

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education & Children's Services
DATE	23 May 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Corporate Parenting Annual Report and Plan 2023-26
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/135
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Amy Evans
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1, 2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to respond to the Committee's request (formerly Public Protection Committee) for an annual report (Appendix 1) on the progress of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities outlined in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 1.2 To present the refreshed Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-2026 (Appendix 2) to the Committee for endorsement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 note the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022 (Appendix 1) detailing progress and activities against key Corporate Parenting duties; and
- 2.2 note and endorse the Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 -2026 (Appendix 2) and delegate authority to the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to submit the Plan to the Children's Services Board for approval.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines Corporate Parenting and places a number of duties on public sector organisations to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after and care leavers.
- 3.2. Corporate Parenting responsibilities are set out in section 58, Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 as the following six duties:
- To be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children and young people and care leavers,

- To assess the needs of care experienced children and young people for services and support it provides,
- To promote the interests of care experienced children and young people,
- To seek to provide opportunities for care experienced children and young people to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing,
- To take appropriate action to help care experienced children and young people access opportunities and make use of services and support,
- To take such other action as appropriate to improve the way our organisation functions in relation to care experienced children and young people.

3.3 In addition to our Corporate Parenting Plan, our Corporate Parenting responsibilities are reflected in our Children's Services Plan and Local Outcome Improvement Plan where the following objectives are set for Corporate Parenting under stretch outcome 6:

“As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026”.

3.4 The Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2022 (Appendix 1) provides the Committee with a summary of our corporate parenting activities over the course of 2022 and demonstrates our progress as corporate parents.

3.5 The Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 -2026 (Appendix 2) outlines the aims and actions we intend to take to realise our Corporate Parenting duties and aspirations over the next three years, keeping cognisance of delivery on aspects of The Promise and ensuring a rights-based and trauma-informed approach is central to the design and delivery of all services for children and young people with care experience.

3.6 Consultation on the draft Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 -2026 took place between March and April 2023 with Corporate Parents across the partnership, and relevant stakeholders including young people with care experience.

3.6 The Committee is asked to note the progress and activities against key Corporate Parenting duties and to note and endorse the Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 -2026.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Corporate Parenting duties included in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 are designed to ensure that the attention and resources of various organisations are explicitly focussed on the task of safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of looked after children and young people, and care leavers. This part extends the duties of corporate parents and the reporting responsibilities of local authorities.
- 5.2 Aberdeen City Council has a duty to report to Scottish Government Ministers every three years on how it is meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities as detailed in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The second submission to the Scottish Government was provided in March 2021.
- 5.3 Section 59 of the 2014 Act provides that corporate parents must prepare a plan for how they propose exercising their corporate parenting responsibilities and must keep this plan under review; corporate parents must consult with one another before preparing or revising the plan and must publish the plan or revised plan. This report and appendices comply with these statutory duties.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

- 7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	That the multi-agency workforce training plan is insufficiently supported	There is a robust delivery plan and support at a senior level.	M	Yes
Compliance	The Council has responsibility to comply with its statutory corporate	The Corporate Parenting Group and Children's Services Board have responsibility for the delivery of the Corporate Parenting	L	Yes

	parenting responsibilities	Plan and will continue to provide an annual report on Corporate Parenting to ensure the Council complies with the law.		
Operational	Children and young people with care experience are a vulnerable cohort whose needs require to be recognised and met. Competing resource demands may have an impact	These are duties which have been incorporated across existing structures and will be consolidated in practice	L	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified against this category			Yes
Reputational	A failure of Aberdeen City Council to comply and meet its Corporate Parenting responsibilities would reflect negatively on the Council	There is a strong legacy of positive practice and sharing of success in this area	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified against this category			Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: -

Working in Partnership for Aberdeen

- Work with the city's universities, North East Scotland College and businesses to increase educational and training options and the number of care experienced young people and young people from deprived communities, going onto positive destinations, including further and higher education, vocational training and apprenticeships.
- Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems.
- Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce "out of authority" placements.

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26

Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes

The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 6 – 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.

The report seeks to provide an annual update on Corporate Parenting progress and activities, including the following improvement projects within the LOIP:

- Reduce by 5% the number of children entering the care system by 2024.
- 100% of children and young people leaving care are offered a health assessment to identify gaps in their health provision and needs by 2024.
- Increase the number of young people with care experience by 10% receiving multi-agency throughcare/aftercare support by 2023.
- Reduce the number of children being permanently removed from parents with care experience.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase by 100% the number of partners supporting kinship carers by 2023. • 80% of the identified multi-agency workforce successfully complete Corporate Parenting training aligned to the Promise by 2025.
Regional and City Strategies	<p>The proposals within this report support the Children's Services Plan.</p> <p>This report takes into account the local authority's legal obligations in respect of the legislation and national policy outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 • UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill 2021 • The Promise • Plan 21-24 • GIRFEC

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 OPE/22/042 Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021 Public Protection Committee 23.02.2022.

10.2 [Statutory guidance on Part 9 \(Corporate Parenting\) of the Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)

10.3 [The Promise](#)

10.4 [Plan 21-24](#)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022

11.2 Appendix 2: Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 -2026

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Community Planning
Aberdeen



**Children's
Services Board**

Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022



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Introduction from Chief and Lead Officers

We are pleased to bring you the seventh annual Corporate Parenting Report for Aberdeen City providing a progress update and overview of key Corporate Parenting duties. This report gives an overview of the highlights over the course of 2022 and our performance as Corporate Parents to our infants, children, young people, and young adults with care experience.

In Aberdeen we believe that corporate parenting is not just a responsibility, it is also a real opportunity to improve the futures of our children and young people and ensure they have the love, security and chances every child should have.

The last year has seen increasing diversity in our children and young people with care experience, brought about by the implementation of the National Transfer Scheme. We have adapted locally, setting up a best practice group, to ensure the specific cultural, language and trauma needs of our unaccompanied children are recognised and met.

Upholding the respective needs and rights of both young parents and their children whilst realising corporate parenting and safeguarding responsibilities has been a focus of the Corporate Parenting group in 2022. Responding to the voices of several of our young parents with care experience, better supporting and preparing our young people with care experience for life beyond care, including parenthood, has become a strategic priority in our children's services and corporate parenting planning as we strive to become better Corporate Parents and Grandparents.

Our collective efforts to #KeepthePromise have informed our Corporate Parenting priorities for the next three years with a strategic focus on keeping Brothers and Sisters together and connected, reducing physical restraint and restrictive practices in the care of our children, and ending the over representation of young people with care experience in the justice system.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank not only the members of the Corporate Parenting Group but all of those across the partnership who hold children and young people with care experience at the heart of what they do.

Graeme Simpson

Chief Social Work Officer / Chair of the Corporate Parenting Group

Amy Evans

Corporate Parenting Lead Officer

A Note about Language



'System language' can have negative effects on our children and young people and the [Independent Care Review](#) told us that it made young people feel different, stigmatised, or excluded from participating in their own care planning.

In this annual report we have strived to use language which is easily understood, positive and which does not create or compound stigma. There are times where the statutory framework in Scotland requires certain terms to be used and we have outlined key terms and what they mean to help make the language in this report more accessible. Our use of language continues to evolve, and we will endeavour to incorporate the preferences and voice of children, young people, and their families into our vocabulary as we go forward.

A child-friendly version of our Corporate Parenting Plan is also available **[LINK TO BE ADDED]**.

