

**CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER
AND
LEAVING CARE**

STRATEGY 2018 - 2021

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Strategic Vision	3
3. Start Healthy and Stay Healthy	6
4. Be safe at home, in the school and in the community	8
5. Enjoy learning and achieve their best	13
6. Develop social skills and take part in activities	14
7. Have a voice in decisions that affect their lives	16
8. Stay in education and get a job	18
Annex A: Calderdale Corporate Parenting Pledge	
Annex B: Care Leavers Pledge	
Annex C: Children in Care Pledge	

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction by Councillor Megan Swift, Lead Member for Children's Services and Robin Tuddenham, Chief Executive Calderdale Council.

As a Council, and as corporate parents, we are committed to giving children looked after the care and opportunity we would want for our own children and grandchildren. We know that our looked after children face some very big and at times difficult challenges, and we have the same hopes and ambitions for them as those of every good parent and grandparent.

Calderdale Council has an ambition to be the best borough in the North, and we are working to realise our vision for 2024 to create a place known to be enterprising, talented, resilient, kind and distinctive. We will only achieve this if we give the best possible chance to children looked after, and enable all children and young people who come into our care to reach their potential. Our new Children Looked After Strategy sets out how we will do this, and how we will know that we are getting it right for our children.

We want our children to develop or maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, professionals and other trusted adults while upholding their rights.

We want our children to flourish with good health, to be safe and happy, to do well at school, and make the most of leisure opportunities, hobbies and interests. We want them to grow in confidence, able to express their hopes, fears and experiences with trusted adults. We want them to have good quality care in stable placements, that will support them as they make their way through childhood into adult hood and beyond. We recognise the importance of supporting the development of a positive identity in the diverse communities of Calderdale.

We want our young people to be equipped to lead independent lives and to make their way as adults in higher education, in good careers and jobs, and be financially secure. Also, if they themselves become a parent we will ensure they receive early, sensitive and effective support .

As elected members, senior officers, and as a council, we promote corporate parenting and grand parenting seeking out every opportunity to support our children and young people who are or have been looked after.

This matters to us. Lets make it happen together.



Councillor Megan Swift



Robin Tuddenham

2. Our Vision

“All children in Calderdale are happy, healthy, safe and successful, regardless of whom is looking after them.”

As corporate parent and grandparents, we want to ensure that we make good decisions for children and young people. Becoming Looked After is a serious step in the life of a child or young person, so we have robust systems in place ensuring that children and young people become looked after in a timely manner, with their best interest at the heart of decision making.

Evidence indicates that high-performing local authorities are those with strong leaders who have an aspirational vision of effective corporate parenting for all looked-after children and young people. These authorities embed partnership and multi-agency working at the heart of the planning process and ensure that children and young people are fully engaged in the design and delivery of services. (NICE guidelines May 2015).

At the heart of our service delivery to our children, young people and care leavers is our commitment to the 7 principles of corporate parenting as outlined in the Statutory guidance published in February 2018:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work

In order that children and young people who are looked after will have everything that good parents want for their children we will ensure the following:

- Involve children and young people in decision making and in shaping their services.
- Use our resources effectively to secure appropriate, safe and stable homes and accommodation for our children looked after, including working purposefully with birth families to support return to their care.

- To ensure they develop a positive sense of identity by supporting and promoting both equality and diversity.
- Where it is not safe for children to return to their birth family, then we will strive to secure them suitable alternative permanence in a timely manner.
- Develop creative and innovative ways of working with and supporting children, young people and their carers to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Be clear what the outcomes are, remembering that everyone is different and everyone matters.
- Work together to ensure that carers are well supported by a skilled and knowledgeable work force.
- Work in partnership.
- Celebrate achievement and excellence.

Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities as corporate parents and as a local authority are:

- Start healthy and stay healthy
- Be safe at home, in the school and in the community
- Enjoy learning and achieve their best
- Develop social skills and take part in activities
- Have a voice in decisions that affect their lives
- Stay in education and get a job

Associated Plans, Strategies and Policies

The children looked after strategy forms part of a range of documents, policies and processes that help inform our work and ensure our focus on the outcomes and achievements of our children and young people who are looked after.

This strategy should be read alongside existing service plans focused on individual services and the overarching strategies.

The associated strategies are:

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) looks at the current and future health and wellbeing needs of Calderdale residents and it is used to inform and guide the planning and commissioning (buying) of health, wellbeing and social care.
- The Early Intervention Strategy which outlines the plan and interventions we offer, ensures children and young people and their families receive the right help at the right time in the right place.

