

**West Lothian
Corporate Parenting Plan
2020 – 2023**

<u>Content</u>	<u>Page</u>
Foreword	3
Vision	4
The use of Language	4
Listening to our looked after children and carers	4
What is Corporate Parenting?	6
Duties and responsibilities of Corporate Parents	7
What do we know about West Lothian's Looked After Children	7
What do our Looked After Children tell us	11
Planning Landscape	13
West Lothian priorities	15
Conclusion	17
West Lothian Performance & Action Plan	18

Foreword

As Corporate Parents we are committed to getting it right for every looked after child, young person and care leaver in West Lothian. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 puts Corporate Parenting on a statutory footing and is defined as “**the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers**”.

We are committed and determined to improve the life experiences of our looked after children by narrowing the gap in outcomes between looked after children and young people and their peers. For us this means more love, better understanding of rights and less stigma. We are committed to supporting the Independent Care Reviews vision of Scotland leading the way to be the ‘best care system in the world’.

This Corporate Parenting Plan builds on our previous plan and it is focussed on how partners will work together to tackle the identified outcomes gap. It sits alongside the suite of strategic plans for children’s services with the West Lothian Children’s Services Plan be the overarching plan.

The plan outlines the work of the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group, set out partners’ commitment to making positive change and highlights four areas of priority to be taken forward. The strength of our partnership will be a key driver in making the needed changes happen, alongside clear detailed action planning, robust scrutiny and measurement of progress.

Corporate parenting is not new and has been embraced for some time in West Lothian. We have made positive progress which we will build upon to realise our ambitions for our looked after children and care leavers. We engaged with the Independent Care Review on their **Stop:Go** initiative which allowed us to focus on what is working and what is not working for our looked after children and young people in West Lothian and most importantly what work streams to stop and which to move ahead with to offer a more person centred and holistic style of support.

We are committed to supporting the Independent Care Review’s vision of Scotland leading the way to be the best care system in the world and incorporating recommendations from **The Promise** into working practices throughout West Lothian. The principles that underpin The Promise are consistent with the aspirations and ambitions that we have for our care experienced young people and their families in West Lothian.

Our commitment to continue becoming better corporate parents is underpinned by a long and active tradition of engagement with children and young people. The West Lothian Champions Board is an example of this collaborative relationship between those providing and using services for care experiences children, young people and care leavers. This provides the structures and processes for our looked after children and young people to hold us, as Corporate Parents, to account for the progress that we make on delivering the commitments detailed within this plan.

Engagement and consultation will take place through the life of this plan and an Engagement Strategy will be developed to ensure that we hear and listen to the views of children, young people, families and staff about the approach that we are taking and the priorities we have identified.

As a partnership of corporate parents we look forward to working together to ensure that we improve the lives of West Lothian’s looked after children, young people and care leavers.

Susan McKenzie
Chair
Corporate Parenting Strategic Group

Vision

In West Lothian we believe that every child should have the best start in life to enable them to realise their potential and achieve their aspirations. We want all children to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens and will work to ensure that they are safe, nurtured, healthy, active, included, achieving, respected and responsible.

We have an additional responsibility to children and young people who are looked after and who have left care. We are determined to look after them as we look after our own children. Like any good parent, we want our children and young people to be healthy and happy, to enjoy school and do well there and to be secure and confident individuals.

We are ambitious and aspirational for our looked after children, young people and care leavers and are determined to support them to maximize their potential. We want our children and young people to have loving, respectful relationships and happy lives; to have stable and nurturing homes; have the opportunity to go to college, university or into apprenticeships; find good jobs and have their achievement and successes celebrated. We want them to go into a Positive Destination that is right for them. We want them to be fully included and effective members of our communities and, in the fullness of time, to be good parents themselves.

The Use of Language

We recognise that there has been consideration both locally and nationally as to how we describe our children and young people, and their families to recognise their experience. Within this Plan some terms will be used interchangeably. Due to the current legislative framework in which we have duties and responsibilities, the terms 'looked after children' and 'care leavers' are used as there are rights and entitlements attached to these terms. We do understand that many young people do not wish to be referred to as children, and also that the acronyms of 'LAC or LAAC' or being 'looked after' is not descriptive terms they would wish to recognise instead opting for 'care experience'. There are also times we will refer to the experience as 'lived experience'. As we update this Plan and report on progress, The Promise has been published as an outcome of the Independent Care Review in Scotland. The Promise highlights the use of language as something which requires careful consideration. The aim by 2023 is that we will have actively consulted those with lived experience as to the use of language to accurately describe their experience, and further to that, those with lived experience will be directly involved in writing any future Plans and Strategies.