'Child/ Young person/ Person with **Care Experience**' is the preferred terminology identified by those with experience of the care system as it is inclusive of those who may no longer be 'looked after' but still require our scaffold of support to thrive. This term includes those currently looked after and those who have been looked after at any time in their life, no matter how short, including adopted children who were previously looked after.

Children and young people can be both 'looked after' and have experience of care at the same time.

A child or young person is '**Looked after**' when:

1. Accommodated by the local authority under s25 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995
2. Subject to a compulsory supervision order (CSO) or interim CSO made under the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011
3. Has a similar order from England, Wales or Northern Ireland
4. A Permanence Order has been made under the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007
5. Children and young people can be looked after at home with social work support, or in kinship, foster or residential care.

'**Care Leaver**' describes a young person who was 'looked after' on or after their 16th birthday and who is aged under 26. This is a necessary distinction from 'care experienced' as it reflects legal entitlement to Throughcare and Aftercare support.

Aberdeen City's Write Right About Me (WRAM) improvement project has continued its work to ensure children and young people's records written by the range of children's services in Aberdeen reflect their voice and are written in ways which reduce stigma and are trauma informed.

In 2022, the compulsory Recording Principles e-module was launched for all social work staff in Aberdeen City. The module sets out Aberdeen City Council's principles for recording, including the language of care we expect from our workers in our Children and Adult Social Work Services.

Glossary of key terms/acronyms

ACE	Aberdeen Care Experienced (ACE) is the support network for Care Experienced young people up to the age of 26 years in Aberdeen.
Carers	Refers to anyone over the age of 16 who is providing care for a child either formally (through a legal order) or informally (no legal order).
Champions Board	A Champions Board is made up of professionals from different organisations who have the power to make positive changes for children and young people with care experience. They meet with the young people with care experience to offer their support, listen to what needs to be done and to take responsibility for their organisation in making care better for young people.
Children's Services Board (CSB)	The Aberdeen Children's Services Board represents all the key agencies that deliver services for children and young people in Aberdeen City. Its purpose is to ensure the effective delivery of services for children and young people at all stages of their development and growth.
Contact AKA Family Time	Is the term used in legislation to refer to formal arrangements made for when children in need of care and protection spend time with important people in their lives who they are not living with at that time.
Kinship	Kinship care is when a child is looked after by their extended family or close friends if they are not able to live with their parents.
Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)	The LOIP is a document which sets out how Community Planning Aberdeen will improve outcomes for and with local people and communities.
MCR Pathways	MCR Pathways is a school-based mentoring programme which supports young people with care experience or experience of disadvantage, to build confidence, broaden aspirations and have the chance to get the same education outcomes, career opportunities and life chances as every other young person.
Mind of my own (MOMO)	Mind of my own offers digital tools that empower children and young people to participate and have their voices heard.
Placement	Is the word used in legislation to refer to the place where a child or young person is being cared for away from the care of their parents.
The Promise	The Promise is that Scotland's children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected. To keep it,

	Scotland must bring about the change demanded by the Independent Care Review.
The Scottish Physical Restraint Action Group (SPRAG)	The Scottish Physical Restraint Action Group was formed to continue the discussion on physical restraint in residential child care and plan a way forward to ensure the eradication of the harm caused by physical restraint.
UNCRC	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights.

What is Corporate Parenting?



Corporate Parenting is the term used in Scotland to refer to organisations (and individuals who work for them) who have a legal duty to respond to and support the care and protection needs of all children and young people. The use of ‘corporate parent’ as a term was specifically highlighted as potentially demeaning and an example of cold, process-driven relationships by the Independent Care Review. In Scotland, corporate parents and their duties are set out in legislation. We have therefore continued to use the term corporate parent in this report, given its statutory nature.

Every child and young person needs a strong scaffold of love, care and support to see them through to adulthood and beyond. For many people, that scaffold is provided by those closest to them - parents, siblings, pets, wider family and beyond that in surrounding communities, like neighbours and school. When a child or young person goes into care, it can feel like essential pieces of this scaffold are removed, and corporate parents should step in to form a new scaffold of support.

A corporate parent is the name given to an organisation or person who has special responsibilities to children and young people with care experience. This may include:

- those in residential care, including residential schools or secure care,
- those in foster care,
- those in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent, and
- those who are looked after at home
- those with previous experience of any of these types of care

In simple terms, a corporate parent is intended to carry out many of the roles a loving parent should. While they may not be able to provide everything a parent can, they should still be able to provide the children and young people they’re responsible for with the best possible support and care.

Corporate parenting responsibilities are intended to encourage people and organisations to do as much as they can towards improving the lives and outcomes of children and young people with care experience, so that they:

- feel in control of their lives, and
- are able to overcome the barriers they face

Who are Corporate Parents in Aberdeen City?

There are lots of organisations who are a Corporate Parent (see honeycomb image below) and it is everyone in these organisations, not just those who work directly with children and young people, who are required to fulfil that corporate parenting role.



EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE

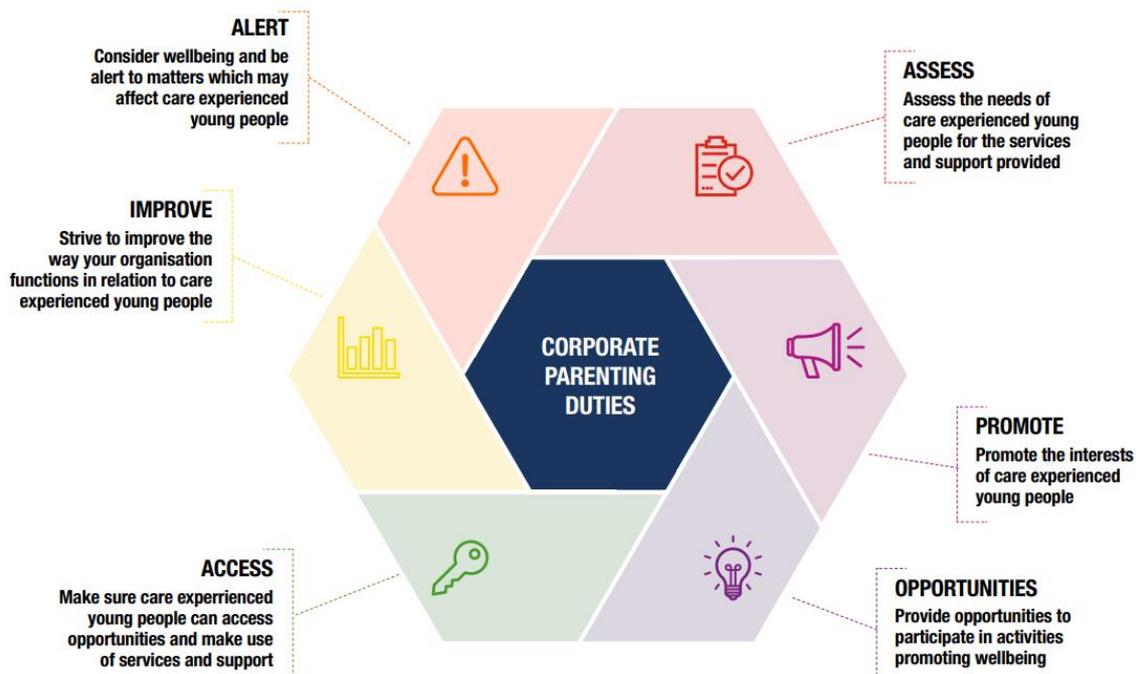
*(THIS IS THE CATEGORY THAT INCLUDES ACCOUNTANT IN BANKRUPTCY; DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND; EDUCATION SCOTLAND; THE SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE; THE SCOTTISH PUBLIC PENSIONS AGENCY; STUDENT AWARDS AGENCY FOR SCOTLAND; AND TRANSPORT SCOTLAND).