- The sufficiency plan which outlines how the council will ensure we have sufficient high quality placements to meet the needs of our children looked after and care leavers.
- Adults and Children's Directorate Strategic priorities 2018-2019.

The associated key documents are:

- The permanence policy outlines in detail how we avoid drift and delay for our children looked after to ensure that they achieve permanent, stable families as soon as possible, whether that is with birth family, foster carer, residential care or through adoption or Special Guardianship.
- The foster carers handbook and associated procedures.
- Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children – DfE March 2015.
- Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children – DfE 2018.
- Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers (Statutory guidance for local authorities 2018).
- Calderdale's Local Offer to our care leavers which outlines the services available for our care leavers.
- Statutory guidance in relation to care leavers (The Children and Social Work Act 2017) DfE.
- Guidance to the Children's Homes Regulations – DfE April 2015.
- Commissioning strategy for children and young people looked after.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Review

This strategy is regularly reviewed and monitored by senior leaders, elected members and by the corporate parenting panel. We will provide an annual report to the children-in-care council, Right2Voice and UNO, the local authority's People Scrutiny committee, the Director of Public Health, the NHS commissioner and the Leader of the Council. The report will cover the effectiveness of services for looked after children and young people when evaluated against the local pledge to children in care, national indicators and local targets.

Relevant service areas have aligned performance indicators which measure how well we are achieving our strategic aims for the children looked after and those leaving care. These performance indicators are monitored at a variety of levels within the organisation, including the Children's Safeguarding Board.

3. Start Healthy and Stay Healthy

Working closely with our health service colleagues we aim to improve the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people in and leaving care through:

- Promotion of physical and emotional healthy lifestyle choices.
- Promotion of emotional resilience.
- Ensuring that their health needs are met.

Our Pledge to Young People in our Care

We will protect you and care for you, by making sure that you are happy, safe and healthy.

If you are getting ready to leave care or are leaving care, we will help you stay healthy, and happy.

We will advise you about what health services are available, making sure that you understand those services and get the support that you may need.

What We Do

Every child or young person in care is registered with a GP and Dentist and has an up to date health assessment and action plan that is monitored and reviewed at every child looked after review.

Children and young people are receiving timely health care services from appropriately qualified health professionals to address their health needs.

Ensure that Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ) are undertaken for all eligible looked after children and that SDQ scores are appropriately shared with the registered GP and health professional undertaking health assessments.

All 16-18 year olds are offered a statutory health assessment. In addition, the Named Nurse provides advice and support to the Pathways Team to ensure all young people have access to and understand their full health history via one to one health input to care leavers and joint working including visits with key workers.

As well as directly identifying and addressing the health needs of children and young people, we support carers to meet the health needs via training and advice.

Why we do it?

Most children become looked after as a result of abuse and neglect. Although they have many of the same health risks and problems as their peers, the extent of these is often greater because of their past experiences.

Longer term outcomes for looked after children remain worse than their peers, as they face greater challenges related to long-term health, social and educational needs.

We want to readdress this inequality by providing health assessment opportunities as soon as possible to identify individual health needs, develop individualised health action plans and refer children and young people to the right health services.

We recognise that unaccompanied asylum seekers who become looked after potentially have a range of health needs. On average we look after between 17 to 20 unaccompanied asylum seekers. The majority of these young people are from Iraq, with other young people from Afghanistan, Somalia, Albania, Iran, and Vietnam.

UASC often have complex physical and mental health needs which may be delayed and may not be present at the time of their initial health assessment (IHA).

All require dental registration and an appointment for dental and vision checks, and are referred for commencement or completion of the universal immunisation, blood tests including blood borne virus (BBV) screening and TB screening.

What difference has it made?

Children who enter care in Calderdale benefit from having their initial health assessment undertaken by the Designated Doctor for looked after children within a recognised timeframe.

Arrangements for the completion of review health assessments (RHA) will be completed totally by our team of Named and specialist nurses and will see the same nurse each time for continuity and relationship building.

Where appropriate looked after children are offered a choice of location by by our team of nurses for their RHA. This helps to promote engagement and positive relationships with health services and means that young people are seen in a location where they are comfortable.

Of the eligible cohort of young people at the end of March 2018:

- 3.0% were identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year (6 young people)
- 85% were up to date in their immunisations
- 89% had their teeth checked by a dentist within the last 12 months
- 93% had their annual health assessment within the last 12 months

- 88.5% 16-18 years olds took up the offer an annual health review.
- 91% of eligible children had a completed SDQ score with an average of 14.2%

What we need to do better?