Listening to our looked after infants, children, young people and carers

In West Lothian we want to ensure that all looked after children, young people, care leavers, parents and carers have the opportunity to have a real say in matters that affect them. We currently have a range of ways of engaging and involving our looked after children and carers including:

- ❖ Having Your Say forum
- ❖ Viewpoint
- ❖ Advocacy services and Children's Rights service
- ❖ Residential House Activities
- ❖ Carers Consultative Forum
- ❖ Kinship Care Group

❖ Champions Board

Looked after children and carers are also actively encouraged to attend all meetings where their needs and outcomes are to be discussed. If they choose not to attend, we ensure their views and voices are heard at their meetings and ensure they receive feedback on what was discussed after the meeting.

Having Your Say is a well established group of infants, children and young people with experience of being in fostering families and kinship care. They are supported by experienced sessional workers and have undertaken work in relation to the United Nation Conventions on the Rights of the Child, participated in the Independent Care Review as some of the 5000 voices, and have co-facilitated training for Children's Hearing Panel Members.

The Champions Board has been developing since the last Corporate Parenting Plan and there is continued opportunity for growth and wider membership. An example of the work that has been undertaken has been the collaboration with the University of Edinburgh to co-design training for the workforce in relation to mental health and wellbeing for young people. Members have also had the opportunity to meet with the Children and Young Persons Commissioner in Scotland.

Partners in West Lothian have a contract in place to provide independent advocacy for care experienced young people who are looked after away from home. We are currently doubling our advocacy and children's rights resources. Although not directly related to Corporate Parenting, West Lothian has a bespoke children's rights service for children with experience of Court Contact orders and the creative and child centred practice is something we would wish to emulate for all our infants, children and young people

We recognise the difference between consultation and participation and are developing an Engagement and Participation Strategy to ensure that Children and Young People are able to participate and inform the development of services going forward.

We have identified that there are four ways in which infants, children, young people and their families should be able to participate. The four ways are:

- ❖ At an individual level
- ❖ At a community level
- ❖ At a strategic level
- ❖ At a national level

We have aspirations to ensure active participation is part of any approach we have going forward. Further to this we recognise by the language of including peoples 'views' this infers that only those with words are able to be consulted, or actively participate. We would wish to also include the quieter voices, understand the experiences of non-verbal, and pre-verbal infants, children and young people and their families which will only serve to inform any policy or decisions.

Participation and engagement should also include those in roles who have duties and responsibilities to carry out in relation to Corporate Parenting roles and activities. The work around collaboration, communication and engagement is a thread that should encompass all the work that is undertaken.

A Participation and Engagement working group is established and is reviewing the ways we currently communicate and listen to those with lived experience. The working group will develop a clear structure, framework and action plan for our future activities.

What is Corporate Parenting?

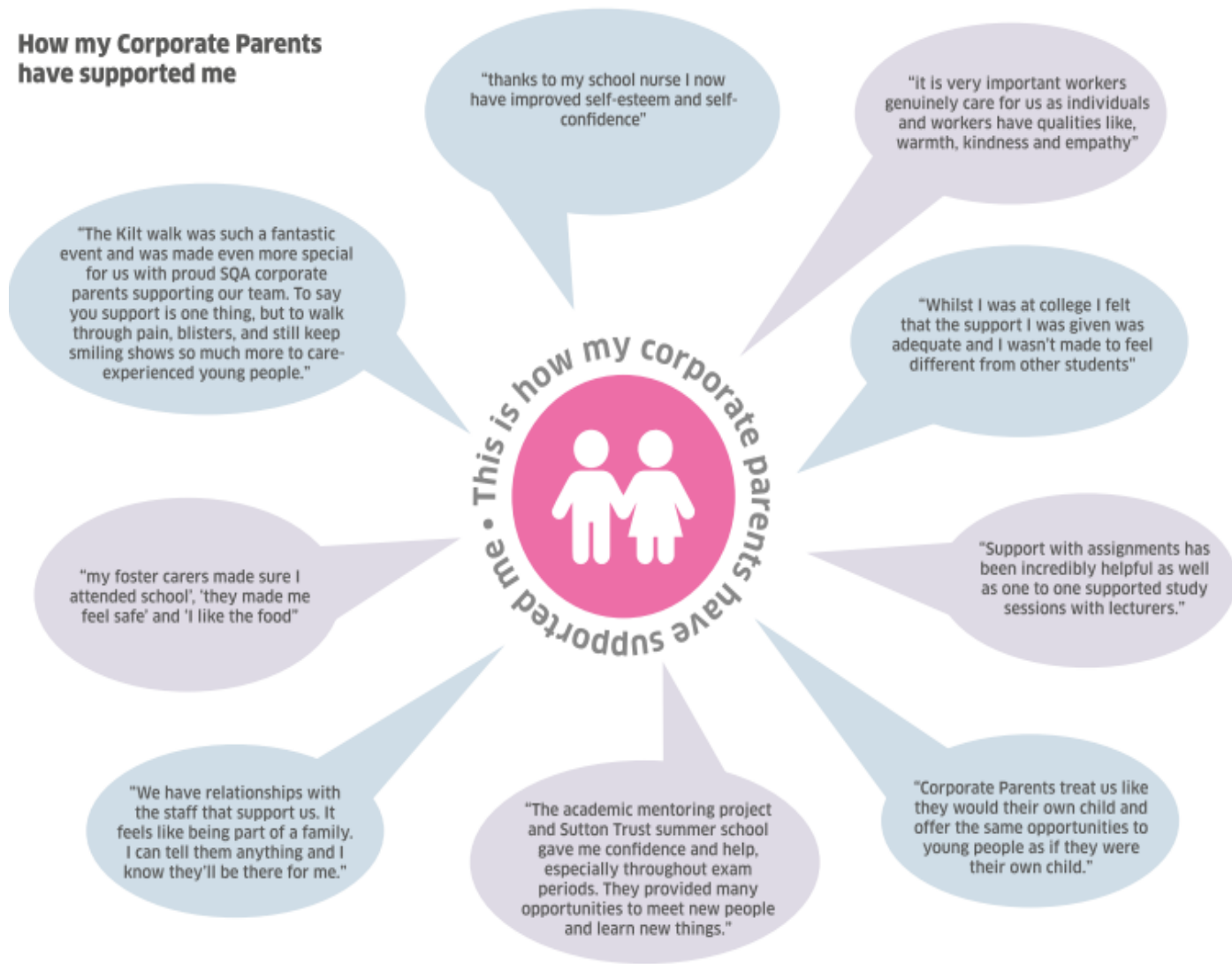
The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines corporate parenting as "the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers".

