

Corporate Parenting Strategy for Children and Families Services in Portsmouth 2017 - 2020



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL



Portsmouth City Council Corporate Parenting Board. L-R: Alison Jeffery, Adam Murphy, Chloe Geer, Ashley Murphy, Debbie Price, Kate Freeman, Tina Henley, Sarah Newman, Shyreen Holmes , Sarah Shore, Karley Middleton, Cllr Ryan Brent, Charley Pitt, Adam Shepherd, Cllr Rob Wood, Jackie Clark



Contents

▪ 1	Foreword	5	▪ Appendix 1 - Legislation	22
▪ 2	Letter from the Leader of the Council	6	▪ Appendix 2 - Our Pledge	24
▪ 3	Our Commitment and Vision	7	▪ Appendix 3 - Corporate Parenting Board Terms of Reference	28
▪ 4	The Portsmouth Context	9		
▪ 5	The role and responsibilities of councillors, council departments and other partners	12		
	▪ All Council Services	13		
	▪ Children and Families Services	13		
	▪ The Virtual School	14		
	▪ Schools, Colleges and other Education Providers	14		
	▪ Health Service Providers	15		
	▪ Housing Providers	15		
	▪ Community Organisations	15		
	▪ Children in Care Council	15		
	▪ Foster carers	15		
	▪ Residential carers	15		
▪ 6	Leadership and the Corporate Parenting Board	16		
▪ 7	Measures of Success	19		

1

Foreword

Hi there,

We are really pleased to write this foreword so that you know what we as children and young people who are in the care of Portsmouth City Council would like from you, as you are acting in the role of our corporate parents.

Like any young person, we want to feel safe where we live and the places we go.

We would like you to provide us with a good education and support us when we find school or college difficult.

We believe that young people should know their full entitlements and be supported to access them when we need them.

We want to be taken seriously - we want our views to be listened to and taken notice of. We want you to respect we are all individuals and we would like you to support us to develop our own identity and interests.



We look forward to working with you.

Lawa Rashid

Chair Portsmouth Children in Care Council

2

Letter from the Leaders of the Council

We want Portsmouth to be the very best place for all our children to grow up. All parents want the very best for their children, and as the Leader of Portsmouth City Council and Lead Member for Children's Social Care we want to ensure that we are doing all we can to support our looked after children.

As corporate parents we want to afford the very best care and affection for children in our care and ensure we are building bright futures. To do this we need to be ambitious and we need to work together so that you fulfil your full potential.

To clarify our commitment, as corporate parent to you, we have developed this strategy, which sets out our vision and how we will seek to provide the very best care, support and guidance for you.

We want to hear the views of children in care so that together we are creating the right environment for our staff and our carers to do the very best for you.

Kind Regards



**Cllr Gerald
Vernon-Jackson**
Leader, Portsmouth
City Council



Cllr Rob Wood
Lead Member
for Children and
Families Services



Alison Jeffery
Director Children,
Families and
Education

3

Our Commitment and Vision

This strategy sets out Portsmouth City Council's vision and commitment, explaining how we will be an effective and trustworthy corporate parent for any child or young person who is in our care irrespective of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, faith or disability.

We will also ensure our young people receive good quality advice and support when they leave care.

Every good parent knows that children require a safe and secure environment in which to grow and thrive. Parents protect and support their children against the dangers and risks of life. Parents are ambitious for them and want them to reach their potential. Parents celebrate and share in their achievements and a good parent is also a good listener, who responds positively to what their children say.

A child who is cared for by the council has the right to expect everything from a corporate parent that would be expected from a good parent.

We will preface all our thinking, planning, actions and decisions with: 'If this was my child I would...'

