

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

2017-2018



worcestershire
county council

COMMITMENT TO THE BOARD

April 2017 - March 2018 Meetings

WYRE FOREST
0 OUT OF 7

0%

MALVERN
6 OUT OF 7
86%

WORCESTER
2 OUT OF 7
29%

BROMSGROVE
4 OUT OF 7

57%

REDDITCH
3 OUT OF 7
43%

WYCHAVON
4 OUT OF 7
57%



ANDY ROBERTS

Lead Member for Children and Families and Chair

6 out of 6* - 100%



FRAN OBORSKI

County Councillor and Vice Chair

6 out of 7 - 86%



CATHERINE DRISCOLL

Director of Children, Families & Communities

5 out of 7 - 71%



TINA RUSSELL

Assistant Director Children's Social Care

7 out of 7 - 100%



YOUTH VOICE GROUPS

Youth Voice Reps

7 out of 7 - 100%



JAKE SHAW

Lead Officer for Corporate Parenting Board

7 out of 7 - 100%



*Out of 6 possible - first meeting took place on Thursday 22 June 2017

APRIL 2017

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We heard from **Gwen Fennell** the **Virtual School Head** about:

- The **new EPEP** (online Personal Education Plan) which was designed to involve children and young people.
- **Attachment Aware Schools Programme** - supporting schools to understand the needs of our looked after children and the importance of building relationships.



The joint protocol with **Warwickshire and West Mercia to Reduce the Offending and Criminalisation of Children in Care** was endorsed by the Board.



West Mercia
POLICE



Warwickshire
POLICE

CARE LEAVER STRATEGY
setting out our commitment and priorities to **Care Leavers** was signed off by **Cabinet**



County Council Members sign up to **Corporate Parenting Training** ensuring that they understand their role as corporate parents.

Our **CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY** was signed off by Cabinet ensuring that Corporate Parenting is **everyone's responsibility**



KEY ISSUES DEBATE at Full Council took place. This was opened by **Dr Catherine Driscoll**. There were **presentations from our young people** to raise awareness and ensure corporate parenting is understood through the **voice of children and young people**.

BY THE END OF THE 2016/17
98% OF MEMBERS HAD UNDERTAKEN THE TRAINING
56 OUT OF **57**

JUNE 2017



Joint Housing Protocol initiated by the Board to ensure all our care leavers have **suitable accommodation** to live in.

“I would like to thank all the members of the board and in particular the young people who attend in order to make a difference to children and young people’s lives.”



Marc Bayliss
The Former Chair stepped down

“I am really pleased to be the New Chair of the Board and keen to ensure that we work all together to make a real difference to looked after children and care leavers in Worcestershire. I want to ensure that the Board puts children and young people’s voices at the centre of what we do”



Andy Roberts
New Lead Member for Children & Families & New Chair

The **role of the chair** is to ensure that **everyone plays their part** to make a difference to children & young people’s lives.

Meetings made Public

The Board agreed this change to **raise the profile of Corporate Parenting in Worcestershire** and make it easy for everyone to access information from the meetings.



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The Care Leavers Setting Up Home Grant was increased up to **£2,000** to better support care leavers moving into their new home.



Worcester County Council sign up to the Care Leavers Charter

The Charter is a set of **principles and promises** that care leavers want the central and local government to make.



The Charter for Care Leavers is designed to raise **expectation, aspiration and understanding** of what care leavers need and what it means to be good Corporate Parents.

Care Leavers’ Guide

This was shared with the Board that outlines Worcestershire’s offer to Care Leavers.



JULY 2017

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Virtual School Update

We heard about:

Mentor Link - all Schools in Worcestershire have been offered the opportunity of a long term mentoring service that will provide Looked After Children with one to one support from professionally recruited mentors. There were 28 pupils already working with Mentor Link.

NEET Prevention Programme - funding has been secured for every Looked After Child, in Year 10. This will allow them to have intensive Information, Guidance and Mentoring to support young people to be in some form of Employment Education or Post-16 Training.



Chief Executive & Young People Lead Council Leadership Exchange

- Set of **Promises** created to ensure **all Directorates** within the county council take responsibility for Corporate Parenting



Dr Catherine Driscoll opened the new Youth Voice Group offices



Nothing about Us Without Us!

All local authorities should have a Children in Care Council. In Worcestershire we have 3!!

- **Big Voices Little Kids**
- **Who Cares We Care**
- **Speak Out**



The Youth Voice Groups are split into different age groups and provide the **voice of looked after children and care leavers**. They help to **shape and influence** the wide range of services for children and young people.

IRO ANNUAL REPORT 16/17

This highlighted some things we were not doing very well in Looked After Children Reviews

- PARTICIPATION 
- TIMELINESS 
- ATTENDANCE 
- The Board challenged the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Service & Independent Reviewing Officers to take action

OCTOBER 2017

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The Board heard a very powerful and moving presentation from Care Leavers about what difference we were making.