This includes infants, children, young people and care leavers who are:

- ❖ in residential care, including secure care
- ❖ in foster care
- ❖ in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent
- ❖ looked after at home
- ❖ disabled and who receive overnight respite
- ❖ left care – up to the age of 26 years

In simple terms, a corporate parent will carry out many of the roles a parent would and will be able to provide the children and young people they're responsible for with the best possible support and care to maximise their potential and achieve the best possible life outcomes.

How my Corporate Parents have supported me



Duties and responsibilities of corporate parents

The duties and responsibilities of corporate parents are outlined in **Part 9, Section 58** of the **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**. Corporate parents need to make sure the rights of the children and young people in their care are respected. They should do this by:



- ❖ being alert to matters that affect their wellbeing
- ❖ assessing their needs
- ❖ promoting their best interests and listening to them
- ❖ providing and enabling access to opportunities
- ❖ making sure services are easy to access
- ❖ continuous improvement

Corporate parents should work together to support looked after children, young people and care leavers and share responsibility for acting on behalf of those within their care. This includes:

- ❖ Sharing relevant information with each other
- ❖ Making sure their services are properly coordinated
- ❖ Funding sports, cultural and leisure activities on behalf of children and young people in their care
- ❖ Publishing plans about how to get better at helping the children and young people in their care.

As part of this Plan, we have collaborated with other partners to better understand the needs of our infants, children and young people and this is reflected in the Sections below

What do we know about West Lothian’s Looked after Children?

The number of our children looked after in West Lothian has remained at around the same level since 2012, showing only small changes. On 31st July 2019 there were 427 looked after children and this figure increased decreased from 443 on the 31st July 2018. This generally equates to around 1.1% of the total 0-17 years population in West Lothian being looked after, with the Scottish average being 1.4%.

The following information provides more detail on what we know about our looked after children.

Characteristics of our looked after children and young people:

	Gender			Children aged 4 and under		Children aged 16 or over		Minority Ethnic Group		Assessed having a disability	
	Male	Female	% male	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Scotland 2019	7,706	6,556	54	2,833	20	1,733	12	619	4	1,535	11
West Lothian 2019	236	191	55	100	23	40	9	8	2	46	11

Our looked after children and young people are accommodated in a range of placements:

	At Home with parents		With friends/ relatives		With foster carers provided by LA		With foster carers purchased by LA		In other community		In LA residential care		In other residential care	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Scotland 2019	3,569	25%	4,175	29%	3,335	23%	1,463	10%	272	2%	708	5%	740	5%
West Lothian 2019	110	26%	129	30%	116	27%	20	5%	9	2%	16	4%	27	6%

At 31st July 2019 the following was also relevant in relation to our looked after children:

- ❖ 40 of our looked after children were placed out with West Lothian in other local authority services

- ❖ There was a small decrease of 1% in our children and young people being looked after in Kinship Care arrangements
- ❖ There was a 4% decrease in the number of options of family based care by West Lothian's fostering families
- ❖ 50% of the children looked after away from home had been accommodated for more than three years

A number of our looked after children (4.7%) has experienced moves of care setting during the past 12 months. A small number of looked after children have experienced 3+ placement moves in the last year, none of which were under the age of 5 years.

Educational attainment and positive destinations

Across Scotland educational attainments for looked after children are improving. However, there are still gaps in comparison with the general school leaver population. Our looked after children tend to have lower levels of educational attainment than their peers. These differences are, in part, linked to our looked after children tending to leave school at a younger age than their peers.