Corporate Parenting Duties

In 2014, the Scottish Government passed a law called the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This law named specific organisations and set out that they had the parental responsibility to work together to uphold the rights and support the needs and wellbeing of care experienced children, young people and care leavers across Scotland.

Under Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the responsibilities of corporate parents are to:

1. Be **alert** to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children and young people
2. **Assess** the needs of looked after children and young people for services and support we provide
3. **Promote** the interests of looked after children and young people
4. Seek to provide **opportunities** for looked after children and young people to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
5. Take appropriate action to enable looked after children and young people **access** to these opportunities and make use of our services and support
6. Take any other action we consider appropriate to **improve** our functions to meet the needs of looked after children and young people



Outcomes for children and young people with care experience

The Statutory Guidance for the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 identifies 8 Outcomes for Corporate Parents to work towards:

1. Providing safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for looked after children and care leavers
2. Enabling looked after children and care leavers to develop or maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, professionals and other trusted adults
3. Upholding and promoting children's rights
4. Securing positive educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers
5. Ensuring 'care' is an experience in which children are valued as individuals, and where support addresses their strengths as well as their needs
6. Ensuring physical or mental health concerns are identified early and addressed quickly
7. Increasing the number of care leavers in education, training and employment
8. Reducing the number of looked after children and care leavers who enter the justice system

We have aligned our corporate parenting plan to these 8 outcomes and made clear where there is crossover with other work we are doing in children's services to keep The Promise and uphold children's rights.

Corporate Parenting Group

Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Group has responsibility for the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Improvement Plan, collation and monitoring of data and quality assurance in relation to children and young people with care experience, delivering on identified aims set out in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and driving the implementation of The Promise across the Partnership. The Corporate Parenting Group engages with care experienced children and young people and seeks to ensure all improvement activity takes full account of their views and lived experiences.

Specifically, the group has oversight of the refreshed LOIP Improvement Project Stretch Aim 6; *“95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026”* and the following improvement projects:

- Reduce by 5% the number of children entering the care system by 2024.
- 100% of children and young people leaving care are offered a health assessment to identify gaps in their health provision and needs by 2024.
- Increase the number of young people with care experience by 10% receiving multi-agency throughcare/aftercare support by 2023.
- Reduce the number of children being permanently removed from parents with care experience.
- Increase by 100% the number of partners supporting kinship carers by 2023.
- 80% of the identified multi-agency workforce successfully complete Corporate Parenting training aligned to the Promise by 2025.

Key data, research and reports related to children and young people with care experience (such as publications from The Promise Scotland team, research from Who Cares? Scotland and discussion points from national groups such as SPRAG) are considered by the group to identify implications for us as corporate parents to enable us to take action where required.

Corporate Parenting and The Promise in Aberdeen



Responsibility to deliver on the Promise does not sit solely with the Corporate Parenting Group and whilst there is significant crossover between the calls to action from The Promise and our Corporate Parenting improvement planning, achieving the aims of The Promise requires investment of the broadest kind across resources and agencies. This report, however, focuses on the aspects which do cross-over with corporate parenting improvement aims.



On 5th February 2020, the Independent Care Review published seven reports, with 'the promise' narrating a vision for Scotland. The Independent Care Review recognised that the whole landscape of systems and services that interact with children and families needed to change.

The Promise is responsible for driving the work of change drawn from the findings of the Independent Care Review and makes clear the extent of change required, however, the outcomes that Scotland needs to achieve are simple and reflect Scotland's existing commitment that all children "grow up loved, safe and respected so they can fulfil their potential".

In Aberdeen we know that commitment and alignment to The Promise requires more than sentiment and change from within single agencies, that the care system is far reaching, and that care experience can have a lifelong impact. All services in and around care have responsibilities for delivering on The Promise, not just for those children currently in care, but for all who have, or will go on to have, care experience including infants, children, young people and adults.

The Scottish Government's Promise team translated the findings of the Care Review into The Plan for change which will be phased across ten years from 2020-2030. [Plan 21- 24](#) is the first of 3 plans and was published in April 2021.

Plan 21-24 focuses on the period from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2024 and outlines a series of outcomes that must be fulfilled by 2024.

The five priority areas for Plan 21-24 are:

- The right to a good childhood
- Whole family support
- Supporting the workforce
- Planning
- Building capacity

Led by Aberdeen City Council colleagues, under the auspices of the Children's Services Board, the partnership has undertaken a self-evaluation of progress in Year One of Plan 21- 24 (Appendix 1) to examine how children's services in Aberdeen are and need to support the change agenda to keep the Promise. This exercise has helped identify gaps and areas for further development across the multi-agency children's services partnership.

Aberdeen Year 1 of Plan 21-24: Status of Work

31st March 2022

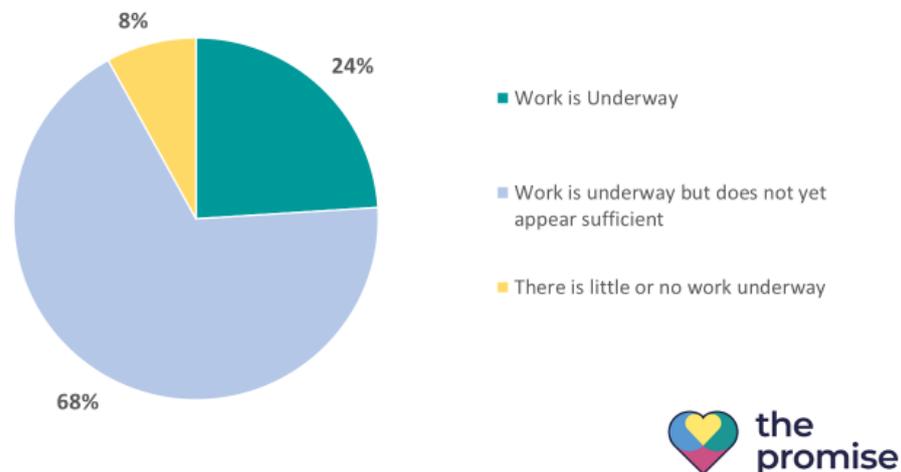


Figure 1: Aberdeen Promise Status of Work Year 1

As Figure 1 illustrates, progress has been made in Year One of Plan 21-24, however, there is still a significant amount of work to do if we are to affect the transformational change required of us all in and around the care system to deliver on The Promise. Notably, where there is 'little or no work underway', action to progress change is required to be made at a national, systems level e.g., by the Scottish Government or Children's Hearing system, before a local response to the call for change can be made.