We will see timeliness of review health assessments is better for children placed out of the area and is equivalent to the timescales for children looked after and placed within Calderdale.

Improve the take up of the SDQ and use individual results to support young people and their carers more consistently across the children looked after service.

We continue to refine the health needs analysis (HNA) database to capture health information collated through the review health assessment process, in order to produce a comprehensive HNA of the looked after children and care leaver cohort and have commenced a new tool which should give us the information we need to support services accessed by Children looked after. This will in turn inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and commissioning of services.

4. Be Safe at Home, in School and in the Community

This strategic aim is about making sure all children are safe, and feel safe. It pays attention to those risks that we know are a particular danger to children looked after, and also covers wider safety and security needs.

- **Our Pledge to Young People in our Care**

We will protect you and care for you, by making sure that you are happy, safe and healthy.

We will do our best to make sure that wherever you live you feel happy, secure, loved, part of a family and part of the community.

We will support contact with your birth family, if it is in your best interests and it is what you want..

- **And for those Leaving Care**

We will support you to move on to independence. We will keep in touch with you regularly.

We will work with you to find the right place for you to live and help you settle in.

What we do

Right place, right time, right home

We want to make sure that our children and young people have the right home, at the right time, in the right place, where they can build trusting relationships, feel cared for valued and respected.

We do this by:

- Ensuring we make matches that meet the child's or young people's needs.
- Recruiting foster carers locally who can meet the individual diverse needs of our young people.
- Maintaining our residential homes at good or outstanding Ofsted rating by ensuring we recruit staff who are motivated to achieve the best possible outcomes for the young people in their care.
- Ensure that our young people are protected from bullying.
- Support those young people leaving care to live in suitable accommodation
- Encourage Staying Put placements.
- Place children with an adoption plan in a timely manner and by using early permanence placements when it is in the child's best interests.
- Calderdale therapeutic services offer consultation and advice to carers, social workers and direct work with children.
- We offer training to foster carers, residential workers and social workers to support them to deliver the care and support we want for our young people.
- When we commission placements, or services, we only use good or outstanding providers and these are carefully monitored using a commissioning framework.
- Successfully commissioning 4 beds with a local provider in two by two bedded homes.
- We listen to our young people's wishes, feelings and views, so they can tell us what their experience is of living in their home.
- We help children and young people understand their rights and support them to give feedback and/or complain.
- We ask their views in shaping the services that support them in their home.
- Right Home brings together a number of flexible services that support our young people between 16 and 25 years old, including Range Street, a 24 hour supported accommodation for 16-26 year olds and the Calderdale Foyer Service for 16 – 25 year olds.
- We have established relationships with other supported housing partners.

Positive Relationships

We support our young people to develop skills and confidence through establishing trusting and caring relationships and offer them opportunities to develop self-esteem, resilience and confidence.

We recognise the importance of enduring birth family relationships, in particular sibling relationships and when it is in their best interests support them living together.

We use several models of positive relationship building depending on the care setting. In our residential homes we use restorative principles, authoritative parenting and a strength focused approach. In foster care therapeutic parenting and TCI have similar principles and at the heart of both approaches is relationship building.

Contextual safeguarding approaches enables the authority to work with partners to identify particular areas of vulnerability in relation to missing, offending and CSE, to enable both individual and more community based risk management plans.

Our partner's commitment to restorative justice has led to a reduction in the criminalisation of children looked after and is more effective in impacting positively on recidivism.

We have identified 95 young people 21 to 25 years of age who may need support from our leaving care service, as a result of Keep on Caring. 6 are already receiving a service

Why do we do it?

Research and young people tell us that young people do better across a range of outcomes if they are able to live in the right setting for them, close to home, with the right support and with the right contact arrangements

We know that part of being a good parent is allowing your children to make unwise choices at times, however we recognise that for a variety of reasons, children and young people who are looked after are often vulnerable in this area and take greater risks than their peers.

These risks range from substance misuse, offending behaviour, missing episodes, child sexual exploitation and poor friendship choices. In order to support young people to make informed choices, they need to develop trusting relationships with the adults who care for them, and who can understand their presenting behaviour in the context of their past behaviour.

Contextual safeguarding approaches enable the authority to work with partners to identify particular areas of vulnerability for older young people and those leaving care.

What difference has it made?