The following figures relate to 2018/2019

- ❖ For West Lothian school leavers in this year, 54% of school leavers who were looked after were aged 16 and under (i.e. they left at the earliest point they could)
- ❖ Attainment figures for 37 looked after school leavers in West Lothian in this year were above the National average;
 - 1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 3
 - West Lothian 100%: National average of 87%
 - 1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 4
 - West Lothian 83%: National average of 76%
- ❖ During the same period, 2018/19, 84% of our looked after school leavers (31 young people) were in positive destinations directly after leaving school, compared to the national average of 82%. This is a significant increase from 2016/17 figures, which showed that only 59% of our looked after pupils were achieving positive destinations post-school. There is still more work to be done in this area and we also aim to follow up with school leavers 6 months and 12 months after they've left school to help ensure they've been able to sustain the positive destinations they achieve directly after leaving school in the longer term.

Education Services are working to improve the educational experiences and outcomes for our looked after pupils in a number of ways:

- ❖ Quality Assurance visits to secondary schools now take place annually to review how schools are meeting the needs of Looked After children and how robust their data collection is about the attainments and wider achievements of this group of pupils.
- ❖ The CELSIS 'Looked After and Learning' self-evaluation toolkit was completed by schools in December 2017 to identify areas of good practice and areas for development with regard to provisions made for looked after pupils. Going forward, schools are being audited as to the supports they put in place for care-experienced young people as a part of their Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) process.

- ❖ As a result of these information gathering exercises, we have developed training for school staff to raise awareness of the experience of being looked after and the impact that trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have on learning and development. During 2018-2019 this training was delivered to over half of the schools in West Lothian and will be available to schools and new members of staff on an annual basis going forward. We have also revised the Education Services Policy for Looked After Children in 2018 in order to provide schools with clear guidelines to assist in planning to meet the holistic needs of looked after children

In July 2018, additional funding from the Scottish Attainment Challenge was made available to Local Authorities to support looked after children and young people. In West Lothian, we have used this additional funding to pilot a joint Social Policy and Education approach to re-engaging care-experienced young people who had completely disengaged from education. The LAC Attainment Project approach has supported 16 young people to re-engage with education through direct work with both teaching staff and family support workers. We plan to continue this successful pilot project into 2019-2020 as well as using this funding to support other groups of care-experienced young people to increase their attainment.

Aftercare Services and access to employment, education or training

In July 2019, 333 young people were eligible for after care services in West Lothian. Whilst this was an increase of 3 young people since 2018, we have seen a reduction in the number of those accessing the service, with 49% of young people taking up the service to July 2019 compared to 58% to July 2018.

	Eligible for aftercare service	% receiving aftercare services	% of those with known economic activity
Scotland 2019	6,650	58%	44%
West Lothian 2019	333	49%	36%

- ❖ The 163 young people accessing aftercare services go on to live in a range of accommodation. On 31st July 2019, known to West Lothian Council, this included:

	At home	With friend / relative	Own tenancy/ independent living	Supported accommodation/ semi-independent living	Former foster carers	Homelessnes s	In custody
Number	21	10	96	23	3	6	4
Percentage	13%	6%	59%	14%	2%	4%	2%

- ❖ A number of our Looked after young people, eligible for aftercare services have experienced one or more spells of homelessness and this equates to 33 (10%) young people in the 2018/19 reporting period.

- ❖ 36% of West Lothian's looked after children receiving aftercare services have known economic activity.
- ❖ There is also a dedicated Employment Worker in the Inclusion and Aftercare team that focuses on quality and sustainable education, training and employment outcomes.

What do our looked after children tell us?

In West Lothian *Viewpoint* is currently used to gather the views of looked after children. The information below provides a snapshot of some of the responses collated during the period 1st February 2020 to 10th June 2020.

The information is broken down under the desired outcomes we work towards within services that support our Looked after Children and Young People and are in line with the Wellbeing Indicators: *Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included*. The results for children aged over 7 years are as follows:

Safe

Ensuring that our looked after children and young people are safe is a key responsibility of us as Corporate Parents:

- 96%, of those who completed the viewpoint questionnaire reported that they feel safe where they live now.
- 100% of the children and young people reported that nobody bullies or picks on them where they live now. This is an increase from 96% in 2018/19.

Healthy

Ensuring that we work together to improve the health and wellbeing of our looked after children and young people is a key responsibility of us as Corporate Parents:

- 75% stated they were not worried about how angry or frustrated they felt which is an increase on the previous year when then figure was 69%.
- 89% stated that they would describe themselves as happy most of the time, this is an increase on the previous period when the figure was 80%.

Achieving

Ensuring that our looked after children and young people are supported to achieve their potential is key:

- 82% responded that they thought that they were doing well at school, this is a decrease on the figure as reported in the previous period which was 90%
- 82% responded that they were getting the help that they needed at school, this is reduction on the figure reported in the previous period which was 87%

Nurtured

Feeling nurtured is something we, as Corporate Parents, aim to ensure all our looked after children and young people feel:

- 89% responded that they were settled where they live now, this is an increase on the previous period when the figure was 85%
- 96% responded that their carers were easy to talk to, this is an increase on the previous period when the figure was 90%.

Active

Ensuring that our looked after children and young people are active is essential:

- 67% of looked after children young people reported that they were able to exercise or play support 2 to 3 times per week, this is reduction on the figure reported in the previous period when the figure was 78%
- 81% of looked after children and young people reported that they can do hobbies and sport as often as they like, this is a reduction on the previous period when the figure was 94%

Respected and Responsible

As Corporate Parents we want to ensure that our looked after children and young people are respected and are supported to be responsible:

- 89% of looked after children and young people reported that they thought that their views and opinions were listened to this is the same figure reported in the previous period
- 93% of looked after children and young people reported that they had enough information to make decisions about their future, this is an increase on the previous period where the figure was 84%.

Included

We are committed to ensuring that our looked after children and young people are included:

- 78% of looked after children and young people reported that they were able to keep in touch with family and friends as much as they want, this is an increase on the previous period when the figure was 65%
- 48% of looked after children and young people reported that they were able to go to clubs, activities or events in their local area, this is a decrease on the previous period when the figure reported was 69%.

It is important to celebrate the successes for our looked after children and young people, demonstrated above in West Lothian however it is also key for this plan to focus on what has not gone so well in the past year. We have seen improvement in under the Safe, Healthy, Nurtured, Respected and Responsible. Further improvement is required in taking forward the Active, Achieving and Included themes, it should be noted that some of these figures can be attributed to the impact of the pandemic particularly around access to school, sports and hobbies and face to face contact with Social Workers.

Planning Landscape

A wide range of legislation, regulation and guidance provides the framework for our work with looked after children and their families, in particular Part 9, Section 58 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Getting it Right for Looked After Children and Young People and Guidance on Health Assessments for Looked After Children in Scotland. The concept of corporate parenting is not new. In 2008, the 'These Are Our Bairns' report identified key aspects of being a good corporate parent, including: early intervention, partnership working, improving outcomes and listening to the voices of children and young people. Work has been ongoing in West Lothian over the years to improve the life experience of our looked after children. In 2018 the Scottish Government produced 'Turning legislation into practice'; this was the first report on corporate parenting activity in Scotland. We will continue to reflect on this report alongside National Government benchmarking indicators to improve our services.

In February 2020 the Independent Care Review (ICR) published its final conclusions and recommendations, and launched The Promise declaring that Scotland will do everything it can to make sure that the recommendations are fully implemented and to fulfil Scotland's ambition for children and young people to grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential.

The Independent Care Review identified five foundations for change:

- Voice:** Children must be listened to and involved in decision making.
- Family:** Where children are safe in their families, they must stay and families must be given support.
- Care:** Where living with family is not possible, siblings must be kept together.
- People:** Looked After Children must be actively supported to build relationships with their wider community.
- Scaffolding:** Children, Families and the workforce must be supported by the system when support is needed.



Partners in West Lothian are already working to improve outcomes for Looked after Children and Young People and are committed to working towards shifting the balance of care. We are reviewing how we position and provide services to ensure that families are supported at the earliest point and intensive support provided to ensure children at risk of being accommodated remain placed within their own families, family networks and communities.

While we recognise that there will be some challenges in aligning the focus of our partnership to keep the Promise the principles that underpin the Promise are consistent with the aspirations and ambitions that we have for our care experienced young people and their families in West Lothian

In West Lothian our Corporate Parenting Plan has been developed by the multi-agency Corporate Parenting Strategic Group (CPSG). The CPSG has representation from: NHS Lothian; Scottish Children's Reporter Administration; West Lothian College; Children's Rights Officer; Having Your Say Forum representative; Third Sector Representatives; Social Policy; Education Services; Economic Development and Planning; and Housing, Customer and Building Services.

A range of activities has been undertaken by the CPSG to inform our priorities and subsequent plan. These have included a Strategic Needs Assessment on services for Looked After Children and Young People, analysing both national and local information about looked after children; taking into account children and young people's voices through a Children's Rights Worker and Advocacy Worker and Viewpoint reports.

From this activity, the CPSG are committed to delivering a Corporate Parenting plan which facilitates positive practice and ensures looked after children are supported to achieve the best possible outcomes.

West Lothian's Corporate Parenting Planning will be a live process with a clear action plan that will be reviewed regularly to ensure that we are targeting priority areas and meet the changing needs of our looked after children.

The lead responsibility for the Corporate Parenting Plan and wider children's services rests with the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group which reports directly to the Community Planning Partnership on performance and progress.



The Corporate Parenting Strategic Group reports through this structure. The planning activities carried out identified priority areas for improvement and four work streams were formed to focus on this improvement work. Each of the work streams has a detailed action plan in place which sets out specific actions and activities to drive these improvements forward. Engagement and partnership work also support this improvement work and the Quality Assurance Self Evaluation (QASE) sub-committee will undertake self-evaluation activity in support of this.

West Lothian Priorities

West Lothian's four areas of priority are:

1) Improving the quality of our care and care planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the amount of time taken to make a decision on children returning home or having an alternative permanent placement plan in place• Improving the quality of individual child planning including a focus on reducing the length of time children are on home-based supervision• Reducing the number of placement moves experienced by children and young• Increasing the number of looked after children and young people living in a community setting.• Ensure more looked after children and young people from West Lothian and support to live in West Lothian
2) Improving health and wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving timely access to assessment and effective health interventions for care experienced young people• Increasing the numbers of looked after children and young people given opportunities to pursue sports, cultural and leisure activities
3) Raising attainment and promoting positive destinations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving attainment levels for looked after children and young people and ensuring that their learning needs are identified and addressed• Increasing the number of children residentially looked after who are engaging meaningfully with their educations and who are routinely attending school• Increasing training and employment opportunities for looked after young people and care-experienced young people• Increasing the numbers of looked after young people who are sustaining a positive destination after leaving school
4) Providing effective through care and aftercare support and services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing the number of looked after children remaining in their existing care placements beyond the ages of 16 and 18 based on their developmental needs• Reducing the number of care-experienced young people who experience homelessness

The four priority areas for improvement form the basis of West Lothian's second Corporate Parenting Plan. Improvements in these areas will enhance the overarching outcomes we have for our looked after children. West Lothian corporate parents will work together to ensure we:

- ❖ Put the voices of looked after children and carers at the heart of service design and delivery.
- ❖ Deliver services that are tailored to the individual and diverse needs of looked after children by ensuring effective joint commissioning and integrated professional working.
- ❖ Develop services that address health and wellbeing needs and promote high-quality care.
- ❖ Encourage the development of warm, caring relationships that nurture attachment and create a sense of belonging between looked after children and their carers so that the child or young person feels safe, valued and protected.
- ❖ Help looked after children to develop a strong sense of personal identity and maintain the cultural and religious beliefs they choose.
- ❖ Ensure looked after young people are prepared for and supported in their transition to young adulthood.
- ❖ Support looked after children to participate in the wider network of peer, school and community activities to help build resilience and a sense of belonging.
- ❖ Ensure looked after children have a stable experience of education that encourages high aspirations and support them to achieve their potential.
- ❖ Ensure local plans and strategies for children and young people's health and wellbeing fully reflect the needs of looked-after children and set out how these needs will be met.
- ❖ Ensure the professionals working with looked after children have an increased understanding of their diverse needs, improving their knowledge and skills.

Additional activities will also be progressed and form part of the wider CPSG action plan, these will include:

- ❖ Development of a Participation and Engagement Strategy to ensure we have a clear framework for engaging with our care experienced infants, children, young people, families and those who care for them
- ❖ Building upon the development of Champions Board to ensure our those with lived experience are at the heart of collaboration, decision making and system design
- ❖ Enhancing the quality of performance data on our looked after children to inform our planning and decision making, and that any measures include those important to those with lived experience
- ❖ Ensuring our looked after infants, children and young people have access to advocacy and support from the Children's Rights Officer service and Who Care's (Scotland)
- ❖ Develop and enhance development opportunities for the workforce connected to our care experienced children

We expect the strength of our collaborative partnership working in West Lothian to make a difference and deliver improvements to our looked after children's wellbeing and outcomes.

Conclusion

We, as Corporate Parents, are ambitious and aspirational for our looked after children, young people and care leavers and are determined to support them to maximise their potential.

This Corporate Parenting Plan sets out our priorities and commitments to improve outcomes.

Workstreams will take forward our priorities. These are led by senior responsible officers who will drive forward the implementation of the plan. Progress reports and performance information will be submitted to the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group on a quarterly basis. An annual report reflecting the progress we have made in improving outcomes for our looked after children and young people will be produced.

The Plan will be kept under review to ensure that it takes account of the changing needs of our looked after children and young people and will ensure they have access to a range of support services which meets their needs.

We recognise that the delivery and implementation of the changes identified in the Plan will be challenging. We will work together as Corporate Parents to make these changes happen to ensure that we get it right for our looked after children and young people, to give them the best start in life and support them to achieve their aspirations.

West Lothian Performance & Action Plan

The following is a summary of the progress on the initial measurements/indicators identified in previous versions of the Corporate Parenting Plan. As part of our review on progress – we have identified measurements we would like to incorporate for the period 2020-2023 and these are highlighted in blue and marked as new

Improving the Quality of Care and Care planning.

Effective care planning promotes permanence and reduces the need for emergency placements and placement changes. Good care planning supports the quality of the relationship between the child or young person and carer by minimising disruption, increasing attachment and providing greater placement stability.

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances
Wellbeing Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe, Nurtured, Included and Respected
Corporate Parenting Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being alert to matters that affect their wellbeing - assessing their needs - promoting their best interests and listening to them - making sure services are easy to access - continuous improvement
Key Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the amount of time taken to make a decision on children returning home or having an alternative permanent plan in place - Improving the quality of individual child planning including a focus on reducing the length of time children are on home-based supervision

- Reducing the number of placement moves experienced by children and young people

Actions

- Reduce the length of time from first being placed away from home to final decision being made
- Continue to invest in a concurrency planning approach
- Improve the formal reviewing process for children looked after at home
- Increase the number of short breaks for disabled children
- Develop the use of Viewpoint and other methods of gathering the views of children looked after at home
- Increase the number of new foster carers and enhance training and support for all carers

How we will measure progress.

Indicator	Pentana ref	Performance	Target	Reporting Period
Average time taken from point of accommodation of a child to permanent placement decision	P:SPCF112_9b	32 days	50 days	2019/2020
Percentage of Children and young people using Viewpoint as a mechanism to provide feedback	SPCF010_6b.5	10%	20%	QTR4 2019/2020
Percentage of Looked After Children reviews completed within statutory timescales	SPCF074_6b	69.4%	80%	QTR4 2019/2020
Percentage of cases where positive progress can be evidenced at the 6-month Looked After Child Review	SOA1305_15	81%	95%	QTR1 2020/2021
Percentage of parents who participate in Looked After (LAC) reviews	SPCF009_6b.5	60%	70%	QTR4 2019/2020

Percentage of children and young people who participate in Looked After (LAC) reviews	P:SPCF008_6a	44%	55%	QTR4 2019/2020
Percentage of children involved with the Whole Family Support service who have avoided becoming accommodated who were assessed as being at high risk of being accommodated.	P:SPCF138_9b.1c	88%	85%	2019/2020
Percentage of Looked After and Accommodated Children under the age of 5 who have their adoption orders granted	SPCF111_9b	21%	16%	2019/2020
Number of West Lothian foster carer households paid for by West Lothian Council	SPCF103_9b.1a	86	90	QTR4 2019/2020
Number of children in full-time foster care	SPCF095_9b.1a	156	175	QTR4 2019/2020
Number of children looked after in Kinship Care Placements	SPCF094_9b.1b	144	140	QTR4 2019/2020
Number of children looked after at home	SPCF093_9b.1b	91	110	QTR4 2019/2020
Percentage of Children and Young People placed in residential care who have gone on to be placed in external resources	SPCF131_9b.1a	10%	10%	2019/2020
Percentage of children looked after at home who	NEW			

have been subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order of more than 12 months				
Percentage of looked after children with positive progress recorded during looked after children reviews, including looked after children at home	NEW			
Average length of time taken from becoming looked after to a decision on permanency being made	NEW			
Average length of time taken from permanence decision to placement and final order	NEW			

Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children

Looked after children should enjoy the same opportunities as their peers in taking part in activities to promote wellbeing. Looked after children should receive support to recognise, develop and achieve their full potential.

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our Children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances - We live longer, healthier Lives and have reduced health inequalities
Wellbeing Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe, Nurtured, Included and Respected
Corporate Parenting Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being alert to matters that affect their wellbeing - assessing their needs - promoting their best interests and listening to them - providing and enabling access to opportunities - making sure services are easy to access - continuous improvement
Key Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving timely access to assessment and effective health interventions for care experienced young people - Increasing the numbers of looked after children and young people given opportunities to pursue sports, cultural and leisure activities

Actions

Ensure the Mental Health and Mental Wellbeing Screening Group respond proactively to the needs of looked after children

Improving timely access to assessment and effective health interventions including routine access to a school nurse for all looked after children

Development of the Vulnerable and Looked After Child clinic to improve access assessment and effective health interventions for children with complex needs

Develop and expand the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) consultation clinics

Increasing the numbers of looked after children and young people given opportunities to pursue sports, cultural and leisure activities

How we will measure progress.

Indicator	Pentana Ref	Performance	Target	Reporting Period
Percentage of eligible Looked After Children 2 year olds attending early years childcare provision	SPCF140_9b	100%	100%	2018/2019

Percentage of Mental Health and Well-being Referrals offered a service within 4 weeks who are Looked After Children	SPCF076_9b.1a	75%	40%	QTR4 2019/2020
Percentage of looked after children who report they feel safer as a result of intervention or support	SOA1305_09	96%	80%	2018/2019
Percentage of looked after children notifications received within 7 days of becoming looked after	NEW			
Percentage of comprehensive health assessments undertaken within a 4 week timeframe	NEW			
Percentage of children and young people with an appropriate health plan	NEW			
Percentage of eligible looked after young people receiving support from the TCAC nurse	NEW			
Percentage of looked after children referred to CAHMS and managed via consultation clinics	NEW			
Percentage of children and young people who said they exercised, played sport or did activities at least 2 times a week (Viewpoint)	NEW			

Raising Attainment and positive destinations.