- Know our children; their needs, talents and aspirations and promote their interests
- Hold high aspirations for their future and expect the best for and from them
- Take an interest in their successes and problems and show our pride in their achievements, and celebrate them
- Listen to their views and ensure they influence practice, service developments and policy
- Ensure they are consulted and involved about their own lives and plans
- Recognise, support and respect their identity in all aspects
- Promote and support high academic and vocational achievement
- Support their health and emotional wellbeing and resilience through access to the right services at the right time
- Support transition to adult life; promoting their economic prospects and preparing them to become responsible citizens
- Learn from outcomes of complaints from children and young people

For corporate parenting to be effective it needs commitment from all elected members and council employees in a council-wide approach. The whole council needs to be involved, as well as our partners, all acting as good parents, committing resources and working together to improve the lives of all children and young people in our care and care leavers.

It is about listening to what children and young people want, supporting them to make the most of their lives and providing services that meet their needs.

We will ensure that we:

- Act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our children and young people
- Encourage our children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- Take into account the views, wishes and feelings of our children and young people
- Help our children and young people to gain access to and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its partners
- Promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for our children and young people
- Our children and young people are safe and stable in their home, relationships and education or work
- Prepare our children and young people for adulthood and independent living

4

The Portsmouth Context - Looked After Children and Care Leavers



We aim to support the majority of our children and young people within their own families and communities. However, for a small number this is not possible and they require alternative care arrangements (either in the short term or long term)

Children and young people are in care either by a court order or with the agreement of their parent(s) or guardian(s). A child or young person may come into care as a result of temporary or permanent problems facing their parents, as a result of abuse, neglect or a range of difficulties.

The delivery of support for children and young people who are in care and care leavers is underpinned by a number of key pieces of legislation and guidance which are listed at Appendix 1.

Children and young people in care are individuals, they come from all walks of life and have different aspirations, ambitions and cultural identities. Corporate parenting is the term used for the collective responsibility of the council and partners to ensure safe, meaningful and effective protection of children and young people in care and care leavers.

Many looked after children and care leavers are at greater risk of social exclusion than their peers, both because of their experiences prior to coming into care, and by virtue of the fact that they are in care. It is essential, as a corporate parent, we ensure that their experience of being in care is a positive and supportive one that maximises their full potential as they move into adult life.

Portsmouth's children in care and care leavers placement profile at March 2017

358 children in care

49 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in care

Rate of care 81.74 per 10,000

169 Children in care living with foster families

189 Children living outside the local authority area

14% living more than 20 miles away

96 Care leavers

The number of children in the care of Portsmouth City Council increased by 11.18% last year (2016-17) and this year we are expecting the number to remain high. At the end of March 2017 there were 358 number of children in care (a rate of 81.74 per 10,000). This 'rate of care' is slightly above the average for our statistical neighbour group and is higher than the national average of 60 per 10,000. The increase in children in care locally correlates with the high numbers of unaccompanied minors coming into the city.

Of all our children in care, 169 (47%) live within the local authority area and most of our children in care (276 or 77%) live with foster families. The majority of children who live out of the area live in adjacent local authorities.

The percentage of children living in children's homes remains at 4% (which is lower than the national average of 8%).

The composition of our looked after children population has changed over the last year with higher numbers of 14-17 year olds (43% increase).

At 31 March 2017 the ratio of looked after girls to boys was 37% to 63%, which is a change from previous years at 34% to 66%. The national picture is 45% girls and 55% boys.

The pattern of ethnicity of looked after children in Portsmouth is changing - reflecting the increasing numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

White British	275
Any other ethnic group	23
White other	16
Arab	9
Black/Black British African	9
Mixed other	7
Mixed white and Asian	7
Mixed white and black African	5
White Irish	4
Mixed white and black Caribbean	2
Asian/Asian British other	1

The educational achievement of our looked after children requires further improvement, particularly at key stage 4. GCSE results improved slightly in 2016 with 30% of Portsmouth's looked after children achieving five or more GCSEs grade A*-C including English and Maths.

78% of our 16 and 17 year olds in care are in education, employment or training.

53% of care leavers were in education, employment or training at the end of March 2017. This meant we were ranked 8 out of 11 statistical neighbours and this needs to be improved.