Over the remaining years of Plan 21-24, our local priorities for change are:

- Whole Family Support: supporting families (of all shapes and sizes) with a focus on what support works to keep families together and support wider families to care, ensuring that support feels coherent, holistic and relational
- Trauma: delivery of early and preventative trauma informed support across all services
- Children's Rights: embedding a rights-respecting approach into all services and ensuring that rights of the child, their own needs and their voice is at the centre of decisions about what is best for them
- Poverty: ensuring that our local services know and understand the impact of poverty and work to reduce the number of children growing up in poverty and the negative outcomes associated with that
- Participation: involve the care community and lived experience in our plans to #KeepthePromise by working with families to redesign the services available to them to make them work better for those that use them

We will continue to work in collaboration with the Promise Scotland Team and our Promise Delivery Partner and welcome the opportunities this brings for mutual and ongoing knowledge exchange and support around implementing The Promise in Aberdeen.

Children's Rights and Corporate Parenting



The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out specific rights that all children have to help fulfil their potential.

In March 2021, the Scottish Parliament passed the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill, to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law. The Supreme Court determined that certain parts of the Bill fall outwith the competence of the Scottish Parliament. It is anticipated that the Scottish Parliament will reconsider the Bill. Respecting, protecting and fulfilling children's rights is central to #KeepThePromise and the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) which continue to underpin how we love, care for and support all children and young people in Scotland.

Children's rights have been prioritised and intrinsically woven throughout our corporate parenting and children's services planning in Aberdeen. Some examples from 2022 of our efforts to embed a rights-based approach are:

- Inter-agency Referral Discussions template and guidance were refreshed to take cognisance of care experience, children's rights, and a child's need for advocacy at the initial stages of child protection processes.
- Feedback from children and young people via the Young Person's Rights Service continues to have a strong influence on the work and priorities of the Corporate Parenting Group.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



Children's Commissioner

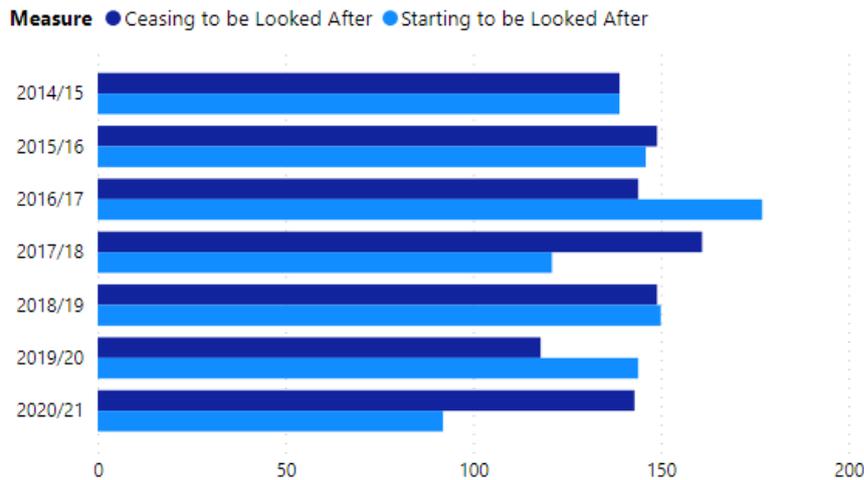
Survival		Development		Participation		Protection		
You have a right to life, good food, water, and to grow up healthy		You have a right to an education and time to relax and play		You have a right to say how you feel, to be listened to, and taken seriously		You have a right to be treated well and not be hurt by anyone		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	
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41	42	© UNICEF/UNEP/WHO/World Bank Group 2019. All rights reserved. www.unicef.org/uncrc						

Local and National Context

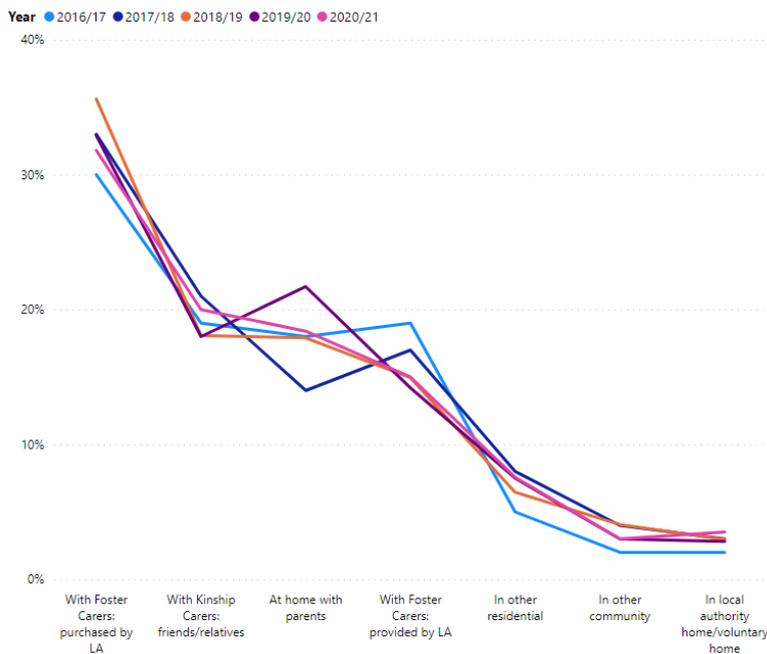
In 2022, Aberdeen City had an average of 506 infants, children and young people who were 'looked-after' in various care settings across the year.

We are reducing the number of children and young people coming into the 'care system' and are working to support more children and their families to remain together.

Looked After Status



Accommodation of Looked After Children



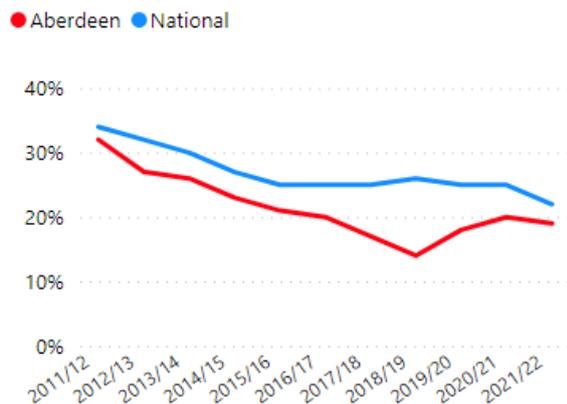
The latest national figures show that 13,255 children in Scotland are currently in care. In Aberdeen, we are in-line with or better than the national average (from the Scottish Government's CSW Statistics Report 2020-21) in relation to:

- Reducing numbers of children and young people being looked after

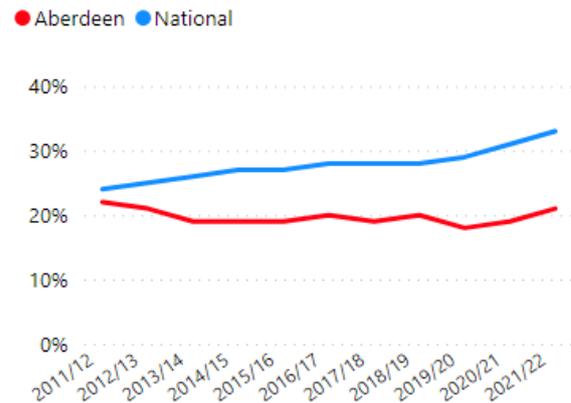
- Proportion of children being looked after in secure care
 - Majority of our children being looked after are placed in the community
- Where Aberdeen City differs from the national average:

- Proportion of children looked after at home or with kin
- Percentage of purchased foster care placements from independent fostering providers

Looked After at Home



Kinship Care



There is a nominal positive trend in the numbers of children and young people being looked after at home versus away from home in comparison to 2020/21 data, however, multi-agency efforts on shifting the balance of care toward recognising how we can safely care for children and young people at home or in kinship arrangements is still crucial if we are to keep The Promise and meet our own local targets of increasing the percentage of children and young people looked after at home or in kinship arrangements.