- 98% of our care leavers are in suitable accommodation.
- 99% of our 18 plus leaving care cohort at the end of March 2018 were working with a pathways advisor.
- Our four residential homes are good or outstanding.
- We know which of our young people go missing in Calderdale and they are all offered a return interview.
- Our offending rates remain comparable with the national average of 5%.
- The proportion of children placed outside the authority and more than 20 miles from home was highest in 2015/16 at 14%. There has been a reduction to 12.3% in 2016/17.
- We have reduced the number of children in external foster placements by an average of 10 over 2015/2017. At end of March 2018 this was 54, the majority long term matched
- In 2016/2017, 13 sibling groups were placed in foster care, 12 of these were placed according to plan.
- We have reduced the percentage of children with three placement moves or more, from 10.3% in 2015/16 to 8.4% in 2018, .
- We are excellent at placing children in adoption quickly and are confident that the Regional Adoption Agency will be able to support the progress we have made.
- Service delivery has been influenced by UNO (leaving care participation group) and Right2Voice (children in care council) eg. work on leaflets, children's looked after strategy, life story work.

What do we need to do more of?

We need to increase the recruitment of local foster carers. There has been a redesign and investment into the recruitment process, early indication is that we are on target to recruit 15 mainstream households 2018/19.

As part of the recruitment strategy, we will be targeting carers for short breaks and children with disabilities during 2018/19, as well as mainstream carers.

Long term placement stability remains a concern. It has declined to 56.8% in 2017/18 from 65% in 15/16. This is an improvement on 16/17, so the trajectory is in the right direction but it is still below the England performance. A number of key actions are being put into place.

- Increasing the pool of foster carers by 15 households will lead to improved matching.

- A practice manager emotional health and wellbeing has been appointed to the fostering team to develop the skills and capacity of both the supervising social workers and foster carers.
- Supporting supervising social workers to use the SDQ scores more proactively.
- Enhance professional knowledge and skill in long term matching through workforce development.
- Using systemic practice and theory to better inform long term matching proposals.
- Introduction of Triple P parenting course for carers to strengthen their tool box in relation to adolescent behaviour.
- Development of a specialist teenage fostering scheme during 2018/2019.
- Review of the placement stability meetings.
- Refresh of the disruption process to ensure timely responses for when placements end and to disseminate learning.

We aim to increase placement stability to 65% 2018/2019, with an incremental rise to 70%.

There are 22 young people in external residential provision (including 4 in the commissioned homes situated in Calderdale). We want to reduce the number of children and young people placed in external residential beds by either commissioning additional capacity or opening up new in-house provision. Both these options are being explored and a decision will be made during the first half of 2018.

5. Enjoy Learning and Achieve their Best

This strategic aim is about supporting children looked after by Calderdale Council in the education setting that is right for them. The focus is on formal learning but it is also about supporting wider development goals through the care planning process.

We will support education, providing our young people with guidance throughout their school years and beyond.

- **Our Pledge to Children Looked After**

We will support your education, providing you with guidance throughout your school years and beyond. We will work hard to build strong links between you and the people you work with.

What we do

We have a Virtual School who champions our looked after children and young people to make sure they achieve the best outcomes.

The aim of the Virtual School is to enhance the life opportunities for children in care by supporting their education and enabling them to achieve the best they can.

Virtual school organise and lead Personal Education Plan meetings, so that everyone involved can help and support our young people with their learning.

Virtual school supports carers, children, social workers and other professionals to set appropriate targets for learning.

Schools are supported and challenged to use the Pupil Premium Plus funding (PPP) appropriately to enable children and young people who are looked after to take full advantage of the PPP for their own learning needs.

Transitions are planned and supported by virtual school, unless it is an emergency. Virtual school attends Placement Resources Group to advise in relation to the educational needs of children looked after.

Unaccompanied asylum seekers who are looked after will receive the support they need to fulfil educational and other outcomes. Some unaccompanied children who have recently arrived in the country may never have had access to education before.

For previously looked after children, the Virtual School will be a source of advice and information to help their parents to advocate for them as effectively as possible.

Looked after children and previously looked after children are significantly more likely to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).

Virtual school supports schools to complete the SDQ to triangulate scores.

Why do we do it?

We believe that a good education helps success throughout life.

We know that many of our children have missed time in school, before coming into care, or their previous life experience has hindered their learning, therefore they need advocacy and support to reach their full potential.

We know that a larger proportion of looked after children are significantly more likely to have special educational needs than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans). Again these young people will need advocacy and support to reach their full potential.

We want you to achieve your best in everything you do, not only in your learning but through support for leisure and social activities.

What difference do we make?

Virtual School were praised by Ofsted as a key strength of the authority.

We have achieved an excellent PEP completion rate of 100% in last five years.