5

The role and responsibilities of councillors, council departments and other partners

All services that support looked after children need to work as corporate parents, and are all accountable to the children and young people who are looked after in Portsmouth. We must all strive for children in our care to succeed in the same way that any parent would strive for their own child or children. This can mean providing advice and guidance to a young person who is starting to live independently, supporting carers, ensuring that children's mental health is safeguarded, helping a young person find a job, or listening to their hopes and dreams, problems and insecurities. There is a wide range of people and organisations who need to work together.

All councillors...

Need to be aware of their corporate parenting responsibilities and must:

- Have a clear understanding and awareness of the issues for looked after children and care leavers in the city and those placed outside of the city.
- Champion the interests of looked after children and care leavers.
- Ask questions about outcomes for looked after children and care leavers
- Communicate with looked after children and care leavers so that they can have a say in how decisions are made about the services that affect

them, and so that they can influence those decisions. This may include some councillors engaging with the Children in Care Council

- Lead on securing work-based training opportunities, including apprenticeships for care leavers within the council and its partners and contractors to improve their future prospects
- Be equally mindful and responsive in their role of corporate parent to children placed out of the city
- Question whether the council as corporate parent is keeping the promise it has made in the Corporate Parenting Pledge (see Appendix 2) and the Care Leavers' Charter
- Demand evidence of positive outcomes for Portsmouth's looked after children
- Ask how all elements of council business has an impact for looked after children
- Make connections and links between council plans, strategies and decision-making for looked after children
- Consistently ask 'Would this be good enough for my own child?'

All Council Services...

All councillors and council officers share corporate parenting responsibilities and cannot abdicate this responsibility.

Portsmouth's most important collective contribution to corporate parenting is how we as the 'family firm' in all council departments, can deliver better graduate schemes, employment, apprenticeship, traineeship and work experience opportunities for looked after children and most importantly care leavers up to the age of 25 years. These opportunities are designed to:

- Offer care leaver graduates the opportunities to work in a graduate scheme
- Help young people meet their potential and achieve their ambitions, hopes and aspirations
- Help them become confident individuals
- Give them the taste of the world of work
- Broaden their horizons from little or no work experience or employment options
- Help them become economically and socially contributing citizens

Children and Families Services...

Corporate parenting principles will form part of the staff induction programme. The quality of relationships that young people have with their carers and the professionals closest to them is crucial to their success whilst in, and leaving care. Young people who are looked after have told us again and again about their need for good relationships that provide love, stability and continuity in the home and in learning. Their need to be listened to and involved in decision making and most of all, their need to be parented like other children. This is the basis of our strategy. A good corporate parent encompasses our Pledge to looked after children (see Appendix 2) and the leaving care charter for our care leavers and supports the gap between being parented by birth parents to being in the care of, or leaving the care of, the local authority.

5


The role and responsibilities of councillors, council departments and other partners

The Virtual School and college...

Portsmouth's virtual school for looked after children is responsible for providing leadership, strategic direction and partnership working with schools to secure successful educational outcomes for all looked after children and young people. It maintains an overview of all looked after children to ensure they can sustain a school place and has in place support designed to meet their individual needs. The relationship between being looked after and poor educational outcomes can be explained in part by the trauma of pre-care experiences such as physical or sexual abuse and neglect. In addition, many looked after children have had gaps in their education, which can sometimes be a continuing significant factor whilst they are looked after. Looked after children are more likely to be excluded from education than their peers. However, the assumption being that being looked after leads to poor outcomes is incorrect. Educational targets are often set too low, are not sufficiently challenging, or the support required for a child who is not attaining educationally is not provided. Accelerated progress targets would better reflect our ambition for looked after children, accompanied by appropriate and targeted support, having proper regard to the use of the pupil premium for each and every child and young person in our care.

Schools, Colleges and other Education Providers...