How good are we as Corporate Parents?



As part of our consultation on the refreshed Children's Services Plan, Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-2026, and annual review of the work of the Champions Board we asked children and young people with care experience to tell us what they thought of Corporate Parenting in Aberdeen.

What's good about Corporate Parenting in Aberdeen?

- *"It exists!"*
- *"We're talking and making plans to change the system"*
- *"Some workers/teams continue to provide support past age cut-offs"*
- *"We like informal opportunities (like Supper Club) to chat and meet corporate parents."*
- *"Celebrations of care but we want more representation from Corporate Parents"*
- *"I like coming to Westburn for food and Rights walk"*
- *"I've had really bad experiences with the Police but this [Participation activity with Corporate parents] has given me and my kids the opportunity to see Police positively."*

What could Corporate Parents do better?

- *"do what you say you're going to do like you would for your own children"*
- *"don't cut off support at 26 years old"*
- *"use views, comments, and queries in our own words, not their own interpretation, avoiding us having to tell our story, views or issue more than once to different people, in case of workers being off, or changing jobs"*
- *"Help everyone understand what it means to be care experienced."*
- *"Corporate Parents should talk more to those still experiencing the care system as opposed to those who have left"*
- *"We need more specific supports for looked after and care experienced children and young people like the LAC Nurse"*
- *"Understand care experienced young people as individuals, their traumatic experiences, not making us tell our story or issues again and again"*
- *"Be non-judgemental"*

Carers

Carers play a vital role in helping us understand the experiences and voice of children and young people in their care. We asked some carers to tell us what they thought about Corporate Parenting in Aberdeen and what changes they would like to see in the refreshed corporate parenting plan:

- *"To listen more to kinship carer to be able to work out how support can be put in place, for the child & the carer."*
- *"Honesty, trying to keep promises, & for carers to be more informed about changes, for example (team manager's taking over chairpersons role in LAC meetings)."*

Challenges in 2022

- It is well known that **poverty** adversely impacts upon health and wellbeing and in 2022, the cost-of-living crisis further threatened children, young people, carers and their families.

Some of our Care Leavers shared examples with the Champions Board in June 2022 about the kind of things they and other care experienced young people are finding difficult:

“Food prices and shopping are getting more expensive”

“Finding it difficult to know what support is available and how to access it”

“One-off support payments are welcomed but not so helpful in the long run”

“Fuel costs rising and more rises to come”

“Support for parents during school holidays not covering costs”

“Covid then cost of living crisis affecting mental health”

“It’s unfair that we always have to make the changes, what are our corporate parents doing for us?”

“Asking for help makes me feel bad”

Children growing up in poverty are more likely to be removed from their families. Beyond the material aspect, poverty also takes a toll on children and adult’s physical and mental health and wellbeing that can, in some cases, increase the risk of interaction with the ‘care system’. Development of a Whole Family Support model is a priority of children’s services planning in Aberdeen which seeks to support families earlier and to stay together and learning and reflection from the voice of children and young people with care experience has been incorporated into Aberdeen City’s Poverty Action Plan 2022-2026.

Changes to support such as; the timing of when the higher education bursary for students with care experience is paid have been considered helpful. As are the development of resources such as the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum Real Toolkit, which can help young people and their workers understand what they are entitled to/where to get help, however, more support is needed to ensure that no child or young person leaving care in Aberdeen experiences poverty.

- **Mental health** has been further negatively compounded by the cost of living crisis with many of our children and young people talking about the challenges accessing mental health supports and the prevalence of these issue for them. A thematic Champions Board held on the issues of mental health was held in April 2022. Young people with care experience asked for designated supports and highlighted the omission of any local mental health services for 18-26 year olds.
- Our contractual partnership with Who Cares? Scotland came to an end in 2022 leaving us with a vacant Development Officer post to support improvement around **Participation and Voice**. A small cohort of colleagues within children’s social work have worked hard to continue facilitating activities such as monthly Supper Clubs, to support the participation and voice of young people with care experience as an interim measure, however, we hope to recruit again for this vital post in 2023.

Highlights from 2022

- In April 2022, a new Principal Planning and Development Officer post in Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Team was successfully recruited to. Initially working with the Development Officer from Who Cares? Scotland, this post has further enabled us to expand our support of the engagement and participation of our children and young people with care experience.
- In September 2022, training on Corporate Parenting was delivered to all probationer teachers in Aberdeen City and to a cohort of newly qualified social workers. The sessions were well attended and received. Feedback from these sessions is informing ongoing work to develop and refresh our Corporate Parenting training, including a reworking of the mandatory e-learning module for all Aberdeen City Council staff and creation of local multi-agency training, to ensure relevant policy and legislative changes are included.
- Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting pages on Aberdeen Protects went live in 2022. The content on the site seeks to increase understanding and awareness of Corporate Parenting with our workforce and the wider public, as well as provide a platform for routine and accessible reporting on improvement activity:
<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Aberdeen-Protects/improving-childrens-futures/corporate-parenting>
- 2022 saw the resumption of face-to-face Champions Boards, celebrations of care and regular events seeking to offer connection and support to our children and young people with care experience.
- New Pathways Advocate posts have been introduced across eleven Secondary schools in Aberdeen to support, monitor and track young people with care experience in pathways planning and achieving a positive and sustained destination. Pathways Advocates provide advice and support around choices, vocational pathways and future options and work closely with Principal Teachers of Guidance and Skills Development Scotland, Careers Advisors. Two Edge of Care pilots in Northfield and Lochside Academy were also introduced to mitigate barriers to school attendance by providing intensive support to those who are care experienced or on the edge of care. The impact of these changes will be closely monitored to inform next steps and have been incorporated into our Corporate Parenting Plan for 2023-2026.
- A suite of multi-agency data, to support our monitoring of Corporate Parenting activity and tracking of trends for our children and young people with care experience across the partnership, has continued to develop and mature.
- Sport Aberdeen distributed 250 free Fitness memberships to young people with care experience, and those in their support network, and provided 350 hours of one-to-one support to 22 young people to support their participation in various fun activities.

Corporate Parenting Plan 2021- 2023

The timing of this annual report offers an opportunity to review the work carried out in the 2021-2023 iteration of our Corporate Parenting Plan and to present our new plan for 2023 - 2026.