We have consulted with a high number of young people through observations, play, drawing and discussions, captured in the pupil voice forms in PEPs.

We have a high level of engagement with education.

Our young people have achieved above national average outcomes for children looked after at Key Stage 4 in the last five years.

At the end of March 2018, we had 22 young people in university education.

What do we need to do more of?

Addressing the barriers for Children Looked After around accessing education through the further development of attachment training and understanding across schools.

Expanding our offer of advice and guidance for those previously looked after in line with the new guidance and looking at ways to regionalise this offer.

Further developing links with our Alternative Provision providers to ensure that our children looked after have prompt access to quality education.

Using the data we collect around educational attainment and progress to inform our service delivery and therefore continue with our aim to narrow the gap between the attainments of children looked after and other children in Calderdale.

Continue to work closely with our special educational needs and difficulties (SEND) team colleagues to ensure our personal education plans (PEPS) and education, health and care plans (EHCP processes) are aligned.

Continue to work closely with the Pathway Team to ensure that we are available to support young people aged 16 – 19 years appropriately.

6. Develop Social Skills and Take Part in Activities

This strategic aim is about identity, building self-confidence, self-esteem, social skills and resilience.

• Our Pledge to Children Looked After

*We will provide activities for children and young people and encourage you to join in.
We will ensure each young person has a Passport to Leisure.*

We will make sure that you have photographs taken during your childhood and have mementoes and keepsakes which are important to you.

What we do

We believe that young people should be provided with a range of activities that make available opportunities to meet, engage and have enjoyment with other young people in a space that is safe.

This forms part of an informal educative offer from the Local Authority and Voluntary Sector partners that encourages personal growth and development for all young people and children.

We encourage and support carers to ensure that young people are given opportunities to enjoy success, develop social skills and appositive identity

We provide a passport to leisure care to carers to facilitate this.

We celebrate achievement, no matter how small or large through an annual celebration event, and a separate event for our care leavers.

On Christmas Day 2017, one of the Pathways social workers hosted a dinner in a local restaurant for our unaccompanied asylum seekers who live independently to ensure no one was alone on Christmas day.

We encourage young people who are looked after to take part in the Council's annual 'Take Over Day'.

We encourage social workers and carers to make and keep memories for the young people in their care, to celebrate their achievements.

Why do we do it?

Research indicates that often children and young people are disenfranchised from leisure activities prior to becoming looked after.

We want to encourage healthy lifestyles for our young people leading to improvements in physical as well as emotional health.

We want to discover and develop skill and talent like any good parent would.

We want to foster mutually reciprocal friendships amongst young people, who may struggle making and maintaining relationships due to previous life experiences.

We want our children and young people to have a bank of memories, held safely so that they can have a sense of identity and understanding about childhood events. This will support them if they choose to access their records as care leavers.

We have listened to work that the Children in Care Council has undertaken in relation to recording, and the need for records to be strength focused as opposed to negative.

We have also listened to our young people telling us they want to have passports as a right.

What difference do we make?

Direct feedback from children, young people, carers and professionals through children looked after reviews and evaluations.

Achievement of accredited outcomes such as the Duke of Edinburgh.

Evidence of life story work on children who are looked after files.

The uptake of passports is monitored and at the end of March 2018 over 56% of eligible young people had a passport. However this needs a greater take up.

What do we need to do more of?

Measure how many children and young people take up leisure activities such as learning to swim. At the moment this is measured on an individual basis through looked after children reviews.

Ensure that commissioned placements make and keep memories for our children and young people placed with them, through contract compliance.

Keep the drive on passports to achieve a year on year improvement in numbers of children looked after who hold a passport to achieve 75%.

7. Have a Voice in Decisions that Affect their Lives

This strategic aim is about respecting the voice of our children and young people who are looked after, and ensuring that they understand their rights and responsibilities concomitant to their age and understanding. Children's rights include the right to participation in decisions made about them. For looked after children, this right is enshrined in the Children Act (England & Wales) 1989.

• Our Pledge to Our Looked After Children and Young People

We will make sure you know your rights. We will listen to your opinions, wishes and feelings and provide a Children's Rights Service and access to us as Corporate Parents. We will let you know how you can get involved with Children in Care Council.

We will make sure that you are involved in writing up your Care Plan and that you fully understand what this is. This will be reviewed with you regularly. We will remember that when we review your Care Plan, that your opinion is the most important one.