Have a range of responsibilities including ensuring that every looked after child has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and is supported to achieve. Maintaining children looked after and care leavers in school, and working hard to avoid exclusions is an important part of achieving this. All schools should have a designated teacher with special responsibility for looked after children. School governors have statutory responsibilities, which include monitoring the progress made by looked after children. Schools must engage with the Virtual School and respect the role of the Corporate Parent.



We aim to ensure that our children are placed in Good schools appropriate to their needs and we try to avoid school changes



Tina Henley,
Virtual
School Head

Health Service Providers...

Have important responsibilities for improving the health, both physical and emotional, of all looked after children. Health assessments must be undertaken and Specialist nurses for looked after children must ensure that Personal Health Plans (Health Passports) are developed with the child or young person and that they are fully implemented. Transitions to adult health services will be managed sensitively and with full cooperation with young people.

Housing Providers...

Have an essential role to play in working with Portsmouth City Council to provide enough good-quality accommodation for care leavers who are ready to live more independently, and provide a range of move-on accommodation for care leavers wanting to move from more supported accommodation.

Community Organisations...

There is a wide range of community organisations throughout Portsmouth, who provide important services and support for looked after children and care leavers, including advice and guidance, mentoring, supported housing, and drug and alcohol services. These services are vital to the task of preventing care leavers from needing the intervention of statutory services.

Children in Care Council (CiCC)...

In Portsmouth we are committed to listening to the views of the children we work with and working with them in the planning and delivery of services.

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) will continue to be a key group in assisting the council to deliver our corporate parenting strategy. The group will undertake specific tasks and projects on behalf of all our looked after children and care leavers and continue to represent Portsmouth at various national forums. They play a key role in the recruitment of staff and carers; and contribute to service developments.

Foster carers...

In Portsmouth we value our foster carers and acknowledge the work that they do. We have a strong fostering liaison group who will continue to assist us in developing the best care arrangements for our children and young people. We are working with foster carers to strengthen staying put arrangements for our young people.



Residential carers...

We recognise that some young people cannot live in family settings and we provide in-house provision across two sites. We also commission specialist residential provision outside Portsmouth where appropriate.

6

Leadership and the Priorities of the Corporate Parenting Board

- This strategy will be adopted by full council. The Portsmouth City Council Cabinet Member for Children and Families has the lead political role in ensuring this strategy is taken forward and the Director of Children, Families and Education provides the strategic service leadership. The Corporate Parenting Board will be responsible for the delivery of the identified key objectives and the Board's annual plan.
 - The Portsmouth Corporate Parenting Board will lead and support all corporate parenting activity of Portsmouth City Council and its partner organisations. The Board will have wide representation including elected members and officers. The Board has formal accountabilities to the City Council and it also has important relationships with the Health Service and Police, as well as partnerships such as the Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
 - The Corporate Parenting Board will act as a leadership, advisory and consultative body to the Council and its partners and will provide challenge to ensure that Corporate Parenting duties are carried out effectively and consistently. It will ensure that the outcomes and life chances of looked after children and care leavers are maximised, so they are in line with their peers, and will act as the champion for these children and young people. It is the role of the Corporate Parenting Board, to monitor the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, our looked after children and the care leavers.
 - The Board will hold the Council and its partners to account if there are gaps in service provision to looked after children, or in the performance of their corporate parenting responsibilities. The Board will have access to good qualitative and quantitative management information in order to monitor performance effectively against outcomes, and track delivery of the Pledge commitments. Individual Board members must attend appropriate training to be prepared for their task.
- See Appendix 3 for the Terms of Reference for the Board.

Priorities

Taking account of the performance outcomes for looked after children and care leavers in 2017/18, the key priorities for this updated strategy are to:

Reduce demand for placements

Achieve permanence for more children

Ensure sufficiency of placement types and remodel services to meet the needs of our looked after children and care leavers

Improve placement stability

More care leavers in education, employment and training

Improved emotional health and resilience

Reducing offending of our looked after children and care leavers

7

Measures of success - How do we know if our services to Looked After Children are Good?