The Board was also set some challenges in their **Wish List**. 2 of these have been progressed:

- **Council Tax** exemption for care leavers!
- Consider the **Pathway Plan** as a core document in a young person's Looked After Review!

More work is needed on:

- Extending **training flats** county wide
- **Work with housing** to provide accommodation for young people who need a lot of support
- Having a joined up **Prevention of Eviction Policy** to stop young people being evicted from their accommodation

Care Leavers Week

'Family Firm' campaign launched to raise awareness of Corporate Parenting and the role in ensuring our young people are given opportunities within the council.



Youth Voice Group WEBINAR



ASK US! TELL US! Lead Member, Andy Roberts; Director of Children, Families & Communities, Catherine Driscoll; Assistant Director, Tina Russell and Lead Officer, Jake Shaw were questioned and challenged by children and young people on issues important to them.



NOVEMBER 2017

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District Data Profiles Go Live

Helping to **raise the profile** of looked after children and care leavers in each of our 6 districts.

The data allows each district to understand the number of children and young people in their area. It also allows important information like how many care leavers are in suitable accommodation or not in employment, training or education.

This is an important way of ensuring **all districts** take **ownership** of their corporate parenting **responsibilities** and are active in **improving outcomes** for our looked after children and care leavers.

We heard again from **Gwen Fennell** our **Virtual School Head Teacher**. Whilst there is lots still to do we did hear about some good progress being made:



Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 - more children and young people were achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths compared to last year



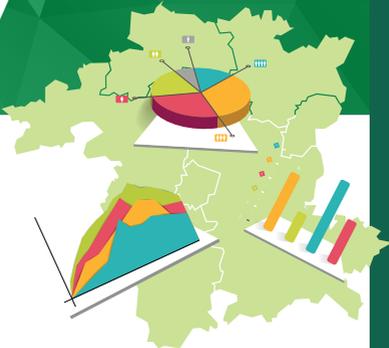
Key Stage 4 has also seen improvements in GCSE English and Maths



The proportion of looked after children that were in **education, employment or training** had increased



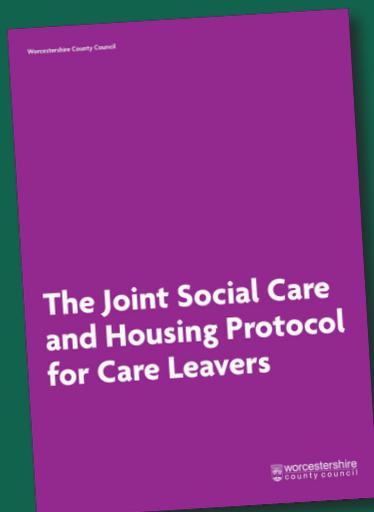
19 of our **Care Leavers** were also attending **University**



The **Joint Social Care and Housing Protocol for Care Leavers** is endorsed.

The Protocol is a key part of the **Worcestershire's Care Leaver Strategy 2017-2019**. It helps to confirm our collective **corporate parenting responsibilities** towards care leavers to ensure our young people achieve the best outcomes possible.

Importantly it works to ensure all care leavers have suitable accommodation and to **end the use of B&B** accommodation for Care Leavers.



FEBRUARY 2018

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Leisure Passes

We heard from young people that 2 Districts have reduced their Leisure Pass offer to Looked after Children and Care Leavers. We heard how important this is to looked after children and care leavers.



Young People challenged the board and wanted to see equity across all the districts.

The **Youth Voice Groups** will want more of an update come the day of the **'Take Over'** Board!



Looked After Children's experience and journey into care

Tina Russell Assistant Director Social Work Safeguarding Services, presented 3 children's experiences and journey into care.

The children's lives we heard about helped the Corporate Parenting Board members to understand the different reasons why children come into the care and the difficulties children and families experience.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Consultation Event Update



Picking up on the **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Action Plan** to support participation, attendance and timeliness, the IRO's organised an activity based consultation event.

We heard about the **IRO activity based event** engaging young people through play.

The young people did:

- Painting
- Nature art
- Biscuit decorating
- Sensory games
- Lots more crafts and fun

Young people said:

- Make my meetings happy
- Let me decide who comes
- Don't want my meeting in an office
- I want to say what is discussed
- Let me have my say in the meeting
- Make things better
- Can we have some juice and biscuits?

MARCH 2018

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The Corporate Parenting Board met the **Through Care Management Team** to hear about how services for looked after children and care leavers have been brought together within one central hub.

This change is to ensure that children receive a **joined up service** that supports children achieving the **very best outcomes**.