What we do

We want our children looked after and those leaving care to make informed decisions about life and relationships by:

- Having Involvement in the design, delivery and improvement of our services
- Having a voice in the services that surround them as Children Looked After

The Children's Rights and Advocacy Service is embedded within Calderdale Council and lead on voice and participation for children and young people looked after.

We have an established children in care council called Right2voice, which also includes a junior Right2voice which meets on Saturday mornings.

For young people leaving care there is an established UNO group, facilitated by an older care leaver.

Both the Right2voice group and Uno work together on shared projects.

The children in care council attends corporate parenting panel and on alternate meetings, take responsibility for running the meeting.

We encourage the participation of children and young people in their reviews and this is monitored monthly at senior management level.

We expect that children and young people are seen regularly and have an opportunity to meet with their social worker as part of our safeguarding responsibility. Statutory visits are monitored regularly by senior management.

Children and young people have access to advocacy and independent visitors, and the service reports regularly to corporate parenting panel.

Independent reviewing officers ensure that children and young people know how to complain, and the Regulation 44 visitor checks for grumbles when visiting Calderdale's residential homes.

Why we do it?

We recognise the importance of children feeling safe and valued by being encouraged to share their experiences, both the good and those they wish to change. We believe that a complaint is a gift.

We recognise the need to upskill children, young people and professionals to demonstrate active engagement in the full spectrum of decision making impacting on their lives.

We believe that through active engagement and involvement our services will be improved and that we will become more responsive to children and young people's needs.

We also value the additional benefits which can come to communities and individuals through being more actively involved in empowerment, participation, democracy and citizenship activities.

What does difference has it made?

We have made service improvements such as the drive to ensure young people have passports.

We have amended the care plan in consultation with young people to make it more accessible to them.

We have good contributions from children and young people in their reviews; the lowest it has been in 2016/2017 has been just under 75%.

Consultation with those leaving care has helped shape the local offer in relation to Keep on Caring.

What we need to do more of?

We need to develop more creative ways of engaging young people in their reviews using modern technology such as WhatsApp, face time etc.

We need to have consistent contribution at children looked after reviews with a target of 90%.

We need to evaluate the impact of the work of Right2voice and UNO on practice, and what changes it has brought about in service delivery.

8. Stay in Education and Get a Job

This strategic aim is about supporting each child looked after into independence and a positive, safe, happy future. There is a particular focus on education and employment, providing the kind of support, advice and help that a good parent would give their own child.

- **Our Pledge to Children Looked After in Calderdale and by Calderdale**

We will ensure that young people aged 15+ are aware of Prospects (Pathway team). We will make sure that you know what you are entitled to as a care leaver, through links with appropriate workers and make sure that you are supported through your transition to independence.

We will help you get a good education and to get a good job.

We will provide financial support to you when you are in education.

What we do

Prospects Services, Calderdale Pathways Team, works with children looked after and who have left care. It is a commissioned service.

The service is responsible for young people aged 15.6 up to their 18th birthday and remains in touch up until their 21st birthday, or 25th birthday if the person is in further or higher education. From April 2018, we also have a responsibility to continue to offer a service up to 25 year old.

The Pathways team has developed an expertise in supporting unaccompanied asylum seekers over the age of 15.6 months. The service supports young people to:

- Stay in education and training, including apprenticeships post 16 years old
- Achieve outstanding education results
- Positive transitions to adulthood
- Contribute and develop their pathway plan

The service has achieved good and outstanding outcomes for our young people who are leaving care across a range of indicators.

We support young people by ensuring we keep an eye on their attendance at school and college, by ensuring our University students have appropriate accommodation outside term time, by close links with CK Careers, colleges and workforce development in Calderdale Council, one of the biggest employers in the district.

What difference does it make?

The service ensures that young people leaving care have good education and employment opportunities, which will improve their life chances, both now and in the future.

At the end of March 2018 19.5% of Calderdale care leavers were undergraduates. The national average for care leavers who are undergraduates is 6%.

At the end of March 2018, there were 22 young people studying at university.

These results and the results for young people who are not in employment, education and training (NEET), evidence that the Pathways service maintains a consistent approach to ensuring our young people are supported and engaged in education, employment and training. This coupled with the work of Virtual School mean that our young people perform much better than the national average.

Not in education, training or employment (NEET)			
April 2015	March 2016	March 2017	March 2018
22.6%	17.4%	20%	5.2%

The national average for not in education, employment and training is 38%.

Whilst 43 young people are not in education, employment or training :

- 16 are parents or pregnant
- 17 are in receipt of employment and support allowance, (ESA , the benefit which has replaced incapacity benefit)

Therefore only 10 (5.2%) are in a position to engage.

