01753 476729.

Services local to Slough who can provide housing support include:

- Slough Borough Council - Housing advice
<https://www.slough.gov.uk/homelessness>
- Citizens Advice Berkshire
<https://caeb.org.uk/get-advice/call-us/>



Help from children's social care

There are processes we need to follow to help you get the right support and ensure you have somewhere safe to stay.

We will do an assessment to see if you are a "Child in Need" (CiN) (this legal term covers young people too). If you are, a Social Worker will speak with you to discuss how we at SCF can help you find a place to live.

You will be asked if you would like to be cared for by your local authority, but this will only happen if there is no other suitable way of meeting all your needs. It is very important that you understand what becoming cared for means, so that you can make an informed choice.

We will never make you return to somewhere you feel unsafe. We have a responsibility to provide you with emergency housing if you need it.

Our support includes:

- Home visits, as part of assessment process
- Referral to appropriate support services
- Planned accommodation moves
- Support for temporary or emergency accommodation
- Discussion around Section 20 accommodation
- Individual support package based on assessed needs
- Mediation with family members

Will I be made to go back home?

Our priority will be for you to go back home safely, depending on the situation and where safe to do so.

You are entitled to ask for an Independent Advocate to help you have your say.

This is someone who doesn't work for children's social care whose job is to make sure you're views are listened to and taken into account, help you to understand information and support you at meetings if that's what you want. They can also support you to make a complaint.