Last year 25% of children in care completed an annual survey to tell us about the standard of our care. Of these children:

- 100% of Looked After Children who completed the survey stated they feel safe and well cared for.
- 71% of the children, young people and parents who completed the survey said the education support provided was good.
- 91% children and young people who completed the survey said the health support provided was good.
- 89% of Looked After Children have said the support provided by IROs is good all the time or sometimes.
- 69% of Looked After Children who completed the survey say they feel contact is supported well.
- 83% of Care Leavers who completed the survey feel involved in their Pathway Plans.

Whilst we are making progress against a number of key performance indicators, our data last year indicates that we can do more to achieve greater stability for children in care (both through placements and fewer changes in social workers) and better learning outcomes and work opportunities for children in care and our care leavers. We will ensure our workforce have the right knowledge and skills to meet the needs of our unaccompanied minors; and that we are working with children to promote healthy development, behaviours and relationships.

Young people have said:

'There is no better way my personal advisor could support me! She is a very helpful person and excellent at her job'

'My IRO listens to me, and encourages and believes in me; which is positive.'

'My social worker is very helpful and supports me as much as she can'

'You are doing a good job'

'They have found me a really good family, and support me really well'

'My social worker talks to me and has very good chats with me, we do fun things'

'More support for care leavers. Listen to the children, try to understand, and not make out that you know what they have been through'

We will determine the success of this strategy by paying particular attention to:

1. Reducing demand for placements by:

- a)** Strengthening Early Help and Edge of Care services, particularly with adolescents
- b)** Working with regional and national partners to reduce the number of UASC
- c)** Increasing the numbers of children returning home through robust reunification practice

2. Achieving permanence for more children by:

- a)** Developing the regional adoption agency (RAA) to increase the numbers and suitability of adoptive families
- b)** Increasing the numbers of, and support for, Special Guardianship placements

3. Ensure sufficiency of placement types and remodel services to meet the needs of our looked after children and care leavers by:

- a)** Increasing the numbers of in-house foster care placements to match anticipated demand and re-profile carers to meet need
- b)** Reconfiguring in-house residential provision to meet need
- c)** Improving commissioning arrangements for out-of-city residential placements to reduce cost and increase stability
- d)** Developing a wider range of accommodation options in line with new care leavers offer including Staying Put placements
- e)** Delivering Staying Close Innovation project

4. Improve placement stability by:

- a)** Improving care planning in support of much better matching
- b)** Strengthening placement planning and support
- c)** Targeting support at children experiencing multiple placement disruptions
- d)** Introducing a trauma-informed model of care

5. Strengthening the learning support available through our virtual school so as to improve education attendance and attainment and creating more opportunities for our looked after children and care leavers to remain in education or gain access to training and employment.

6. We recognise that the key to success for many young people is emotional wellbeing and resilience. We will introduce a framework for our workforce to better understand wellbeing and resilience and ensure the workforce has appropriate training and we will expect to see improvement in Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire scores.

7. Reducing offending of our looked after children by:

- a)** Implementing the revised joint agency protocol
- b)** Improving joint agency working

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- Placement Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2017-2020
- Virtual School Action Plan
- Health of Looked After Children Action Plan
- Reducing Offending Action Plan



Appendix 1 - Legislation

In Portsmouth we are working hard to implement the reforms that have been brought about by the Children & Families Act 2014 and the Adoption and Care Planning amendments (Fostering and Adoption).

- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Children (Leaving Care) 2000
- Children and Adoption Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Independent Review of Determinations (Adoption and Fostering) Regulations 2009
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- SEND Code of Practice, 0–25 years 2015 (replaces SEN Code of Practice 2001 – although this remains valid until 2018 for people who entered the SEND support system before September 2014).
- The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 (as amended by the Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014.
- The Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- The Care Planning, Placement & Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended by:
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.
 - Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014.
 - The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.
- Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009

A²

Appendix 2 - Our Pledge

Pledge Statement	Indicator
<p>Pledge 1</p> <p>We promise to support you when you are coming into care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the percentage of looked after children who have a timely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Care plan b) Health assessment; and c) Personal education plan within 20 days of entering care • Increasing the number of foster carers recruited • Reducing the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted • Reducing the time it takes for prospective adopters to be assessed, approved and having a child/children placed with them.
<p>Pledge 2</p> <p>We promise to do everything we can to keep you safe and happy while living in care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the placement stability of looked after children, in particular, the percentage who have been in the same placement for more than two years. • Increasing the number of looked after children in Portsmouth City Council foster care Reducing the number of looked after children with three or more social workers in the year • Reducing the percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in the year Increasing the percentage of all looked after children services (including individual services such as fostering and children's homes) graded by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding • Increasing the number of children placed for adoption or placed through a special guardianship order (including family and friend placements) • Reducing the number of children and young people who re-enter care within 12 months of returning home • Ensuring that children and young people who are identified as being at high risk of sexual exploitation are receiving specialist support/service and that risk decreases • Reduce the numbers of young people missing from care and ensure that all young people have the opportunity to have an independent return interview and that we learn from the interviews

A²

Appendix 2 - Our Pledge

Pledge Statement	Indicator
<p>Pledge 3</p> <p>We promise to support your relationship with friends and family as much as we can</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the numbers of parents involved in their children’s care plans and looked after children reviews • Increasing the satisfaction looked after children have with the contact they have with their parents and siblings in line with their care plan • Increasing the satisfaction looked after children have with the contact they have with extended family members (aunts, uncles and grandparents) friends and significant others in the children and young person’s life, especially when contact with direct family members (mother, father and siblings) is not possible or often enough
<p>Pledge 4</p> <p>We promise to help you enjoy and achieve in your education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing absence from school for children who have been looked after for 12 months continuously • Reducing the percentage of children in care for at least 12 months with at least one fixed term exclusion from school • Increasing the percentage of looked after children making two full levels of progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 • Increasing the percentage of children in care reaching level 4 in English and Maths at the end of key stage 2 • Increasing the percentage of looked after children achieving five or more A*-C grades including English and Maths, five or more A*-C grades in total, five or more A*-G grades and one or more A*-G grades at GCSE • Ensuring all looked after children are placed in Good or Outstanding schools (based on Ofsted overall ratings) <p>Ensuring all looked after children’s personal education plans are complete, up to date and of a high quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all looked after children have access to a school nurse to support their specific health needs through their education • Increasing the percentage of 16-19 year old looked after children and care leavers in education, employment and training

A²

Appendix 2 - Our Pledge

Pledge Statement	Indicator
<p>Pledge 5</p> <p>We promise to help you prepare for adult life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the number of looked after children and care leavers entering further and higher education and/or participating in structured/accredited training or learning • Reducing the number of looked after children who reoffend whilst in care • Reducing the number of looked after children and care leavers on remand • Reducing the number of looked after children and care leavers serving custodial sentences • Increasing the numbers of looked after children who have an identified accommodation placement post 18 at or within six months of their 16th birthday
<p>Pledge 6</p> <p>We promise to listen and support your rights in having your view heard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the percentage of looked after children who are satisfied with the service they require • Increasing the percentage of looked after children participating in reviews
<p>Pledge 7</p> <p>We promise we will support you to be healthy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring at least 90% of our looked after children have an annual medical and dental check • Increase the number of looked after children with a completed strengths and difficulties questionnaire • Ensure all young people with high level of emotional needs are provided opportunities to develop resilience • Ensuring that physical, emotional and mental health needs of looked after children are met through their annual health plan and the looked after children's health team



Appendix 3 - Terms of Reference

1 Purpose

1.1 To be the accountable body for the City Council and its Children Trust partners in the discharge of corporate parenting responsibilities for children in care and care leavers in Portsmouth as set out in legislation and guidance.