In terms of the lived experience for our young people (as of end of March 2018):

- 22 are enrolled in higher education
- 96 are enrolled in FE including school
- 20 are in employment
- 11 are in Apprenticeships

In order to succeed in employment, education or training, young people need to feel safe, secure and supported as they go out into the world. None of our care leavers live in unsuitable accommodation.

What we need to do more of

Develop the local offer for Keep on Caring and evaluate it over the next three years in consultation with our young people.

Develop emotional wellbeing support for our care leavers in relation to access to support from a mental health professional.

Increase the number of apprenticeships on offer to care leavers in the 'family business' as well as our partners



Appendix A

Calderdale Councils Corporate Parenting Pledge

What does corporate parenting and grand parenting mean for Calderdale's children and young people?


When a child comes into care, Calderdale Council becomes the corporate parent. The term 'corporate parent / grandparent' means the collective responsibility of the Council, elected members, employees and partner agencies, for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by the Council and young people leaving care. A child in care or a young person leaving care expects the whole Council and partner agencies to be the best parent / grandparent it can be. Every member and employee of the Council has the statutory responsibility to act for that child in the same way that a good parent would act for their child.

Every good parent and grandparent wants the best for their child, to provide a safe, secure, stable and nurturing home. To enable their child to develop or maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, professionals and other trusted adults while upholding their rights. For their children to flourish with good health, to be safe and happy, to do well at school, make the most of leisure opportunities, hobbies and interests, and to grow towards adulthood equipped to lead independent lives and to make their way as adults in higher education, in good careers and jobs, and to be financially secure. Also, if their child becomes a parent ensuring they receive early, sensitive and effective support focused on enabling them to be successful parents.

We have the same hopes and ambitions for the children and young people as those of every good parent and grandparent. We take seriously our moral as well as our legal responsibility for enabling children in care and young people leaving our care to experience happy and fulfilling lives.

Add your signature, name and job title here to sign up to the corporate parenting pledge.

