

Corporate Parenting Partnership: Terms of Reference

Purpose

To lead on behalf of the Council and partners of the Local Authority to ensure that all services directly provided for children and young people in care and care leavers are delivered to a high standard and to all statutory requirements.

To raise the aspiration, ambitions and life chances of children and young people in care, narrowing the gap of achievement and outcomes between children in care and their peers.

To ensure that children in care are protected and supported to develop as healthy citizens, able to participate fully in their community.

To ensure that all elected members are aware of their corporate parenting responsibilities and that all Council services are mindful of the needs of children in care and respond accordingly within their particular remit.

Functions of the Partnership

To receive regular reports in relation to the adoption, fostering, commissioning, children looked after services, care leavers and the virtual school with a view to identifying any areas of underperformance and recommending any changes.

To ensure that the principles of corporate parenting are incorporated within key plans, policies and strategies of the Council including interagency working arrangements.

To review reports relating to complaints from looked after children to ensure officers have dealt with these appropriately and made any recommendations for change.

To raise awareness in Gateshead Council and amongst its partners and the wider community by promoting the role of members as corporate parents and the Council as a corporate family with key responsibilities;

To raise the profile of the needs and achievements of children looked after and care leavers through a range of celebratory events/activities determined by children looked after and care leavers.

To ensure that leisure, cultural, further education and employment opportunities are provided and taken up by our children looked after and care leavers.

To ensure that the views of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Panel to improve educational, health and social outcomes.

To meet with children and young people in care, frontline staff and foster carers to inform the panel of the standards of care and improvement outcomes for children looked after.

To monitor the ongoing commitment to providing support, training and clarity of expectations for foster carers to provide excellent and high quality care.

To appoint elected members as Champions for Children in Care in respect of the following strands:

- Housing

- Employment and training opportunities within council departments and with partner agencies
- Health (including mental health)
- Educational Attainment and access to Higher Education
- Foster carer recruitment and retention
- Response to those who go missing.

Children in Care Council (One Voice)

Representatives from the Children in Care Council will regularly contribute to the Corporate Parenting Partnership through methods and approaches agreed with children looked after and care leavers.

Work Programme

The Corporate Parenting Partnership will meet every three months, supported by an annual work programme to be reviewed at each meeting. In reviewing the work programme, the Partnership may request reports on particular matters of their own preference or as advised by the lead officer.

Performance Monitoring

The Corporate Parenting Partnership will regularly scrutinise and monitor outcomes for children in care and care leavers. The Partnership’s work will be underpinned by a core data set considered at each meeting. Additional detailed monitoring reports will be presented in accordance with the agreed work programme.

Membership of the Partnership

The membership of the Partnership will include an Elected Member of the Council appointed in accordance with political balance requirements.

Other Members of the Council will be invited to discuss issues and raise questions within a standing agenda item.

The Executive Lead responsible for Children will chair the partnership and be supported by at least one vice chairperson agreed within the group. If the chair or vice chairperson leaves, then these arrangements will be reviewed.

Membership will also include a foster carer and representatives from the Children in Care Council.

Membership of the Partnership and workstreams will include key partners to support the delivery of key priorities including but not exclusive to:

Responsible Role

Assistant Strategic Director, Social Work – Children & Families
 Service Manager, Looked After Children
 Designated Nurse for Looked After Children

 Named Nurse for Looked After Children
 Looked After Children’s Team
 Children and Young People’s Rights Officer
 Virtual School Head
 Fostering Team
 Commissioning
 Libraries, Arts & Heritage
 The Gateshead Housing Company
 Youth Offending Team
 Safeguarding and Care Planning Team
 Assessment and Intervention Team

Name

Andrea Houlahan
 Jill Little
 Ellen Robinson
 Linda Hubbucks
 Jean Hubble
 Beverley Hunter-Smith
 Chris Hulme
 Jean Thompson
 Martin Hanson
 Andi Parker
currently vacant
 Penny St Bernard
 Emma Blackwell
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Workstreams

Workstream groups will be established to drive forward the Partnership's three year Operational Plan. Each workstream will be lead by a member of the Corporate Parenting Partnership and membership made up from a range of professionals and partners appropriate to the function of the group.

Workstreams established for 2021-2024 shall include:

Arts, Leisure and Culture	Lead: <i>currently vacant</i>
Education, Training and Employment	Lead: Jean Thompson
Health	Lead: Linda Hubbucks
Participation	Lead: Chris Hulme
Placements and Accommodation	Lead: Andi Parker
Care Leavers	Lead: Beverley Hunter-Smith
Performance	Lead: <i>currently vacant</i>

The membership of each workstream will be reviewed at least annually to ensure that it is appropriate for the function of the group.

Frequency of Workstream Meetings

Workstream groups should meet at least twice between each quarterly Partnership meeting, however the size and focus of these meetings will be at the discretion of the Workstream Lead in accordance with the actions and responsibilities of the group. For education groups, meetings will take place once a term as a minimum requirement.

Officer support

Every member should understand their role as Corporate Parent and ensure their regular attendance at all meetings including Workstream meetings, or else provide a delegate to attend in their absence to ensure continued sufficient officer support.

Training

Appropriate training will be commissioned for members of the Corporate Parenting Partnership as required and will form part of the Member's Development Programme.

Frequency of Partnership Meetings

Partnership Meetings will be every three months preceded with agenda setting informed by the members of the Partnership, annual work programme, performance monitoring and the views of children looked after and care leavers.

Reporting Mechanisms

The Corporate Parenting Partnership will report to the Gateshead Safeguarding Children's Board the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Performance Clinic Quality Board as required.