1.2 To champion children in care and care leavers, ensuring a strategic oversight of needs and outcomes and appropriate high quality responses from all partners.

1.3 To provide challenge and scrutiny to all partners in securing the best outcomes for children in care and care leavers by being aspirational and innovative

1.4 To ensure the voice of children and young people in care and care leavers is central to the functioning of the Board and there is effective involvement in the development of policies, services recruitment of staff and improving practice.

2 Functions

2.1 To develop, lead, manage and monitor the Corporate Parenting Strategy as part of the Portsmouth Children's Trust Plan

2.2 To receive and use high quality data to understand where outcomes for children in care and care leavers are good and where they require attention. To agree activity in response to underperformance and drive improvement

2.3 To support and develop systems and processes to ensure the views and opinions of children and young people in care inform, shape and evaluate services for children in care.

2.4 To make commissioning recommendations based on a good understanding of current service delivery for children in care and care leavers, including specialist, targeted and universal services

2.5 To identify and address gaps in service and where there are blockages to service access

2.6 To ensure that all services within Portsmouth City Council are aware of their corporate parenting responsibility and can evidence in Business Plans their contribution to improving life chances of children in care and Care Leavers

2.7 To ensure that all elected Council Members receive regular updates on the well-being of children in care and Care Leavers



Appendix 3 - Terms of Reference

3 Membership

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Board will include the following post holders:

- The Lead Member for Children and Education
- Opposition spokespeople for Children and Education
- The CEO of Portsmouth City Council
- The Director of Children's Services

3.2 There will be representation from:

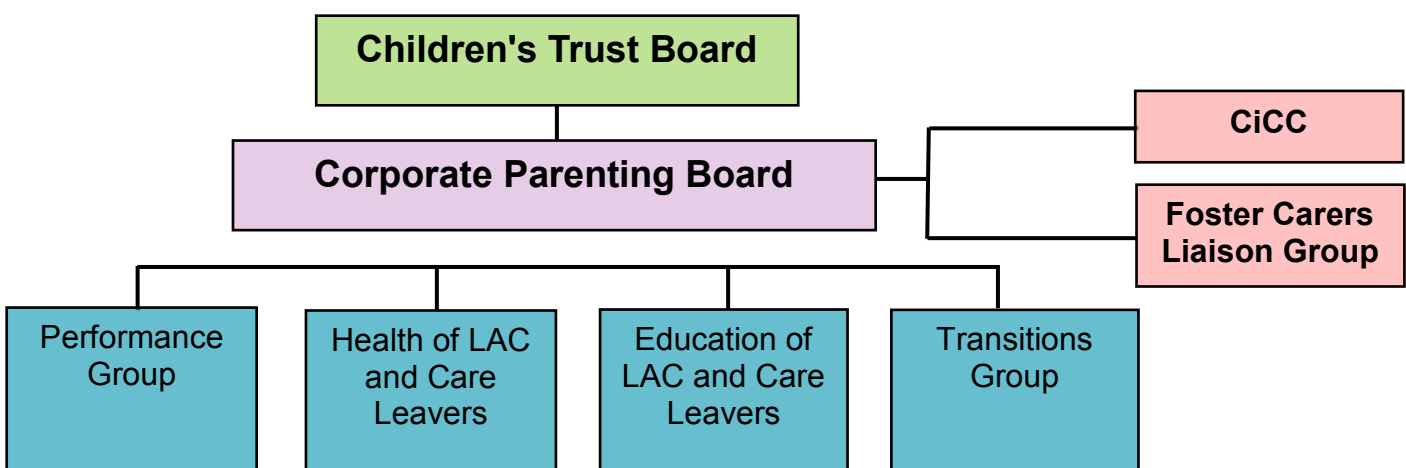
- Children and young people through the Children in Care Council (CiCC)
- Foster carers through the Foster carer Liaison group
- Parent and Carers' Board