Review of Corporate Parenting Plan 2021- 2023	
We said we would do	We did
Improve education outcomes for children and young people with care experience by supporting engagement with MCR Pathways.	MCR Pathways was implemented across 6 of the 11 academies in the city in 2020. Due to the impact of the pandemic on embedding the programme there is limited data available on the improvements made and a continuation of the programme has been recommended.
Improve the knowledge and skills of the workforce in relation to their Corporate Parenting duties and responsibilities and by doing so highlight the pervasive impact of care experience on opportunities and life chances.	Aberdeen City Council's mandatory workforce training was developed and launched on ACC Learn in 2020. A refresh of the training is scheduled for 2023 with plans to widen this out to multi-agency partners.
Feature and promote the recommendations of The Independent Care Review across key systems, processes, and partnership practice.	See Promise section of this report on page 19.
To work in ways which recognise the life-long impact of trauma, placing recovery principles at the forefront of corporate parenting planning.	All of our local residential staff continue to be trained in trauma-recovery principles and ensuring our multi-agency workforce is trauma-informed and where necessary, trauma-skilled, is a priority of our Corporate Parenting Plan.
Continue to develop participation and engagement opportunities with and for our children and young people. Seek creative ways to listen to and capture children and young people's voices and views.	See Participation and Voice section of this report on page 29. An access scheme for the promotion of digital inclusion for care leavers was also developed.
Increase by 3% the number of children looked after at home or with their family (kinship) by 2023.	Children's social work data shows that there has been a 5.4 % increase in the number of children living in kinship placements and looked after at home (33.8% Q1 2019) to 39.2% Q3 2022). However, Aberdeen City continues to have a higher percentage of children and young people placed within a fostering setting compared to the national position. To address this and support children to stay

	with their families where safe to do so , development of a Family Support Model is a priority of children's services planning in Aberdeen.
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Participation and Voice

In Aberdeen, we have used a broad range of participative opportunities to engage with and listen to children and young people with care experience. We use the voice of children and young people to inform the work of the Corporate Parenting Group and Champions Board to bring about changes to supports and services. In 2023 we plan to develop a robust means of feeding back to children and young people more routinely on what we have done with what we have heard.



Aberdeen Care Experienced (ACE) is the support network for Care Experienced young people up to the age of 26 years in Aberdeen.

ACE Core Activities and Outcomes		
	Activity	Outcome
1	Youth engagement and participation	Children and young people will have opportunities to share their views across a range of media.
2	Young people development	There will be examples of young people making contributions to Aberdeen City's Champions Board.
3	Partnership working	Core partners will engage in Champions Board and each will demonstrate impact.
4	Information, awareness-raising, and promotion	Co-produce events which highlight corporate parenting role.
5	Monitoring and evaluation	Gather, hold, evaluate information concerning core activities impact on young people and investment in exit planning strategies.

In 2022, quarterly Champions Boards took place and after adapting to virtual meetings during lockdowns face to face meetings resumed in April 2022.

Monthly Supper Clubs were held at Aberdeen City Council's Westburn Road building, where young people with care experience, and at times their families, have come along to relax, chat and have some food cooked for them by various Corporate Parents who have attended and prepared a meal.

Borne out of Covid-19 lockdowns, as a means of addressing isolation in our care experienced community, the Young People's Rights Service (YPRS) facilitated and continue to hold monthly group walks, allowing young people to come together in the outdoors, at a safe distance to socialise and have something to eat. The group has no formal agenda and provides a relaxed opportunity for young people to be active, feel connected and get support.

In August 2022, Aberdeen hosted the National Leadership Network and co-hosted a Leadership Roadshow Event where one of our own young people with care experience works with the national organisation to bring a variety of leadership opportunities to the care experienced community in Scotland. The event was fun-filled and informative, attended by young people with care experience and local representatives from Aberdeen's Young MSPs and Youth Council, Sport Aberdeen and Scottish Youth Enterprise business support.

In December 2022, children's social work put on an advent calendar of activities including a range of both online and in-person activities such as a quiz, supper and movie nights, arts and crafts sessions, and a Christmas tree light up. A 3-course Christmas lunch and gifts were delivered to around 80 people on the day itself.

A care-experienced specific Warm Space was also trialled in December by staff at Westburn Road, and has since become a weekly fixture, offering young people the opportunity to drop-in, have some food, get warm and use facilities e.g., to charge their phone, wash clothes, and use the food pantry, etc. These warm spaces are well attended and offer young people a relaxed environment in which to connect, receive information and get support.

The Mind of My Own (MOMO) app has continued to be utilised by children's social work to support children and young people to express their views and needs and to keep in contact with professionals.

Whilst our participation and engagement opportunities are well attended by care leavers, we have not yet been able to increase the participation of those children and young people currently in care. This is a focus for us in 2023-2026.



Use of Data and Intelligence



Our multi-agency Corporate Parenting data set focusing on children and young people with care experience is routinely shared with members of the Corporate Parenting Group and Children's Services Board. Data is analysed for emerging trends and support needs which allows the group to act where necessary. The data set spans across the partnership from social work, health, education, housing, police, and other services.

The data gathered is aligned to 8 scrutiny questions grounded in the 8 outcomes for Corporate Parents to work towards within the Statutory Guidance for the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The data gathered continues to be refined to include measures relating to our performance in achieving various aims of The Promise and Plan 21-24.

Areas of Progress

- Routine data is now available for all 8 scrutiny questions.
- Aberdeen City's Data and Insights Team have developed a heat map of the location of our children and young people who are looked after to help us understand and demonstrate the distances our children and young people are often living from Aberdeen.
- The Lead Officers for Corporate Parenting and Child Protection work closely to ensure alignment between the Corporate Parenting and Child Protection data sets and strategic planning.

Areas of Concern

- The Corporate Parenting Group has identified gaps in our multi-agency data gathering in relation to the mental health of children and young people who are looked after, brothers and sisters and the use of restraint. We are aware that we are not the only local authority area to be experiencing these challenges and continue to work with and learn from colleagues from the Promise Scotland and other national groups to share learning and developments in these areas.
- The introduction of a new recording system to Children's Social Work, Dynamics 365, in late 2022 has impacted upon the reliability of children's social work data and the creation of new data collection fields as the service adapts to the change and IT support is reduced to support the embedding of the new system.

Areas of Interest

- Most data collected across the partnership relates specifically to looked-after children and we hope to develop routine collection of care-experienced data to help us better understand a child/young person's experiences and outcomes beyond care better. Work to improve our workforces understanding of the language of care is underway to support achievement of this.
- Interface with the Promise Scotland Team around our Corporate Parenting data set has shown that we are in a comfortable position in relation to data locally in comparison to other local authority areas who do not have as well developed data sets.

Conclusion

This seventh annual Corporate Parenting Report for Aberdeen City celebrates the significant developments and improvements over 2022. It highlights the commitment of agencies and services to care for Aberdeen's children and young people and keep The Promise.

This report demonstrates the progress made as well as the areas for continued or new development over the coming years.

The aims and priorities of Corporate Parents in Aberdeen are outlined in Appendix 1 Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-2026 which aligns to The Promise, local Children's Services Plan, LOIP and the UNCRC, describing how and when these improvements will be achieved.

Feedback on the annual report, corporate parenting plan or any other aspect of corporate parenting in Aberdeen is welcomed and can be provided here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/rNNQZdyMeh>



Find out more

To find out more about Corporate Parenting in Aberdeen please visit: [Corporate Parenting – Aberdeen Protects](#).

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Appendix 1 Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 – 2026

Aberdeen City

Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2023 – 2026

Why do we have a Corporate Parenting Plan?

This plan sets out how we intend to exercise our corporate parenting responsibilities in Aberdeen and is aligned with other plans such as Aberdeen City's Children's Services Plan.

Aberdeen City's Children's Services Plan 2023-26 highlights the Corporate Parenting responsibilities of the partnership with the following stretch outcome:

“As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.”

To achieve this outcome, Corporate Parents across the partnership have focused on evidencing improvement in the following areas:

1. Improving education and health outcomes for children and young people with care experience
2. Supporting attainment of balance of care, where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin
3. Supporting children and young people to understand and access multi-agency throughcare and aftercare services

Who is this plan for?

