Who are Looked After Children (also known as children in care)

They are children up to the age of 18 years who are in the care of the local authority

* Children voluntarily looked after (Section 20) – children placed in the care of the local authority with the agreement of the person who holds parental authority. Consent remains with the person with parental responsibility.
* Children with an Interim or Full Care Order (Section 31) – court grants an interim or full care order to the local authority to care for the child. Consent is shared between the person with parental responsibility and the local authority.
* Children on remand – children on remand for criminal offences are looked after even if they are remanded to the care of their parents. Consent remains with the person with parental responsibility.
* Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. All children who are deemed to be under 18 or who claim to be under 18 until an age assessment is completed are looked after. If deem Fraser Competent they can consent for their own treatment if not the local authority would give consent.
* Children placed for adoption up until the full adoption order is granted. The prospective adopters share parental responsibility with the local authority until the final adoption order is granted when the adopters gain full parental responsibility

Consent

If a GP practice needs consent for immunisations or treatment they will need to check with the child’s social worker who can confirm who can consent as a children’s legal status can change.

Delegated Authority

Delegated authority is the process that enables foster carers to make common sense, everyday decisions about the children and young people they care for, such as allowing them to go to friends’ houses for sleepovers, signing consent forms for school trips and even arranging haircuts. Holders of parental responsibility can delegate authority to foster carers to undertake such tasks and decisions. Foster carers never have parental responsibility for a fostered child, so they can only take decisions about the fostered child where that authority has been delegated to them by the local authority and/or the parents.

For example, a foster carer could be given delegated authority to take a child to GP appointments but it would **NOT** extend to consenting to treatment or immunisations.

Looked After Health Professionals

Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group

Designated Nurse for Looked After Children – Anne Gray email anne.gray6@nhs.net Tel 07876847020

Designated Doctor for Looked After Children – to be appointed

Swindon Borough Council

Named Nurse for Looked After Children – Sally-Anne Harrison email sally-anne.harrison@nhs.net Tel 07392109890 Lane line 01793 464334 PTO

**How a looked after child’s health needs are met and the GPs role**

When a child becomes looked after the Named Nurse for Looked After Children will notify the GP Practice the child is registered with through NHS Net email.

The notification will include a request for information about the child’s previous health history to be returned to the Named Nurse for Looked After Children within 5 working days. This information will be used to inform the Initial Health Assessment.

The GP practice will put a flag on their IT system that the child is looked after

An Initial Health Assessment is completed within 20 working days of the child becoming looked after and a health care plan is written setting out the child’s health needs who is responsible for meeting those child’s health needs and a time scale for them to be completed.

A copy of the health care plan is sent to the child’s GP - if there are any actions for the GP practice they should be completed within the timescales.

A review health assessment will be completed annually or every 6 months for children under 5 years. Following each review health assessment, the health care plan will be updated and a copy sent to the child’s GP. If there are any actions for the GP practice they should be completed within the timescales.

When a child leaves care the Named Nurse for Looked After Children will inform the child’s GP.

Every 6 months the Designated Nurse will send a list of looked after children registered to each individual GP practice.

**Care Leavers**

When a child leaves care between 16 and 18 years they become a care leaver until they are 25 years old. This means they are entitled to support from the local authority which is delivered through the Care Leavers Team. Care Leavers are provided with a Care Leavers Health Passport which gives them a summary of their health history and information about how to access health services. The Named Nurse for Looked After Children is able to provide advice and support to care leavers

**Children placed in Swindon by other local authorities**

Other local authorities may place looked after children with foster carers, family members or prospective adopters in Swindon. The placing local authority remains responsible for the child and should inform Swindon Borough Council and Swindon CCG that they have placed a looked after child in Swindon but this does not always happen. The carer will be able to tell the GP practice which local authority is responsible for the child and the social workers contact details.