Introducing the new Through Care Management Team!



Districts confirm sign up to **Council Tax exemption** for Care Leavers up to 25.

- 4 Districts confirmed
- 2 going through governance

This step shows the financial commitment by Districts to Corporate Parenting and to our Care Leavers

Planning also took place for our Corporate Parenting **Keeping in Touch Events**.

These events gave Corporate Parenting Board members an opportunity to meet with staff, carers, children, young people and families.

Corporate Parenting Board Members keeping in touch with the experiences of Children and Young people including:

Attending a Young Person's Pathway Plan Meeting

Meeting foster carers and Kinship Carers

Attending a Looked After Children's Review

Visiting our children's homes

Meeting with our 4 Care Leaver Peer Mentors

Visits to St. Basil's - Supporting Living Accommodation

Observing an Edge Of Care Panel

CHAIRMAN'S EVENTS

The **Chairman Anne Hingley** chose Looked After Children and Care leavers as her area of focus in 2016/17 and set up a Cross party working group to show Worcestershire's commitment to Looked After Children and Care Leavers & raise the profile of Corporate Parenting. 4 events have taken place and 4 more coming up before the end of June.

Cllr Rob Adams - Wychavon, October 2017 half-term

'Big Dig' archaeological test pit digs where young people got to excavate and find relics in people's back gardens.

Cllr Fran Oborski - Franche First School, Wyre Forest, 19 Nov 2017

Children's party including face painting, bouncy castle, disco, indoor archery, pizza, ice cream and a magician.

Cllr Steve Mackay - Worcester City, 22 February 2018

Tea with the Mayor of Worcester Steve Mackay and a **Tour** of the **Guildhall** and the **Commandery**.

Cllr Charlie Hotham - Bromsgrove Fire Station, 7 April 2018

Fire Station Activity Afternoon - which included tour of station, rides in fire engine, smoke room, car cutting, yard drills from the Young Firefighters, food and more. **In association with PRIME Fire Mentor Service** and **Hereford and Worcester Fire Rescue Service**.

Events still to come

Worcester Cathedral - 29 April 2018

Thanksgiving Service at **Worcester Cathedral** with Hymns and intersessions for all our Looked after Children and Care Leavers. Youth Voice Groups in attendance and introducing hymns.

Cllr Lucy Hodgson - The Malvern Cube, 12 May 2018

Tea Party, games and activities for all.

Cllr Patti Hill - Abbey Stadium, Redditch, 19 May 2018

Mini-Olympics - Abbey Stadium sport activities, food, bouncy castles and more.

Cllr Rob Adams - Aston Hall Farm, 3 June 2018

Final all district event - Trailer ride around farm, feeding lambs, cows, pigs, ducks, crafts and activities, food and refreshments and much more.



YOUTH VOICE GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

We ran the Leadership Exchange with the Chief Executive - which resulted in 'Promises' to Looked After Children and Care Leavers

Interviews, Interviews and More Interviews - including the new Chief Executive and Group Manager for Through Care

We supported the Virtual Schools Education Awards

Representative on Worcestershire Youth Cabinet



Assembly at local school to promote Youth Voice Groups

We hosted the Youth Voice Group Regional Event with 14 local authorities



Pushed to get rid of Council Tax for Care Leavers up to the age of 25

We organised our annual Fun Day

Organised Celebration Event for looked after children and care Leavers

Helped to commission the digital tool for young people MOMO

MOMO
MIND OF MY OWN

Helping to promote Fostering and Adoption at Worcestershire PRIDE



Recruited awesome Designated Nurses for Looked after Children



We hosted our First Webinar that put questions to key people in Social care like the Director and Lead Member

Presented at the Foster Carers Conference

OUR PLAN FOR 2018

- **Keeping in Touch Events**
- Youth Voice Group **'Take Over'** of the Board
- Implementation of **Signs of Safety** - supporting how we work with children, young people and families
- **Refreshed Service Improvement Plan** - Version 2
This includes:
 - » **Edge of Care** - supporting families so children can live at home, where it's safe to do so
 - » **Permanence** - securing children and young people their future home
 - » **Sufficiency** - making sure that we have good foster care, children's home and independent living placements for children and young people in Worcestershire
 - » **Engagement and Participation** - ensuring children, young people and families are listened to and involved
- Ensuring **Corporate Parenting Strategy** is achieved
- Continued work on, our **Corporate Parenting Pledge**
- Supporting **Care Leaver Wish list** and **Strategy**

Youth Voice Groups want to see:

- **Consistency** of Social Workers
- Better **transitions** to Leaving Care
- **Improved support** from PAs
- The **same offer** of **Leisure passes** across all districts

Youth Voice Groups like:

- Outreach 
- Youth Voice Team 



At the heart of everything we do