Care Leavers Pledge

Colin Peal Brighouse Ward Conservative (2020) <i>Colin Peal</i>	Lisa Lambert Ilkington & Mixenden Ward Labour (2020) <i>L Lambert</i>	Helan Rivron Ovenden Ward Labour (2018) <i>Helan Rivron</i>	Robert Thornber Ryburn Ward Conservative (2019) <i>R. Thornber</i>		
Howard Blagbrough Brighouse Ward Conservative (2018) <i>H Blagbrough</i>	Jill Smith-Moorhouse Luddendenfoot Ward Conservative (2018) <i>Jill Smith-Moorhouse</i>	Faisal Shoukat Park Ward Labour (2019) <i>Faisal Shoukat</i>	Andrew Tappin Skircoat Ward Conservative (2018) <i>Andrew Tappin</i>		
Seco Benton Brighouse Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Seco Benton</i>	Nicole May Luddendenfoot Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Nicole May</i>	Ferman Ali Park Ward Labour (2018) <i>Ferman Ali</i>	John Hardy Skircoat Ward Conservative (2020) <i>John Hardy</i>		
All Miles Calder Ward Labour (2018) <i>All Miles</i>	 <p>The pledge is a commitment made by Calderdale Council, as corporate parents and grandparents, to our young people who have been looked after by the Council and who are aged 15 and a half and above and who are supported by the Pathways Service. All the adults who work for and with the Council have a responsibility to make sure that you are safe, healthy and achieving your goals. Calderdale believes that the people who work with you when you are leaving care, including Social Workers and Pathway Advisers will believe in you, listen to you, respect you and never give up on you.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help and support you to move on to independence Keep in touch with you regularly Work with you to find the right place for you to live and help you settle in Involve you when decisions are made and take on board your wishes and feelings Help you to get a good education and to get a good job Help you to stay healthy and happy Provide financial support to you when you are in education <p>prospectus Calderdale COUNCIL</p>		Marcus Thompson Skircoat Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Marcus Thompson</i>		
Dave Young Calder Ward Labour (2019) <i>Dave Young</i>			Adam Wilkinson Sowerby Bridge Ward Labour (2020) <i>Adam Wilkinson</i>		
Josh Fenton-Glynn Calder Ward Lib Dem (2020) <i>Josh Fenton-Glynn</i>			Dei Foster Sowerby Bridge Ward Labour (2018) <i>Dei Foster</i>		
Angie Gallagher Elland Ward Labour (2018) <i>Angie Gallagher</i>			Mike Payne Sowerby Bridge Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Mike Payne</i>		
John Ford Elland Ward Conservative (2019) <i>John Ford</i>			Jayne Booth Tudmorden Ward Labour (2019) <i>Jayne Booth</i>		
Patricia Allen Elland Ward Lib Dem (2020) <i>Patricia Allen</i>			Steve Sweeney Todmorden Ward Labour (2020) <i>Steve Sweeney</i>		
Paul Bellenger Greeland & Stainland Ward Lib Dem (2020) <i>Paul Bellenger</i>			Susan Press Todmorden Ward Labour (2018) <i>Susan Press</i>		
Marilyn Greenwood Greeland & Stainland Ward Lib Dem (2018) <i>Marilyn Greenwood</i>			Jane Scullion Luddendenfoot Ward Labour (2020) <i>Jane Scullion</i>	Jenny Lynn Park Ward Labour (2020) <i>Jenny Lynn</i>	Bob Metcalfe Town Ward Labour (2018) <i>Bob Metcalfe</i>
Chris Pearson Greeland & Stainland Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Chris Pearson</i>			Peter Coffey Northowram & Shelf Ward Conservative (2020) <i>Peter Coffey</i>	Chris Piliak (JP) Rastick Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Chris Piliak</i>	Megan Swift Town Ward Labour (2020) <i>Megan Swift</i>
Colin Raistrick Hipperholme & Lightcliffe Ward Independent (2018) <i>Colin Raistrick</i>			Roger Taylor Northowram & Shelf Ward Conservative (2019) <i>Roger Taylor</i>	Christine Beal Rastick Ward Conservative (2018) <i>Christine Beal</i>	Tim Swift Town Ward Labour (2019) <i>Tim Swift</i>
David Kirtan Hipperholme & Lightcliffe Ward Conservative (2019) <i>David Kirtan</i>	Stephen Baines MBE Northowram & Shelf Ward Conservative (2018) <i>Stephen Baines</i>	Lynne Louise Mitchell Rastick Ward Conservative (2020) <i>Lynne Louise Mitchell</i>	Ashley John Richard Evans Waley Ward Lib Dem (2020) <i>Ashley John Richard Evans</i>		
Barry Collins Ilkington & Mixenden Ward Labour (2019) <i>Barry Collins</i>	Anne Collins Ovenden Ward Labour (2020) <i>Anne Collins</i>	Geraldine Cartor Ryburn Ward Conservative (2020) <i>Geraldine Cartor</i>	James Baker Waley Ward Lib Dem (2019) <i>James Baker</i>		
Daniel Sutherland Ilkington & Mixenden Ward Labour (2018) <i>Daniel Sutherland</i>	Bryan Smith Ovenden Ward Labour (2019) <i>Bryan Smith</i>	Robert Holden Ryburn Ward Conservative (2018) <i>Robert Holden</i>	Michelle Foster Waley Ward Labour (2018) <i>Michelle Foster</i>		
			Hipperholme & Lightcliffe Ward <i>[Signature]</i>		

THIS PLEDGE
For All Looked After Children
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We will support contact with your birth family, if it is in your best interests and it is what you want.

We will provide you with workers who are trained, reliable and will act upon your best interests and ensure proper handovers with staff who work with you.

We will make sure you know your rights. We will listen to your opinions, wishes and feelings and provide a Children's Rights Service and access to us as Corporate Parents. We will let you know how you can get involved with Children in Care Council.

We will protect you and care for you, by making sure that you are happy, safe and healthy.

We will make sure that you have photographs taken during your childhood and have mementoes and keepsakes which are important to you.

CARE PLAN
We will make sure that you are involved in writing up your Care Plan and that you fully understand what this is. This will be reviewed with you regularly. We will remember that when we review your Care Plan, that your opinion is the most important one.

We will ensure that young people aged 15+ are aware of Prospects (Pathway Team).

We will do our best to make sure that wherever you live you feel happy, secure, loved, part of a family and part of the community.

We will make sure that you know what you are entitled to as a care leaver, through links with appropriate workers and make sure that you are supported through your transition to independence.

We will recognise all your achievements and will celebrate them with you at an annual event.

We will support your education, providing you with guidance through-out your school years and beyond. We will work hard to build strong links between you and the people you work with.

We will advise you about what health services are available, making sure that you understand those services and get the support that you may need.

We will provide activities for children and young people and encourage you to join in. We will ensure each young person has a Passport to Leisure.

Many thanks to all of the Children Looked After and Young People who shared their views and artwork for this Pledge.

Wise Up Arts

Calderdale Council