This plan is for partners in the Aberdeen City area with corporate parenting responsibilities, it outlines the work of Aberdeen City Council working in partnership with the following organisations.

There are 24 organisations in Scotland that the Scottish Government identifies as Corporate Parents. Locally, this includes Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, North East Scotland College (NESCOL), Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen, Sport Aberdeen, Children's Hearings Scotland, the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA) and third sector partners, represented by Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO).

This Corporate Parenting Plan has been developed by Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Group, which is made up of representatives from the above organisations. The focus of this plan is on what we can do together.



What has informed the plan?

Our draft plan has been created from what we have heard from children, young people, their families and carers, and our workforce so far about what is important to them.

The priorities in the plan have been based on:

- An evaluation of how we have met the objectives stated in our previous 3 year plan
- Regular Champions Board
- Participation Events with children and young people such as Care Day and Supper Clubs
- Regular meetings of the Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group
- Local Care Leavers Review

Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2023 – 2026

Strategic Outcome 1: Provide safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for looked after children and care leavers				
Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
The Promise (Support) Every child that is 'in care' in Scotland will have access to intensive support that ensures their educational and health needs are fully met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We listen to and learn from the feedback of children and young people with care experience and their families to ensure the design and improvement of services takes account of their views. 		Establish a sustainable feedback loop.	Children's Social Work
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will better understand the circumstances that led to our children and young people with care experience entering the care system to inform a preventative Family Support Model. 		Audit of circumstances compiled and shared. Number of children in the care system	Corporate Parenting Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of the impact of the Family Nurse Partnership Programme on parents who have experienced care. Ensure awareness of and access to ante-natal programmes for expectant parents with care experience under the age of 25 years. 		Number of young parents with care experience who feel prepared for parenthood. Number of children accommodated from parents with care experience within the first 12 months.	Family Nurse Partnership Corporate Parenting Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children and young people leaving care will be offered an assessment of their health needs to identify any gaps in their health care/provision. 	31 st March 2024	% of looked after children who are offered a health assessment prior to leaving care (Aim 100%)	NHS Grampian

			% of looked after children who have a health assessment prior to leaving care. (Baseline 0)	
We will provide safe care to our children and young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people with care experience will not be overrepresented in the numbers of overall missing children. 		Number of children and young people with care experience missing (Baseline 74 – 2021/22)	<p>Police Scotland</p> <p>Youth Justice Group</p>
Scotland will have a cohesive central picture of all data on the processes and systems that directly and indirectly impact on children and their families, including wider socio-structural factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parents across the partnership will collaborate to understand our children and young people and be able to identify and respond to trends across our care experienced population. 		Continue to develop our Corporate Parenting data set to include data on keeping the Promise.	Corporate Parenting Group

Strategic Outcome 2: Enable looked after children and care leavers to develop or maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, professionals and other trusted adults				
Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
<p>The Promise (Relationships)</p> <p>All children living in and around Scotland's 'care system' will be maintaining safe, loving relationships that are important to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will grow the capacity of Aberdeen City's Fostering Service to reduce the number of children placed with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's) out with the city. 		<p>% of children in foster care placed with an IFA (Baseline 66% or 149 children)</p> <p>Number of children in foster care placed with ACC carers (34% or 74 children)</p> <p>Number of Foster Carers available locally (Baseline to be added)</p>	Children's Social Work
<p>There will be no barriers to 'contact' and children will be supported to have time with people they care about.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our workforce will understand the benefits and risks of keeping a child at home/with family versus the lifelong impact of removal. Increase the % of Child's Plans at Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPM) and Looked After reviews which reflect the voice of the child and their family and identify how relationships will be maintained. 		<p>% of Child's Plans at CPPMs and looked after Reviews which fully reflect the voice of the child and family when quality assured, are 'good' or better. (Baseline being determined).</p>	Children's Social Work
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Children's Social Work workforce strategy to address current recruitment issues. 		<p>% of vacancies (Baseline - 12%)</p>	Children's Social Work
<p>The Promise (Brothers and Sisters)</p>				Children's Social Work

Scotland will stop the practice of separating brothers and sisters, unless for reasons of safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of instances where brothers and sisters are separated. • Where it is decided brothers and sisters cannot be cared for together, ensure the reasoning for this is explicitly recorded in individual children's plans. 		<p>Number of brothers and sisters who are separated (Baseline to be added)</p> <p>Number of explicit references to reasoning in Child's Plans (new measure).</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the multi-agency support offer to kinship carers to take account of the complexity of caring for children within these arrangements and the support needs of kinship carers. • Review and develop the multi-agency support offer to our kinship carers. 		<p>Number of partners providing support (Baseline 2 – 2022)</p> <p>Number of kinship carers receiving multi-agency support.</p>	Corporate Parenting Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership will assume the presumption that brothers and sisters will be cared for together unless their best interests indicate otherwise. • All social work professionals will feel confident when assessing the needs of brothers and sisters. • Universal services informing assessments through routine collation of child's relationships. 	March 2024	Number of Lead Professionals who report confidence in assessing brothers and sisters. (Baseline to be determined)	Brothers and Sisters Thematic Group
In keeping with the Promise, transitions for children and young people will be limited,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every young person leaving care will have a multi-agency pathway plan 		<p>% of looked after 15/16 year olds with a pathway plan</p> <p>% of young people in continuing care placements</p>	Corporate Parenting Group

relational, planned and informed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When commissioning services, and/or considering out of authority care, Integrated Children & Families Services will confirm the providers capacity for Continuing Care, including transitions and maintaining relationships.		% of children and young people who move care setting on a planned/unplanned basis	
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Strategic Outcome 3: Upholding and promoting children's rights				
Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
<p>UNCRC The Promise (Children's Rights)</p> <p>Advocacy provision will follow the principles set out in the Promise.</p> <p>Children and young people with care experience will be able to easily access child centred legal advice and representation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people will be supported to access appropriate legal advice and representation to resolve their legal status. • We will review our advocacy and support duties in light of Children's Hearing Scotland reform expected April 2023. 		<p>Number of young people accessing advocacy and children's rights services who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care experienced • Looked after • Involved in child protection processes <p>(Baseline to be added).</p> <p>Number of young people with legal representation (Baseline 0)</p>	Children's Social Work
<p>Supporting children and young people to understand and access multiagency throughcare and aftercare services</p> <p>LOIP</p> <p>UNCRC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review welfare assessment process to ensure that where a welfare assessment applies it is completed from a multi-agency perspective. • Develop and launch awareness raising materials to increase children and young people with care experience's knowledge of their rights and how to access services. • Reduce young people being closed to services between the ages of 16-19. 	31 st March 2025	Number of young people with care experience receiving multiagency throughcare/aftercare	Corporate Parenting Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase uptake of Young Scot card to ensure care experienced young people experience less poverty. 			
Planning and delivery of national policies aligned to improving outcomes for those who experience care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and delivery of new policies and legislation impacting on children and young people will be co-produced in collaboration with them, including (but not restricted to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Reform of CHS ➢ Children's Care and Justice Bill ➢ Whole Family Wellbeing Fund ➢ Implications of the Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Bill ➢ Plan 25 – 27 ➢ Complaints processes for children and young people when published by the Ombudsman 			
All children and young people with care experience, wherever they live, will be protected from violence and experience the safeguard of equal protection legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency position statement on restraint • Roll out of trauma training aligned to position statement. 		Number of incident reports regarding restraint for care experienced children and young people (Baseline to be established)	Corporate Parenting Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce use of care providers who use physical restraint and restrictive practices. 		CSSF process and IPA review. Number of children and young people placed with external providers who use physical restraint (Baseline to be established)	Children's Social Work

