

NORTH AYRSHIRE'S

Corporate Parenting Plan

2023 - 2026



NORTH AYRSHIRE
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

In North Ayrshire, we all believe that ensuring effective support, care, and protection for infants, children and young people who are looked after, is one of the most important responsibilities for agencies, staff, carers and the Care experienced community.

Infants, Children and Young People who are looked after may need extra support, love, time, and positive relationships to help them reach their potential.

We all need to do everything we can to ensure that those that are Care Experienced are safe, nurtured and supported, and that we all work together so that life experiences are positive, and improves life chances.

Over the last few years the term 'Care Experienced' has become prominent in the language to collectively describe those who are or have ever been Looked After. The Care Experienced Attainment Fund National Guidance says this: –

The term 'care experience' is now a widely used term within the sector to describe any person who has experience of being in care, regardless of the placement length, type or age.



Care may have been provided in one of many different settings, such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care or through being looked after at home with a supervision requirement.

"**Corporate parent**" is another term and is used to describe a collection of public bodies that have a duty to work together to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of looked after infants, children, young people and care leavers.

However, it is all our responsibility to work with and alongside families, children, young people and the services that support them.

We all must approach this parenting role with as much passion and commitment as any family would and ensure that all looked after infants, children and young people are given the best start in life and maintain this throughout their lives .

At the end of this plan there is a graphic that lets you know who are our Corporate Parents.

This plan outlines our collective priorities and has been co-produced by the North Ayrshire Champion's Board. Our action plan (separate document) is based on the 'Promise', and local priorities'.

All organisations and services within North Ayrshire with corporate parenting responsibilities and the care experienced community are essential contributors to ensuring that care experienced infants, children and young people's outcomes are as good as those for any other children.

Delivering positive outcomes for care experienced children and young people is a key priority for the Community Planning Partnership and its partners. We must now make sure that these priorities are put into practice and that the commitment to those who are Care Experienced is delivered through the implementation of this plan and tangible actions

North Ayrshire has committed to #KeepThePromise which provides a benchmark for corporate parents, carers, practitioners, managers, care experienced community, and decision makers in fulfilling the goal to meet the collective and individual needs of all of our Care Experienced infants, children and young people.



In 2017 an Independent Care Review was carried out over a three year period focusing on the Children's Care System in Scotland. The Review not only listened to Care Experienced young people but had them at the centre of their research and enquires. The Review produced a number recommendations on what needs to change in the care system and challenges Corporate Parents to work alongside children, young people and their families to make these changes happen. This plan will incorporate some of these recommendations, so that all care experienced children and young people can have the best start in life and continued success into adulthood. They have developed five foundation principles. These are:-



VOICE



FAMILY



CARE



PEOPLE



SCAFFOLDING

For further explanation on these Five Promise Foundations please see :- [Foundations of the promise – The Promise](#)

North Ayrshire



Number of Looked after children and young people

Date	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of CYP Looked After	531	533	523	470	450
At Home	170	169	160	139	141
Away from Home	361	364	363	331	309

In the last 5 years,

17% (n = 29) reduction in CYP looked after at home
14% (n= 52) reduction in CYP looked after away from home
15% (n = 81) reduction in total numbers of looked after CYP

Of the 81 CYP no longer under looked after :

57% (n=46) are living with parents
17% (n=14) are living with friends /relatives
4% (n=11) remain in continuing care
4% (n=3) have moved into their own tenancy
3% (n=2) have moved into supported accommodation and
5% (n=4) other

10.7% increase in young people in kinship care placements

Significant increase in numbers of young people requesting continuing care (n=3 to n= 57) in 4 years



Every corporate parent is expected to fulfil the duties contained in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. These duties include:

Core elements of this Plan

- The rights and views of Looked After Children and Young People will be considered when designing services and interventions
- Partnership working and close collaboration between Corporate Parents.
- Measurable promises made to Looked After children and young people
- Actions to progress the six duties within the 2014 Act.



Vision, Values and High level priorities

Our collective plan focusses on key areas which have been identified by children and young people as being important to them.