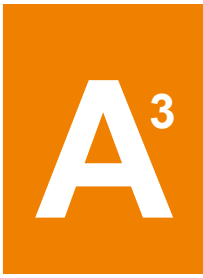
3.3 Senior representatives from the following agencies and services are members of the Board through the wider working group structure:

- Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group
- Solent NHS Trust
- Portsmouth Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Alliance
- Portsmouth City Council - Children's Social Care & Safeguarding
- Portsmouth City Council - Education Service (Chair of E-LAC subgroup)
- Portsmouth City Council - Housing Service
- Portsmouth City Council - Public Health Service (Chair of Health of LAC subgroup)

4. Structure

The Corporate Parenting Board will be made up of four working groups and two consultative groups which will report into the Board.





Appendix 3 - Terms of Reference

5. How the Corporate Parenting Board operates

- 5.1 The Board will meet as a minimum four times a year for 1.5 hours with opportunity for development at least annually
- 5.2 The Board Chair will be the Lead Member for Children's Services of the City Council
- 5.3 Additional members can be co-opted on to the Board for specific periods of time or for specific agenda items.
- 5.4 There will be additional extraordinary meetings, working groups and workshops when necessary.
- 5.5. The Deputy Director for Children's Social Care will ensure the Board is effectively administered including the setting of agenda, minutes and distribution of paperwork.
- 5.6 All Board members will contribute to an annual schedule of reporting (attached)
- 5.7 The Board will be quorate with the attendance of representatives from 3 agencies.
- 5.8 The Board will have a thematic approach to its reporting cycle as follows:
 - January - Education/Employment and Training outcomes
 - May - Accommodation sufficiency
 - September - Qualitative feedback through CIC surveys/IROs/Carers and developmental activities
 - November - Health outcomes
- 5.9 Reports that are for information only will be circulated with the agenda and noted, but not for discussion that are focused on the quarterly theme
- 5.10 Reports will be written in plain English, presented imaginatively and will have a brief executive summary attached, with clear recommendations to the Board.
- 5.11 Board meetings will include 15 minute dedicated time for the CiCC to present key issues for discussion that are focused on the quarterly theme
- 5.12 The three thematic working groups (Education, Health and Transitions) will meet quarterly. Each group will provide an annual report to the Board as per 5.8 above. This allows Board members the opportunity to scrutinise these areas in detail.



Appendix 3 - Terms of Reference

5.14 Minutes will be circulated within 2 weeks of the Board.

5.15 Reports will be shared with the CiCC 3 weeks prior to the Board meetings.

5.16 Members will receive an agenda and papers 5 working days in advance of each meeting.

6. Interface with other Boards

6.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is one of the key partnership bodies that make up the Portsmouth Children's Trust.

6.2 The Portsmouth Youth Offending Board monitors and challenges inter- agency practice in relation to children-in-care and care leavers and their involvement with the criminal justice system.

6.3 The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board monitors and challenges inter- agency practice in relation to safeguarding outcomes for children-in-care and care leavers and sometimes reports on performance.

6.4 Performance monitoring includes quarterly reporting to the Children's Trust and the City Council Strategic Directors Board

7. The Role of Board members

7.1 Corporate Parenting Board members will be clear about their responsibilities as Corporate Parents to our Children in Care and Care Leavers. They must be able to:

- Act as an ambassador for our CiCC and Care Leavers.
- Speak for their organisation or network with authority
- Commit their organisation on policy and practice matters.
- Champion the needs of CiCC and Care Leavers within their organisation and network
- Challenge partners and their own organisation or network to ensure we strive to achieve good outcomes for our children.
- Ensure they attend the Board at least 75% of the time and send a nominated representative from their organisation or network to ensure 100% attendance overall.
- Members will be respectful of others and will ensure their methods of working are cognisant of any confidential matters that arise at the Board.

• Published: **August 2017**