<p>Children and young people with care experience will have opportunities to participate and have their voices heard about what matters to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit dedicated Participation Officer for children and young people with care experience • Continue to hold Champions Boards at least quarterly • Offer a range of participation activities and opportunities to children and young people with care experience 		<p>Recruitment of Participation Officer</p> <p>Number of participation opportunities held per year</p> <p>Qualitative feedback from young people</p>	<p>Children's Social Work</p>
<p>Implementation of a Bairns Hoose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and delivery of a Regional Bairns Hoose will take account of the lived experiences of children, young people and families. • We ensure feedback from children, young people and their families with experience of child protection interventions directly influence the design and delivery of our Bairns Hoose. 	<p>By 2025</p>	<p>Bairns Hoose established.</p>	<p>Corporate Parenting Group, Child Protection Committee and Chief Officers Group</p>

Strategic Outcome 4: Secure positive educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers

Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
<p>The Promise (Right to Education)</p> <p>Children and young people with care experience will receive all they need to thrive at school.</p> <p>There will be no barriers to their engagement with education and schools will know and cherish their care experienced pupils.</p> <p>The formal and informal exclusion of children and young people with care experience from education will end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the impact of the intensive Edge of Care Pilot at Lochside and Northfield Academies to inform next steps for school session 23/24 and beyond. • Building connections for care experienced communities in schools. 	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>In target schools:</p> <p>% attendance of children and young people who are looked after (Baseline 76%)</p> <p>% of children and young people who are looked after attending full time (Baseline 10%)</p> <p>Number of temporary half day exclusions for children who are looked after (Baseline 383 half days)</p>	<p>Education and Children Social Work</p>

Strategic Outcome 5: Ensure 'care' is an experience in which children are valued as individuals, and where support addresses their strengths as well as their needs				
Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
<p>The Promise</p> <p>Organisations that have responsibilities towards children and young people with care experience will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding destigmatising language and practices across the way they work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh and roll out multi-agency Corporate Parenting training. 	March 2025	% of children's workforce, Chief Officers, Elected Members, and all corporate parents who complete Corporate Parenting training aligned to the Promise (Baseline to be added).	Corporate Parenting Group
<p>We will promote the voice of all children and young people in decision-making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the use of alternative communication systems to elicit the voices of children and young people with care experience with disabilities. 	2026	The number of children with disabilities who have access to a professional utilising their alternative communication system at looked after reviews.	<p>Corporate Parenting Group</p> <p>Aligns with CP project of ASN&D</p>
<p>Partners across Children's Services will have the skills and competencies they require to deliver high quality services when working with our children, young people and their families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a new framework of support for staff to ensure people involved in the care of children and young people with care experience feel valued, encouraged and have supportive relationships for reflection with high quality supervision and environmental conditions. 		Number of staff who have undertaken the National Trauma Training Programme to a level appropriate to their role.	<p>Corporate Parenting Group</p> <p>Aligns with Children's Services Board</p>

Strategic Outcome 6: Ensure physical or mental health concerns are identified early and addressed quickly

Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
All children and young people will have access to holistic health support as soon as they enter care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve take-up and timescales for Initial Health Assessments (IHA). • Children and young people entering care will be referred to services that can meet assessed mental health needs within 4 weeks of the referral being made. 		<p>Monitoring of IHA data.</p> <p>Number of young people in care accessing services to meet assessed mental health needs within timescales (New measure).</p>	NHS G
Children and young people with care experience will have access to the same routine medical checks and health promotion initiatives as their peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of placement moves children and young people experience in care. • Where a placement move has occurred, we will seek to ensure continuation of medical investigation/treatment and access to routine care and health promotion initiatives in line with child's age and stage of development. • Where routine opportunities have been missed, supplementary support will be provided. 		<p>Number of placement moves</p> <p>School Nurses to develop tracking system to ensure routine opportunities to meet health needs are not missed or where missed, supplemented.</p> <p>Data from Leaving Care Assessments will evidence reduction in health inequalities/missed opportunities. (Leaving Care assessments to be established)</p>	Corporate Parenting Group
Ensure that priority is given to meeting the mental health and health care needs of children and young people with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people leaving care will be referred to services that can meet assessed mental health needs within 4 	March 2024	Number of young people in care accessing services to meet assessed mental health needs (New measure).	Mental Health Collaborative

<p>care experience in a manner compliant with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill (as enacted).</p>	<p>weeks of the health assessment being completed.</p>		<p>% of children and young people leaving care referred to service that can meet mental health needs within 4 weeks of the health assessment being completed (Baseline to be established)</p>	
<p>Approaches to mental health support for children and young people with care experience should be holistic and relationship-based.</p> <p>Champions Board asks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of CAMHS provision to children and young people with care experience • Extension of CAMHS service up to 25 years old for young people with care experience. • Co-location of health professional at Westburn. 		<p>Review and recommendations.</p> <p>Establishment of service.</p> <p>Successful recruitment to co-located post.</p>	<p>NHS G CAMHS</p>

Strategic Outcome 7: Increase the number of care leavers in education, training and employment

Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
<p>The Promise (Right to Education)</p> <p>Schools will support and ensure young people with care experience go on to genuinely positive and sustained destinations, such as further education or employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the impact of Pathways Associates on care experienced young people's attainment, achievement and positive destinations by 2024 to inform next steps. • Support young people with care experience's participation in college/university outreach initiatives and open days. 		<p>% of young people with care experience entering a positive and sustained destination. (Baseline 76.5% - 20/21)</p> <p>Total tariff points of young people with care experience (L20% 0, M60% 58, H20% 441) – 20/21</p> <p>% of young people with care experience heading into employment (Baseline 0% 2021)</p> <p>% of young people with care experience entering further education (Baseline 35.29% - 2021)</p> <p>Number of young people with care experience being excluded (Baseline 107 half day exclusions over 20/21).</p>	Education Service
<p>Improve access to school leavers in growth or volume sections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed job interview for care experienced in HCSW posts and access to work placements within NHSG 		<p>Number of young people with care experience who access work placements within NHSG (new measure)</p>	NHSG

Strategic Outcome 8: Reduce the number of looked after children and care leavers who enter the justice system

Key Local or National Drivers	Key Actions	By when	How will we know	By Who
<p>The Promise</p> <p>The disproportionate criminalisation of children and young people with care experience will end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency workforce development will be progressed in keeping with trauma specialist approaches: recognising appropriate, proportionate responses to the impact of developmental trauma. Multi agency partners will review/amend/update their local practice and processes on physical restraint of young people with experience of care to align these with trauma informed practices. There will be an improved recognition and responses by the workforce by delivering a comprehensive workforce development programme. 	<p align="center">March 2024</p>	<p>Number of offences linked to young people in local children’s homes recorded by Police Scotland (Baseline to be added)</p> <p>% of young people with care experience charged with an offence (Baseline 83 – 2022)</p>	<p>Police Scotland</p> <p>Youth Justice Group</p>

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