**Participant Information Sheet**

Corporate Parents close the door at 18: Care Leavers Transitions out of the UK Care System

1. **Invitation to research**

I would like to invite you to take part in a study about your experience of transitioning out of the UK foster system. This research will explore care leavers experiences of their transition from foster/residential/kinship care to independent living.

This study is being conducted by Courtney Shepherd as a Masters Dissertation research project for the degree of Child Development and Well-being in Practice at Manchester Metropolitan University, under the supervision of Ekaterina Ostashchenko.

**2. Why have I been invited?**

You have been invited to take part in this research as you fit the inclusion criteria of being a care leaver and have experience of transitioning out of the UK foster system. The recruitment of participants took place on social media and Via email with charities that work alongside care leavers. A total of 15 care leavers will be involved in this research study.

**3. Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide. We will describe the study and go through the information sheet, which we will give to you. We will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. The study is completely voluntary so you have every right to choose to not take part and you are under no obligation to provide consent.

1. **What will I be asked to do?**

You will need to read the Participation Information Sheet and give consent prior to the research taking place. You will then choose a random unique ID code prior to the interview in case you wish to withdraw so the principal investigator can identify your data and remove it. For example for Courtney Shepherd it could be ‘Cookie Seahorse’ You will be involved in a semi structured interview with the Researcher, Courtney Shepherd. This interview will last no longer than 30 minutes. You will be asked questions about your experience of transitioning out of the UK foster system. The researcher will examine whether placement type effects transitions as well as identifying how and whether Government schemes provide support to care leavers.

This research will be overt, you will be able to see and hear the researcher. The interviews will be taking place over Skype and the audio will be recorded for data analysis purposes. If you wish to keep your camera off that is acceptable, however, for the purpose of this study a microphone is required so the researcher can hear your responses. If you wish to not provide consent to your audio being recorded the interview will not take place. The audio recordings are required for transcription and analysis of the data.

All the data will be kept anonymous and will not be able to be traced back to you. The data will be stored on the principals investigators one drive until it is transcribed and analysed, it will then be destroyed. Only the researcher, Courtney Shepherd will have access to the raw data. The Supervisor Ekaterina Ostashchenko will only have access to the anonymous data after it has been transcribed.

1. **Are there any risks if I participate?**

There is a slight risk of experiencing distress due to the sensitivity of the topic. However, you do not have to disclose distressing information if you do not want to. If distress does occur you have the right to withdraw at any point and the Principal Investigator will follow MMUs distress protocol to protect your mental health and well-being.

1. **Are there any advantages if I participate?**

You will not receive an award for taking part in this study. However, participating in this study is massively appreciated by the Researcher and Supervisor of this study. Care leavers allowing their voices to be heard is very brave and is an extremely useful contribution to this research.

**8. What will happen with the data I provide?**

When you agree to participate in this research, we will collect from you personally-identifiable information. The Manchester Metropolitan University (‘the University’) is the Data Controller in respect of this research and any personal data that you provide as a research participant. The University is registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO), and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University’s Data Protection Policy. We collect personal data as part of this research (such as name, telephone numbers or age). As a public authority acting in the public interest, we rely upon the ‘public task’ lawful basis. When we collect special category data (such as medical information or ethnicity) we rely upon the research and archiving purposes in the public interest lawful basis.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. We will not share your personal data collected in this form with any third parties. If your data is shared this will be under the terms of a Research Collaboration Agreement which defines use, and agrees confidentiality and information security provisions. It is the University’s policy to only publish anonymised data unless you have given your explicit written consent to be identified in the research. **The University never sells personal data to third parties.** We will only retain your personal data for as long as is necessary to achieve the research purpose.

All data collected online will be stored in a password-protected folder in the student’s MMU One Drive storage facility. All information and data that is collected will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study. You will be assigned a unique, anonymous personal code – this will correspond with all information and data collected from each participant. The project team is responsible for data entry, quality and the analysis. Only the Principal Investigator and their supervisor will have access to the data. Besides them, authorized representatives from MMU will be authorized to access the data to permit study-related monitoring, audits and inspections. Data will only be shared with other researchers if it has been completely anonymized and in agreement with the supervisor.

For further information about use of your personal data and your data protection rights please see the [University’s Data Protection Pages](https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/data-protection/).

**What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results of the study will be in the final project report which will be submitted for a MSc dissertation, publication in an academic journal and presented at academic conferences.

**Who has reviewed this research project?**

This project has been reviewed by the supervisor Ekaterina Ostashchenko and MMU ethical committee.

**Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?**

During the interviews there is a possibility the participants experience distress or want to file a complaint. If such incidents occur the researcher will follow MMU protocol for distress during research. If the participants have any concerns regarding the study they can email the principal investigator Courtney Shepherd at [19090273@stu.mmu.ac.uk](mailto:19090273@stu.mmu.ac.uk) or the supervisor Ekaterina Ostashchenko at [E.Ostashchenko@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:E.Ostashchenko@mmu.ac.uk). Alternatively, participants can contact the faculty head of Ethics Prof Khatidja Chantler at [K.Chantler@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:K.Chantler@mmu.ac.uk) or in writing to: The Department of Psychology, Manchester Metropolitan University, 53 Bonsall Street, Manchester, M15 6GX. If the participants have any concerns about personal data collected, they can contact the Data Protection Officer by emailing [legal@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:legal@mmu.ac.uk) or by calling 0161 247 3331 or in writing to: Data Protection Officer, Legal Services, All Saints Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M15 6BH. Participants also have a right to lodge a complaint in respect of the processing of personal data with the Information Commissioner’s Office as the supervisory authority. Please see: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>.

**Disclaimer**

Our meeting will take place via Skype, which operates as a processor for any personal data exchanged. In common with other ‘free’ web services, it is your responsibility to review the privacy policy and terms and conditions of Skype. You are under no obligation to accept them. Note, however, that the acceptance of the terms and conditions of Skype forms a contract between you and the company, independent of MMU. Because you will be transacting with your personal information, please familiarize yourself with [Skype’s](https://support.skype.com/en/skype/all/privacy-security/) Privacy Policy and only proceed with arranging an interview if you are comfortable with the information that Skype captures and what the company can do with it.

Our meeting will be password protected and I will share the password with you by email. The audio recording will be stored on my MMU OneDrive and not on the Skype’s servers. You are under no obligation to agree to the use of Skype. Please speak to the researcher if you would like to discuss alternatives to using Skype.

**THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT**