



South Lanarkshire
Partnership
Stronger together

Safe Healthy Achieving Nurtured Active
Respected Responsible Included



getting
it right
for every child
in South Lanarkshire

Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan 2018 – 2020



I want a family who loves me



I never want to move again



Contents

1. Introduction _____

2. Current position _____

3. Governance _____

Action plan 2018 – 2020 _____

Core Commitment 1 _____

Core Commitment 2 _____

Core Commitment 3 _____

Core Commitment 4 _____

achieving included
nurtured
healthy active
responsible
safe respected



I love being with my friends



I like not being judged



1. Introduction

1.1. Getting it Right for South Lanarkshire's Children and Families' vision:

"Children, young people and their families will be safeguarded and supported to reach their full potential and thrive within their communities."

1.2. Definition of corporate parenting

South Lanarkshire embraces the definition as laid out in the Corporate Parenting Guidance (2015) as:

An organisation's performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver and through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted.

Within the website for care experienced children and young people (2018) a corporate parent is defined as follows:

"A corporate parent is intended to carry out many of the things a parent would. They may not be able to provide everything a loving parent can, but they should still be able to provide you with the best possible support and care. Corporate Parenting is intended to encourage people and organisations to do as much as they can to make sure children and young people feel in control of their lives and able to grow up safely, achieve all they can and overcome any barriers they face."

1.3 Duties and responsibilities

Part 9 (Section 58) sets out the 'responsibilities' of corporate parents towards those who are care experienced. The six legal duties which every corporate parent must fulfil are:

- Be alert to matters which may harm the wellbeing of those who are care experienced
- Assess their needs for services and support
- Promote their interests
- Seek to provide opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
- Take action to help them:
 - access opportunities to improve wellbeing
 - make use of services, and access the support
- Take any other action to improve the way we work together

The ultimate aim is to secure nurturing, positive childhoods, from which these extraordinary, and sometimes vulnerable, children and young people can develop into successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

1.4 What does it mean to be a corporate parent?

When a child or young person becomes looked after, the tasks of their parent become the responsibility of everyone working for the Council and partner agencies, and not just those working directly with Children's Services.

Corporate parents should always endeavour to achieve the same outcomes for care experienced children and young people as any parent would want for their own children. They will take responsibility for promoting and securing their wellbeing throughout their care journeys, which ultimately impacts on their lifelong chances. Corporate parents will identify the inequity for those who are care experienced and find innovative ways to close the gap between the vision, policy and practice, whilst being mindful of the detail of the unique inequality for each child and young person.

We must take a strategic, child-centred approach to service delivery and keep shifting the emphasis from **corporate** to **parenting**, taking all actions necessary to promote and support the health and wellbeing of a child from infancy to adulthood.

The specific intention of this Corporate Parenting Strategy is to further strengthen the ownership of responsibility for those who are care experienced with all key partners within the statutory and voluntary sectors. We will continue to promote and insist on nothing short of best practice.

1.5 What do we know about our care experienced children and young people?

Each child and young person who becomes care experienced will have had their unique pre-care experiences, often involving abuse and/or neglect. As corporate parents, we are not only accountable in terms of our statutory responsibilities, we are also privileged to work with and care for them, sharing their joys and challenges along their care journeys.

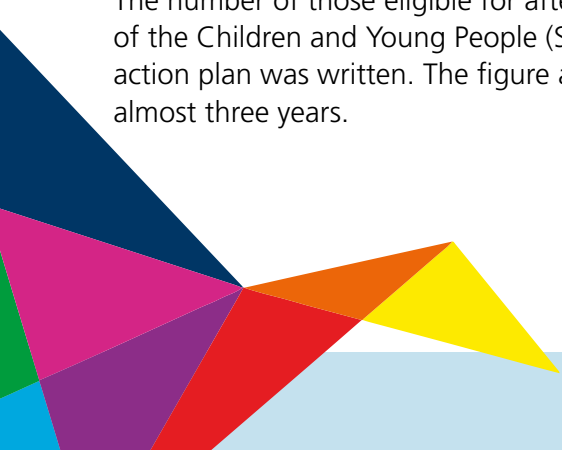
South Lanarkshire is committed to keeping children and young people at home, with their family/kinship and, where this is not possible within a family setting. Some children and young people with multiple complex needs are unable to live within a family setting and require the structure of a residential placement.

The number of South Lanarkshire's looked after children and young people as at 31 March 2018 was 579 as follows:

- 173 (30%) were at home with parents
- 128 (22%) were with friends/relatives
- 206 (36%) were with foster carers
- 72 (12%) were looked after in residential
- 0 were in secure accommodation

These figures show that the majority of looked after children and young people are cared for within a family (88%) and show a continuing trend. We aim to reduce the numbers of new children and young people being cared for within residential placements over the next two years.

The number of those eligible for aftercare has significantly risen due to the implementation of Part 10 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act which came into force just after the last strategy and action plan was written. The figure as at 31 March 2018 was 225 which represents a 236% increase in almost three years.





2. Current position

2.1 How did we get here?

The 2016 – 2018 Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan has just ended. It is fair to describe the plan as having been very ambitious and, in terms of successes, these are captured within both the July 2017 and July 2018 annual reports. We also reported our progress to the Scottish Government at the end of March this year.

A number of Task and Finish Groups were established over and above the work going on individually across agencies by our well trained and talented corporate parenting partners. This approach will continue for the life of this strategy and action plan. It has been agreed that we will streamline the core commitments and associated actions for this plan so that they can be fully achieved over the next two years.

We are signing up to the Scottish Care Leavers Covenant in November 2018 to help improve the outcomes for care experienced young people. It was co-produced by a cross-sector alliance and its aim is to support the promotion of better outcomes provides structured themed improvement approaches across six key areas including:

- Health and wellbeing
- Housing and accommodation
- Education and training
- Employment
- Youth and criminal justice
- Rights and participation

In addition to local consultations, the findings of the Realigning Children's Services programme has been completed which involved 6,800 primary pupils, 9,313 secondary pupils and 510 parents and carers. This links to our children's service plan and, after broad consultation, two key areas of need were prioritised as a high priority, one of which is children and young people looked after at home. The work on the looked after at home population will form part of this strategy and action plan.

This year's corporate parenting conference theme is "What Matters to Me." This is to ensure that, throughout all the work on the vision, the policies and practice, we also truly listen and respond to what matters to those who are care experienced and those who care for them.

2.2 What do we want to achieve?

Taking account of our important corporate parenting duties, feedback from consultation and the learning from the past two years, we have identified four cross cutting Core Commitments with associated actions to further improve our outcomes with and for care experienced children and young people.

Current and future multi agency task and finish groups will continue and be developed over time to support each core commitment with easily identifiable objectives.

We love decorating the house at
Halloween and Christmas

The four core commitments over the next two years are as follows:

2.3 Core Commitments

Commitment	What we plan to do
Core Commitment 1	Corporate Parents will provide a range of opportunities to listen and respond to the voices of children and families/carers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our services will be as effective as they can be when influenced by the voices of care experienced children and young people by corporate parents who understand their responsibilities
Core Commitment 2	Sustain children with their families and within the community <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Families will be supported to remain together within their communities• Corporate parents will work effectively together to provide responsive, consistent and high quality assessment, planning, risk management and reviews
Core Commitment 3	Promote and support the health and wellbeing needs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and young people's health and wellbeing needs are regularly assessed, with bespoke multi-agency responses• Children and young people will reach their potential across education, training and employment
Core Commitment 4	Young people's rights to continuing care and aftercare will be respected and protected <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young people will be encouraged to remain in the care placements until ready to move on• Young people will have bespoke Pathways Assessments and Plans to support lifelong chances

We are proud living here –
it's like being at home

(young person from SLC children's house)

A decorative graphic in the bottom left corner consisting of several overlapping triangles in various colors: dark blue, magenta, purple, red, orange, and yellow.



2.4 How will we achieve this?

The four Core Commitments provide a clear framework to achieve the planned improvements. The attached Action Plan for 2018 – 2020 shows clear action areas to achieve the planned improvements.

The establishment of a Champions Board will provide a platform for looked after children, young people and care leavers to engage regularly and more fully with their corporate parents to discuss and make decisions. The board will provide real opportunities for young people to express their views and feel listened to. Not only will the board help to develop a better understanding of the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers, it will also help to improve the self-belief and self-confidence of the children and young people. The board will discuss and agree a set of the children and young people's priorities which will be followed through and reported on an annual basis.

The findings of the two year Realigning Children's Services programme, which has published a full and executive summary reports will be further analysed and the data is being included across the life of the Getting it Right for every child in South Lanarkshire Children's Service Plan 2017 – 2020. The lead for the children's service plan attends all key sub groups and this helps to ensure that there is a clear connection in terms of strategic planning and reporting.

In terms of supporting this strategy and action plan, work continues to establish a multi disciplinary Throughcare and Aftercare Team which will come in two phases. Phase one involves establishing a central team and the second to include a core and cluster model with a block of flats and satellite flats supported from the core. The service will be available during core hours, evenings and weekends. The existing two training flats are also available to support a more extended transition for those who are ready to move on.

The above involves generous sharing of commitment and resources which will meet the needs of South Lanarkshire's care experienced young people and this is already evident within the Corporate Parenting Sub Group and across partners.

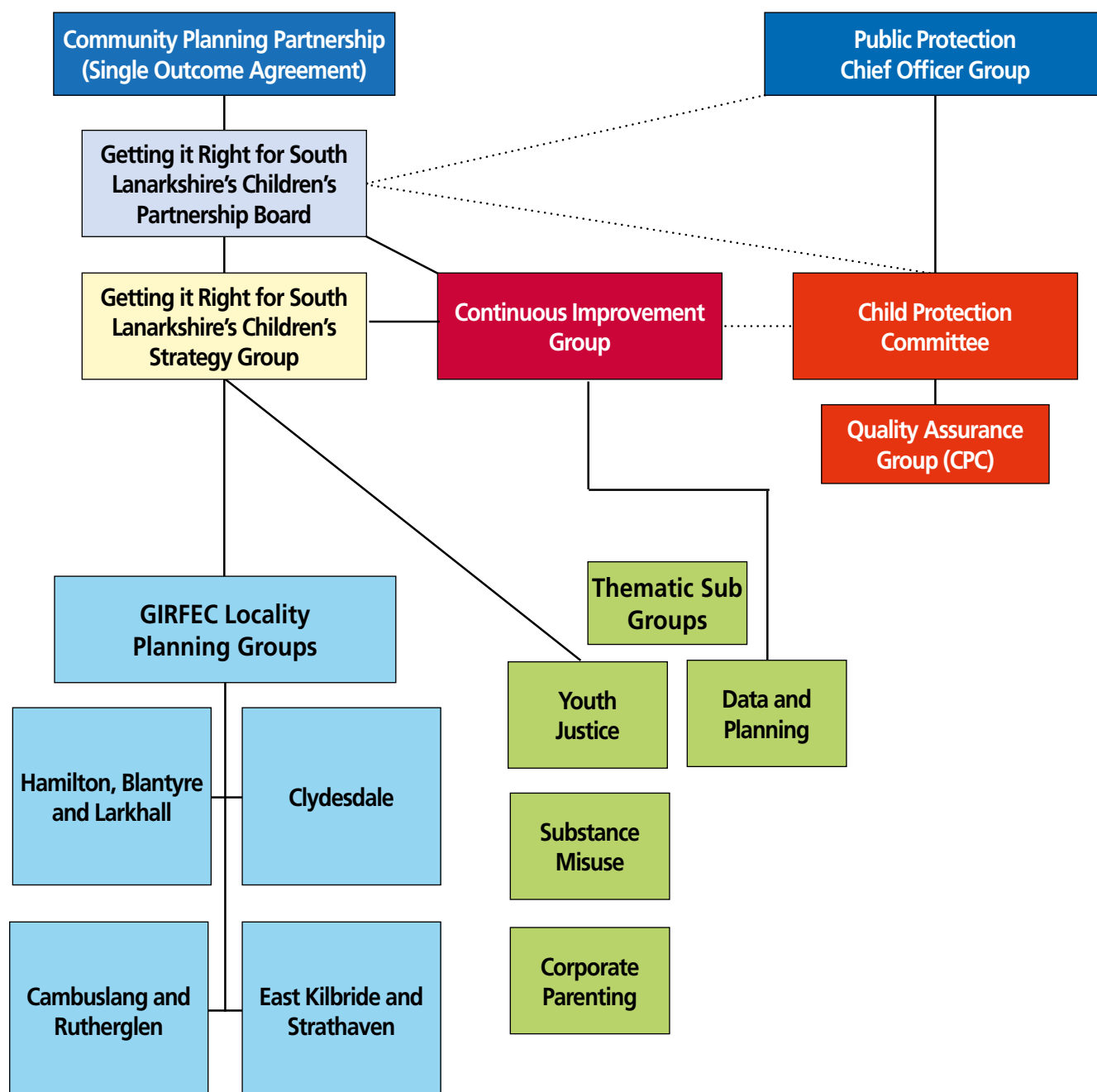


3. Governance

3.1 Structure

The Corporate Parenting Sub Group is responsible for demonstrating improved outcomes for our looked after population. The action plan will be evaluated and updated annually, reporting directly to the Getting it Right for South Lanarkshire's Children Strategy Group, with bi-annual reports to the Partnership Board.

The following chart shows our governance structure:





Action plan 2018 – 2020

Core Commitment 1: Corporate Parents will provide a range of opportunities to listen and respond to the voices of children and families/carers

- Our services will be as effective as they can be when influenced by the voices of care experienced children and young people by corporate parents who understand their responsibilities

Outcome:

- Children and young people are confident their views will be respected and acted upon
- Increased understanding of corporate parenting responsibilities across all partners

Agreed action(s)		Outcome measures and targets	Measure	Lead officer	Timescale
1.1	Close the gap between care experienced children and young people's views and how and which services are provided	Champions Board established, priorities agreed and progressed The Champions Board will empower young people to influence positive change The number of children and young people articulating their views will increase through improved systems to do so	Care experienced children and young people are given specific opportunities to influence and shape policy and services at a local level They will identify key priorities, any unmet need and receive feedback on their views and contributions	Service Manager (Children and Justice)	August 2019
1.2	Provide regular briefings, to all partners and at all levels, to raise awareness of our corporate parenting responsibilities	Range and numbers of partners engaging	All partners are clear about their Corporate Parenting responsibilities and how their own role contributes to this	All members of Corporate Parenting Sub Group	July 2020

I want to be respected

Core Commitment 2: Sustain children with their families and within the community

- Families will be supported to remain together within their communities
- Corporate parents will work effectively together to provide responsive, consistent and high quality assessment, planning, risk management and review

Outcome:

- Individualised plans are in place that safeguards the rights of children to be cared for within a family

Agreed action(s)		Outcome measures and targets	Measure	Lead officer	Timescale
2.1	Enhance the services and intervention methods to support a reduction in children being looked after outwith their family	The number of children being living with their own families will increase year on year	The under and over 12's targeted services will support more children and young people to remain with their families	Service Manager (Children and Justice)	July 2020
2.2	All children and young people at high risk of involvement in offending behaviour will be subject to multi-agency Care and Risk Management Procedures	There will be a year on year reduction in the numbers of young people being placed in external and secure placements and under 18 year olds being detained in HM Polmont YOI	The number of effective CARM risk management plans, which also balance needs, will increase	Service Manager (Children and Justice)	July 2020

Staff make me feel safe





Core Commitment 3: Promote and support the health and wellbeing needs					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children and young people's health and wellbeing needs are regularly assessed, with bespoke multi-agency responsesChildren and young people will reach their potential across education, training and employment					
Outcome:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Effective and consistent assessment, planning and review processes are in place for all children and young people being looked after					
Agreed action(s)		Outcome measures and targets	Measure	Lead officer	Timescale
3.1	Improve the timescales for reporting and responding to the health needs	Number of notifications and assessments on time	The number of children and young people's health needs are identified, addressed and recorded within their active Child Plans	Nurse Director	July 2019
		Number of multi-agency chronologies support more positive change before, during and after care journeys	Care experienced children and young people's assessment, planning and review processes will reflect an improvement in terms of their health and wellbeing	Service Manager (Children and Justice)	August 2019
3.2	Improve the attainment, attendance and school leaver destinations for all school aged children	Use and impact of specific resources, including the Scottish Attainment Fund and Youth Employability Service	Improved outcomes, particularly for those looked after at home	Quality Improvement Officer: Inclusion	August 2019

Carers are really supportive
and will praise you and
tell you congratulations

Core Commitment 4: Young people's rights to Continuing Care and Aftercare will be respected and protected

- Young people will be encouraged to remain in the care placements until ready to move on
- Young people will have bespoke Pathways Assessments and Plans to support lifelong chances

Agreed action(s)		Outcome measures and targets	Measure	Lead officer	Timescale
4.1	Support young people to remain in their existing placement until ready to move on	Number of young people remaining longer in their placements or a similar one, depending on their needs and wishes in their placements	The number of Pathways Plans and Reviews will increase The age of those leaving care will rise	Service Manager (Children and Justice)	July 2020
4.2	Young people with complex needs / risks will have access to intensive throughcare and aftercare support	Incremental development of services is implemented The number of young people's post transition moves will reduce Care experienced young people will know who to contact for aftercare services	Figures of young people's adverse care leaver experiences is reduced Care Leavers have a single point of contact	Service Manager (Children and Justice)	July 2020 December 2018

I don't want to have to repeat my life story again and again





If you need this information in another language or format,
please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.
Phone: 0303 123 1015 Email: equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk
www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Produced for Social Work Resources by Communications and Strategy. 046451/Oct18