Supporting learning and education to encourage high aspirations and individual achievement is central to improving immediate and long-term outcomes for looked after children. Supporting employment, training and positive destinations will encourage independence and increase resilience.

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our Children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances - We are better educated and have access to increased and better-quality learning and employment opportunities - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities
Wellbeing Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nurtured, Active, Achieving, respected, Responsible and Included
Corporate Parenting Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promoting their best interests and listening to them - providing and enabling access to opportunities - making sure services are easy to access - continuous improvement
Key Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving attainment levels for looked after children and young people and ensuring that their learning and wellbeing needs are identified and addressed - Increasing the number of children looked after by West Lothian who are engaging meaningfully with their educations and who are routinely attending school - Increasing training and employment opportunities for looked after young people and care-experienced young people - Increasing the numbers of looked after young people who are sustaining a positive destination after leaving school

Actions

Improve attendance and attainment levels for children who are looked after

Reduce exclusion rates of looked after children

Enhance the development of bespoke packages to meet individual needs

Increase the number of young people sustaining education, training or employment

How we will measure progress.

Indicator	Pentana ref	Performance	Target	Reporting Period
Percentage of school leavers (Looked After)	SPCF126_9b.1b	77%	70%	2018/2019

Children) entering a positive destination Categories: Work, Apprenticeships, Training, Further Education, Higher Education				
Percentage of Looked After Children in the Senior Phase Achieving Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy	CP:EDSQA1089b.1a	72%	85%	2019/2020 These figures relate to Literacy Attainment, we now plan to also track Numeracy attainment as well
Percentage of care leavers (have left care at a previous point) entering a positive destination	CP:SOA1305_07	79%	85%	2019/20
Exclusions per 1,000 pupils for Looked After Children Number of days of exclusions or number of incidents/	SOA1305_13	89	200	2018/2019
Percentage attendance at school for Looked After Children Looked After at Home: Looked After in residential placement: Looked After with Kinship Carers: Looked After with Foster Carers: Ensure data relates to actual full-time attendance, rather than those on reduced education packages.	SOA1305_12	86%	92%	2018/2019 The figures here relate to attendance figures for all looked after children and young people. Going forward, we will break these figures down into which type of care provision a young person is in, to better understand where we need to support attendance for children and young people.

Percentage of eligible 2 year olds in nursery placements	NEW			
Percentage of looked after children school leavers by level of attainment 1+ award at SCQF Levels 3-6	NEW			2017/2018
1+ award at SCQF Level 3		96%		
1+ award at SCQF Level 4		73%		
1+ award at SCQF Level 5		51%		
1+ award at SCQF Level 6 (no of leavers =49)		24%		
Percentage of looked after young people achieving at least 5 qualifications at SCQF Level 3 or above	NEW			
Percentage of looked after school leavers sustaining positive destinations at 6 months and 12 months after leaving school.	NEW			
Categories: Working, Apprenticeship, Further Education, Higher Education, Training				
Percentage of looked after children remaining in school beyond their school leaving age	NEW			
Percentage of looked after young people who have experiences relating to the world of work in the last year of their schooling (recorded on working world by schools)	NEW			

Providing effective through care and aftercare support and services.

Effective transition or pathway planning is required to ensure looked after young people receive the appropriate practical and emotional support and advice, at the right time, to prepare for independence.

Wellbeing Indicators	- Safe, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included			
Outcomes	- Our Children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances			
Corporate Parenting Duties	- being alert to matters that affect their wellbeing - assessing their needs - promoting their best interests and listening to them - providing and enabling access to opportunities - making sure services are easy to access - continuous improvement			
Key Priorities	- Increasing the number of looked after children remaining in their existing care placements beyond the age of 16 and 18 - Reducing the number of care experienced young people who experience homelessness			
Actions				
Increase Supported Adult Placements.				
Ensure young people have an appropriate transition plan and appropriate supports during this period				
Develop transitional tenancy support for young people who are at risk of homelessness, substance misuse and offending				
Increase the number of eligible care leavers accessing support services				
How we will measure progress.				
Indicator	Pentana ref	Performance	Target	Reporting Period
Number of Looked After Children who are reported missing to Police Scotland	SPCF150_9b.1c	52	90	QTR4 2019/2020
Percentage of young people who were previously LAC who become involved with the Criminal and Youth Justice Service within 12 months of ceasing to be LAC.	SPCF142_9b	7%	6%	2019/2020
Percentage of young people eligible for an Aftercare service experiencing one or more	CP:SPCF124_9b.1c	10%	10%	2019/2020

episodes of homelessness				
Percentage of young people ceasing to be Looked After with a Pathway Co-ordinator	SPCF120_9b.1c	100%	100%	2019/2020
Number of looked after young people in their care placement aged 16 and over	NEW			
Number of young people in supported adult placements	NEW			
Percentage of young people in receipt of aftercare services with a Pathway Plan	NEW			