Embedded within these priorities is a commitment to supporting looked after infants, children, young people and care leavers to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with those who are important to them.

Together we have set out our priorities for the period April 2023 to March 2026 and identified the actions we will undertake to achieve these and the measures we will use to make sure they have made a difference to infants, children and young people's lives.

Throughout all we do we will ensure that rights are protected and the 4 guiding principles of the the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are the basis for all that we do. These are that Children and Young People:-

- shouldn't be discriminated against (Article 2)
- should have their best interests accounted for as a primary consideration (Article 3)
- have the right to survive and develop (Article 6)
- have the right to have their views heard and taken seriously (Article 12)

High level priorities

Prevention and early help

Focusing on those who need the most support

Commitment to reducing child poverty

Further embedding Getting it Right for Every Child

Listening/voice/use of technology

Consider our children in care who still live at home with their families

Education and Work

Health & Leisure activities

Training (Trauma aware and informed) & raising awareness

Events/activists led by Children and Young People

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Use of intelligence and data to inform practice

Support for care leavers

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The Care Experienced community and Corporate Parents make a promise to all Care experienced children, young people and their families. This Promise is that endeavours will be made to involve you in the decisions that affect your life. This will be carried out by giving you the opportunity to:-

- join our 'Champions Board'
- be involved in interviews for staff members
- be involved in operational groups looking at changing practice. e.g The Promise Operational Group (PrOG etc)
- be involved in planning and supporting events
- be involved in groups at school and in the community that are for Care Experienced children, young people and their families.
- have your say on your plan.
- be involved in the redesign of processes, paperwork and what language you want to be used about you.
- join focus groups looking at a particular topic.
- help design our social media communications

Our Corporate Parenting Team and other Corporate Parents will endeavour to reach out to you check if you want to be involved in any of the above. Contact us on corporateparenting@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Our generic promises to you as your Corporate Parents



- ✓ **Involve you in all decisions made about you and in designing new ways of working.**
- ✓ **Take account of your rights when working with you and/or supporting you.**
- ✓ **Support you to have positive family time and with friends.**
- ✓ **Create forums where we can better understand your issues, life experiences and the impact this has had on the care experienced community.**
- ✓ **Provide opportunities for you to come and talk to us, have taster days, shadow workers etc**
- ✓ **Do everything we can to help you achieve your potential within education, employment and having the life skills to lead an independent life**
- ✓ **Identify and promote care leavers needs and achievements by celebrating their achievements.**
- ✓ **Support and provide you with opportunities for you to seek employment, further education or training**
- ✓ **Create stronger links with the North Youth Citizenship and Participation Strategy ensuring your voices are included through structures like the executive Youth Council, MSYPs and Joint Youth Forums**
- ✓ **Allocate spaces identified for care experienced young people to access mental health and wellbeing peer support training, accreditation and form part of the mental health ambassador programme.**

How?

We have already set up an 'Corporate Parenting Steering Group', and a 'Promise Operational Group' (PrOG). Children and Young peoples voices are represented on both these Groups. There are also a number of other ways Care Experienced people can get involved.

This Steering Group and PrOG have been set up to identify the Corporate Parenting Duties and 'Promise' priorities and actions. This will result in developing new ways of working and how we monitor what we said we would all do.

The most important factor is that we all work together, children, young people, parents and carers, and all Corporate Parents

Action Plan

We will have an action plan that sets out what we say we are going to do, when it has to be done by, who is going to do it and how we will know the action has made a difference.



What now?

The Corporate Parenting Steering Group and the PrOG are all meeting regularly and setting out plans to take forward the promises above.

We have a particular focus on the following right now and are progressing all of these



Language and Stigma -

Our Champions Board have written an Anti Discriminatory and stigma policy for all Corporate Parents. We hope to launch a campaign this year.



The PrOG has a Communication and Language sub Group who this year Will develop.

- A New North Ayrshire Will Keep The Promise' Social Media Channel
- Form a Care Experienced Youth Exec Group, and
- Hold a 'Let's Talk About Language Day'



All interviews for posts within the H&SCP that have an impact on Care Experienced people will have Care Experience Young People involved in the interview.

Corporate Parents

